

Roman Catholicism and Political Form (Contributions in Political Science)

By G. L. Ulmen

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The relationship between economic and political thinking has reached a crisis at the end of the 20th century. Already at the beginning of this century, in *Roman Catholicism and Political Form*, Carl Schmitt juxtaposed a juridical interpretation of religion oriented to the political sphere to Max Weber's sociological interpretation oriented to the economic sphere in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.

According to G. L. Ulmen, translator of *Roman Catholicism and Political Formjus publicum Europaeum* and the Eurocentric epoch of world history began to decline.

Asserting that all significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularized theological concepts, Schmitt felt the need to address the question of what political form might replace the state. It was in this context that he wrote *Roman Catholicism and Political Form*, which presupposes an affinity not only between the Church and the state, but between Catholicism and political thinking. Once the state began to lose its monopoly of politics and, thereby, its legitimacy, Schmitt looked to the other side of the occidental equation?the Catholic Church?in search of a new form of the political. His argument proceeds from the assumption that there is a structural identity between the metaphysical image of the world a particular age creates and the form of a political organization.

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Review
"This work is important because it shows that beneath Schmitt's surface realism lie some very firm notions about the ideal political order and how nearly the Catholic Church once embodied it."-The New York Review of Books

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About the Author

Carl Schmitt

G. L. ULMEN is a senior editor for *Telos: A Quarterly Journal of Critical Thought*. Dr. Ulmen has published widely on juridical and political issues in both Europe and the United States. His latest book is *Politischer Mehrwert: Eine Studie über Max Weber und Carl Schmitt* (1991).

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