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The Political Theology of International Law of Belligerent Occupation

Friend or Foe? The Contemporary Relevance of Carl Schmitt. University of Helsinki, Finland. June 2013

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While international law is often understood as teleological in its nature, encompassing notions such as progression, development, and prosperity for all of human kind, in my presentation I suggest an understanding of international law of belligerent occupation as eschatological. This suggestion flows from an attempt to put Schmitt's famous claim that "all significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularized theological concepts" into use, and to do so in an analysis of the seemingly paradoxical notions of preservation and transformation within international law of belligerent occupation.