

REPETITION AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

Acts of repetition abound in international law. Security Council resolutions typically start by recalling, recollecting, recognizing or reaffirming previous resolutions. Expert committees present restatements of international law. Students and staff extensively rehearse fictitious cases in preparations for moot court competitions. Customary law exists by virtue of repeated behavior and restatements about the existence of rules. When sources of international law are deployed, historically contingent events are turned into manifestations of pre-given and repeatable categories. This book studies the workings of repetition across six discourses and practices in international law. It links acts of repetition to similar practices in religion, theater, and film. Building on the dialectics of repetition as set out by Søren Kierkegaard, it examines how repetition in international law is used to connect concrete practices to something that is bound to remain absent, unspeakable or unimaginable.

WOUTER WERNER is Professor of International Law at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and Extraordinary Professor at the University of Curaçao.

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WOUTER WERNER

Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam, University of Curaçao



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