Carl Schmitt, crown jurist of the Third Reich: on preemptive war, military occupation, and world empire.


Abstract

Carl Schmitt is one of the most contentious political theorists of the twentieth century. His complicity in Nazi Germany left him discredited yet he has continued to attract widespread attention as an insightful, if flawed, critic of the modern democratic order and its global ambitions. His assertion that 'whoever invokes humanity is trying to cheat' has been revived as a indictment of western especially American, intervention in the affairs of other countries. As a German philosopher Jurgen Habermas has noted Schmitt's arguments potentially have a fatal appeal in the contemporary world. The essays in this volume explore related aspects of Schmitt's arguments against intervention, about the concept of the enemy, political myth, occupation and the global order. In the light of the so-called war on terrorism, the occupation of Iraq and widespread hostility to American foreign policy, these arguments have gained new vitality, yet they are ultimately deceptive. This book examines both the reasons for the appeal of Schmitt's arguments and the reasons why we should reject them.

Item Type: Book

Keywords: Nazi Germany, Intervention, Enemy, Occupation, Global order.

Full text: Full text not available from this repository.

Publisher: http://www.mellenpress.com/mellenpress.cfm?bookid=6319&pc=9

Record Created: 10 Oct 2006

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