Sovereignty and Territorial Temptation

The Grotian Tendency

Christopher R. Rossi



This powerful study stands on its head the most venerated tradition in international law and discusses the challenges of scarcity, sovereignty, and territorial temptation. Newly emergent resources, accessible through global climate change, discovery, or technological advancement, highlight timetested problems of sovereignty and challenge liberal internationalism's promise of beneficial or shared solutions. From the High Arctic to the hyperarid reaches of the Atacama Desert, from the South China Sea to the history of the Law of the Sea, from doctrinal and scholarly treatments to institutional forms of global governance, the historically recurring problem of territorial temptation in the ageless age of scarcity calls into question the future of the global commons, and illuminates the tendency among states to share resources, but only when necessary.

Christopher R. Rossi is an adjunct faculty member in Public International Law at the University of Iowa College of Law.

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