

Final Manuscript - Commissary Dictator and the Katechon

Carl Schmitt - Collison

Political Theology (Taylor and Francis)

Accepted for publication: 16 August 2021

<https://doi.org/10.1080/1462317X.2021.1970090>

Research Article: From the Commissary Dictator to the Katechon: Continuity in Carl Schmitt's Theory of Intermediate Authority

Published online: 26 Aug 2021

Author:

Dr Luke Collison

lukecollison@gmail.com

ORCID iD <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9649-0566>

Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy (CRMEP)

Kingston University, Kingston Upon Thames, London, GB

Abstract:

What relation is there between the commissary dictator and the *katechon* in Schmitt's writings? In this paper I argue that both the dictator of *Dictatorship* and the *katechon* of *Nomos of the Earth* are characterized by a specific conception of authority. This intermediate and limited form of authority, distinct from sovereignty and the regular office, was key Schmitt's attempts, in the 1920s, to save the administrative apparatus of the state from its subsumption to the "machine of government" typical of the theory of the *Rechtsstaat*. Oriented by a task arising from a concrete problem and supported by a hierarchical conception of dignity, Schmitt claims this limited personalist authority can preserve the

creative humanity of the civil service. Reconstructing this form of authority, informed by eschatological fragments from his *Tagebücher*, I argue that Schmitt's 1920s works are haunted by a kind of shadow of the *katechon*, which is only given body thirty years later in *Nomos of the Earth*. Although there shifts in the weighting of elements, paralleling his turn from "decisionism" to "concrete-order thinking", I argue that, at least in its dominant specificities, this form of authority returns in the doctrine of the *katechon*.

Keywords:

Carl Schmitt, Dictator, Commissar, Katechon, Authority, Dignity, Problem

From the Commissary Dictator to the *Katechon*: Continuity in Carl Schmitt's Theory of Intermediate Authority

In *Nomos of the Earth*, first published in the 1950s, Schmitt identifies St Paul's figure of the *katechon* with the Holy Roman Empire of the Middle Ages.¹ He characterizes the role of the Christian emperor in the following way:

the emperor's office was inseparable from the work of the *katechon*, with concrete tasks and missions... [and] in all humility and modesty, and without compromising himself, [the emperor] laid down his imperial crown after completing a crusade.²

The "concrete tasks and missions" and the temporary term recall the stipulations Schmitt used to define the commissary dictator in his early work *Dictatorship*. The Roman dictator and Jean Bodin's commissar were both distinguished from other forms of office by their focus on a concrete problem and the finite time-frame allotted to complete the task. Prompted by these echoes of the dictator that resound in the *katechon*, my paper questions the relationship between these two figures. Does Schmitt's adoption of the *katechon* reiterate, revise or return

to theoretical concerns of *Dictatorship* published 30 years before? I contend that there is a theoretical continuity in the specific structure of authority on which both the commissary dictator and the *katechon* (as elaborated in most detail in *Nomos of the Earth*) are based. As one among the multiple and various themes found in Schmitt's oeuvre, I aim to demonstrate that Schmitt's "mature" doctrine of the *katechon* revisits, with some shifts in emphasis, a conception of intermediate authority first developed in his account of the commissary dictator.

In recent decades, particularly among readers of Schmitt, there has been significant interest in the *katechon*.³ St Paul's mysterious figure is described as an entity that restrains or holds back the antichrist, delaying the final battle between God and Satan, but thereby also defers the last judgement and thus the salvation of mankind.⁴ These two aspects give the *katechon* an aporetic valuation: (i) by ensuring peace and lawfulness and preventing conflict and chaos, the *katechon* averts suffering and maintains the conditions for sustenance, bread and shelter; but in the process, (ii) it delays the realization of the kingdom of God on earth and the longed-for redemption and salvation of man.

While the most nuanced philosophical treatment of the *katechon* is the recent monograph by Massimo Cacciari, an important supplement is Marc de Wilde's extensive excavation of the historical reception which itself builds on Felix Grossheutschi's earlier study (available only in German).⁵ While none of the existing literature interprets the *katechon* through the form of the commissary dictator, there are a few precursors suggesting such a connection. De Wilde's remark that the "task" is a "a crucial but neglected aspect" of Schmitt's doctrine of the *katechon* points clearly in this direction.⁶ Horst Bredekamp's "temporal" reading of the "state of exception" implicitly suggests a link between the finite term of the dictator and the finitude of the present in Christian eschatology.⁷ And Michael Hoelzl argues loosely that a "katechontic structure of history" plays a role in Schmitt's early works such as *Political Romanticism* and *Political Theology*.⁸ My reading develops these hints. By aligning the *katechon* with the commissary dictator (a figure of *intermediate* authority, at least ostensibly), rather than the sovereign (or sovereign dictator), my account breaks with a large proportion of the literature which interprets the *katechon* as a form of sovereign dictator.⁹ As I clarify in the following, this misinterpretation appears to stem from a misunderstanding of precisely what is at stake in *Dictatorship* itself.

How can I claim there is a theoretical continuity between the dictator and the *katechon* when Schmitt's own remarks suggest he only became interested in the latter around 1932 (and

perhaps even as late as 1942)?¹⁰ While it is true that the *katechon* as a name or figure does not appear until much later in Schmitt's oeuvre, as I argue in the following, in the 1920s we find a shadow of the *katechon* haunting Schmitt's earlier account of the governmental apparatus of the modern state. This appears as a puzzle in reconciling the activity of government with the implied consequences of Christian eschatology. The *katechon* fills the negative space described by this puzzle. Sketched out in various works of the 1920s, Schmitt's puzzle is given its most complete articulation in a *Tagebuch* entry in 1928. Under the heading, 'History of Humanism', he writes:

A multitude stands and waits for a miraculous king. Zealous and mysterious people assure with great certainty that he will come. But days and years pass without him coming. The eager and efficient people are now building huts and shelters for the wild crowd, taking care of their food, building homely and comfortable houses, and transforming the expectant into a workforce. Officially, however, they all still live in the expectation of the Lord. How strange.¹¹

In part one, I reconstruct the lines of thought that outline this problem and lead Schmitt to this striking formulation. Beginning with his lecture on the "Dictator and state of Siege" of 1919, I emphasize Schmitt's concern with the theoretical legitimation of the intermediate powers of the state apparatus. While questions of sovereignty were obviously at stake in the debate with Kelsen over the *Hüter der Verfassung* and in texts such as *Political Theology*, his concomitant interest in the transmission and exercise of authority by intermediaries is often overlooked in the reception of Schmitt's works.¹²

In part two, I turn to the doctrine of the *katechon* itself and argue that it reiterates the specific aspects of authority that define the personalist intermediary powers of the commissary dictator. While the early texts *presuppose* a hierarchical social-order, as a source of "dignity", I demonstrate that although this shifts to the foreground in *Nomos of the Earth*, it leaves intact the fundamental structure of authority on which Schmitt's conception of "administration" is based.

I. The Dictator and the Shadow of the *Katechon*

In the opening page of Schmitt's *Tagebuch* of 1922/24, there is a strange dark rectangular discolouration. Presumably, it was caused by something caught between the pages or perhaps it was already there when he first opened the notebook. There is nothing on the adjacent pages to indicate its cause, source or origin, but within the bounds of the mark, Schmitt has written the phrase "the shadow of God".¹³ My aim in this section is to show that in Schmitt's early writings (1916–1930) we find something like a shadow, an outline of an idea, for an alternative sense of authority, which Schmitt will only later subsume under the designation the *katechon*.

Perhaps the earliest indication of this shadow appears in Schmitt's essay of 1916, "Diktatur und Belagerungszustand". With this text, Schmitt makes an emphatic defence of the administrative organ of the state. He insists it is not merely an obedient tool and instrument of the legislature, but the primordial and primary creative force of government.

In the historical development [of the state] it was not simply that first the law as consummate will was spoken and then it would be executed. The beginning of all state activity is administration: legislation and jurisdiction are only separated from it later.¹⁴

Although this can be read as a defense of the sovereign, anticipating the sovereign miracle of *Political Theology*, I insist that Schmitt here refers literally to the *Verwaltung*, the intermediate authority of the bureaucracy, since it is the latter that forms the primary concern of his developed version of this essay, the monograph, *Dictatorship*.¹⁵ Putting aside the question of sovereignty, the real counterposition is Kelsen's proceduralist *Rechtstaat*; an image of administration reduced to an apparatus that mechanically applies general laws (norms) to particulars. If there is a single theme that runs throughout Schmitt's oeuvre it is his opposition to this image of "the state as mechanism."¹⁶ By contrast, Schmitt insists the state develops according to a specifically human "creative capacity" tied to his Catholic conception of the person.

The embodiment of this capacity is the "commissary dictator", a figure drawing on and combining precedents offered by the Roman dictator, based on Livy's *History of Rome*,

and Jean Bodin's theory of the commissar.¹⁷ Schmitt distinguishes the commissary dictator from a number of alternatives: firstly as the personal representative of the sovereign, the genuine "commissary dictator" is neither the sovereign themselves, nor the revolutionary sovereign dictator (in whom the representative relation is collapsed).¹⁸ In addition, the genuine commissary dictator is neither a regular officer, nor the degraded "people's commissar" or "functionary" of the French revolution. While the distinction between the commissary dictator and the post-revolutionary sovereign dictator is clearly one central issue of the text, the simplistic schema that the commissary dictator "protects an existing constitution" and the sovereign dictator, "creates a new situation" or constitutes a new order is only partly true.¹⁹ In particular, it overlooks the decisive point for Schmitt, that the sovereign dictator *can only* establish an entirely new order, it *cannot* make *ad hoc* piecemeal adjustments and innovations once a constitution is established. Moreover, this summary underestimates the broad range of activities carried out under commissary authority.²⁰

Against Weber's narrative of systematic rationalization, in *Dictatorship* Schmitt presents an alternative in which non-systematic, *ad hoc* intervention by commissars form the primary vector of bureaucratic development.²¹ In "all states, at the origin of their development, they do not use regular officials, rather only commissars are used."²² Thus in reforming the state, one must rely on "extraordinary commissars [*Beauftragter*]"²³ The actual historical development of the centralized bureaucratic state, according to Schmitt, occurred through piecemeal adjustments responding to *particular* concrete issues and problems. Although the resulting state is structured according to general principles of law and legality, its construction was dependent on the "legitimacy" provided by the honor and dignity [*Würde*] of the civil servant granted by the system of privileges specific to monarchical politics. The true dictator does not annihilate the division between legislation and execution, but admits the existence of law and acts only because "the means provided by law are no longer sufficient."²⁴

The foundational premise for Schmitt's counter-narrative and the concomitant form of authority it demands is the claim that actual concrete problems cannot, in principle, be contained by any *general* system. In the sphere of law, there is a "power [*Macht*] of the facts" that exceeds general legislation.²⁵ Echoing Edmund Burke and Joseph de Maistre, insofar as they asserted the inadequacy of liberal-rational science to moral and political reality, Schmitt juxtaposes commissary authority with Locke's bias for the law.²⁶ He claims that for Locke, sheer force and the factual are meaningless for authority and law. They correspond to the

“way of beasts”, only the law gives authority.²⁷ Countering Locke, Schmitt argues that objective reality occasionally reasserts itself and only the decision of a particular individual, possessing the creative capacity of humanity can address its demands. The condition of possibility of this *ad hoc* human response to problems is the distinction, found in Jean Bodin, between the sovereign ordinance (a specific mandate given by personal command from the sovereign or assembly of the populus) and general law.²⁸ Instead of the dichotomy of law (*nomos*) and chaos (*anomos*), Schmitt insists on a tripartite division of law (general), ordinance (particular) and chaos.²⁹

The elimination of the requirement for a physical individual or assembly drives the “transition” to *sovereign* dictatorship. For Schmitt, the fact that the commissary dictator is unimaginable in modern democracy itself demonstrates that the democratic collective subject is unable to respond to the immediacy of the concrete situation. The transition to the sovereign dictator is demanded by the distinct character, nature and (lack of) capacities of the democratic equivalent of the sovereign, the *pouvoir constituant*. This is precisely why, *contra* Renato Cristi and John McCormick, *Dictatorship* should be read as an elaborate *critique* of the abilities of the abstract collective subject.³⁰ Emphasizing the “structural and conceptual” differences between monarchical and democratic political forms, Schmitt writes that “the direct commissar of the people, unlike the commissar of the absolutist prince, no longer has a stable reference point for his dependence”.³¹ Thus in democratic systems the distinction between the commissary dictator and the collective sovereign collapse. Signalling this polemic in his introduction, Schmitt criticizes Marxist and socialist literature which simply “define the proletariat as a collective entity — that is, as a genuine agent” or that presume that dialectical logic alone shows that “humanity will become conscious of itself”.³² In *Volksentscheid und Volksbegehren*, Schmitt returns to this very question: what *can* a “collective subject” actually do? Is a collective entity actually a “subject”?³³ For Schmitt, only a genuine human agent can respond to concrete problems at hand.

Although the concrete problem constitutes, in a technical sense, a “state of exception” [*Ausnahmezustand*], the inflationary tendency to equate this with a “state of emergency” overstates the nature of the crisis. As Schmitt recounts, Bodin’s commissars could be given an extremely broad range of commissions, from the mundane task of “meat inspector” to radical reforms of the government hierarchy. These were “exceptional” to the extent that the concrete situation exceeded those foreseen by the existing (general) legal system, but these clearly need not constitute an actual *emergency*.

Thus, Schmitt posits a distinct form of authority, which is given its specificity through a series of antitheses: (i) in contrast to the procedural delimitation of the regular office, it is determined by the concrete task to be completed; (ii) it is not embodied in an “abstract right” that can be possessed or owned, but is a *precarium* with temporal or spatial limits that can be revoked at any time;³⁴ (iii) as a task, it is also distinct from the *general* project of the sovereign; and (iv) it is not a Machiavellian technical art or *arcana imperii*, but a public office, openly adopted by the commissar.³⁵ The result, according to Schmitt, is a finite and limited form of authority, but one that preserves a distinctively human capacity for invention and responsibility.

Firstly, as discussed above, it is decisive for Schmitt that the commissary dictator is defined with respect to a specific task or commission. Schmitt draws on Livy, for whom the dictator was “installed for some specific purpose” whether that was “the task of dissolving [a] dangerous situation”, “organising a people’s assembly,”³⁶ but also on Jean Bodin’s commissar, discussed above, and the “prelates” of the 13th-century Pope Innocent III commissioned with “restructurings of the ecclesial organism” including reforms and interference into the ecclesial functional hierarchies.³⁷

Secondly, the office associated with this task is finite in some concrete spatio-temporal dimension, whether the temporal and spatial limits of the Roman Dictator or the temporary, revocable *precarium* of Bodin’s commissar. In this way, Schmitt insists that the law is not annihilated by the dictator, but merely put aside temporarily in order to be protected.³⁸ Through these two conditions, (i) and (ii), the commissar “is given freedom in the choice of means”.³⁹ This provides “certain legal possibilities [*bestimmte rechtliche Möglichkeiten*]” and opens up a space for personal creativity. The dictator can deliberate and “take all measures without having to consult any advisory or executive body”.⁴⁰

Thirdly, “commissary authority” is distinguished from sovereignty and the police or welfare state, where the aim is merely the “*general* task of administration”.⁴¹ Dictatorship and sovereignty are specifically juxtaposed in Schmitt’s discussion of Cromwell. Schmitt rejects the claim that Cromwell was a sovereign dictator insisting on a nuanced transition between two distinct roles.⁴²

Fourthly, Schmitt stresses that the only measure of a commissary dictator is whether “they have achieved their goal [*Zweck*]”, thus radicalising the realist political formula that the end [*Zweck*] justifies the means.⁴³ However, he resists a Machiavellian reading which would

reduce the commissar to a technical engineer by insisting on the publicity [*Öffentlichkeit*] of the dictator.⁴⁴ Machiavelli failed to understand the specificity of the dictator and through a technical interpretation rendered all politics equivalent to trade secrets and hence an *arcana imperii*. Bodin's commissar is a "representative", a "public person who is empowered externally", not one who wields a "secret teaching" or mystified science.⁴⁵

With this series of distinctions, Schmitt claims to identify a specific *limited* form of authority, but one that resists assimilation to the "machine of government" typical of the liberal theory of the *Rechtstaat*. Insofar as its limits emerge from the concreteness of the problem, the creative agency, the immortal soul of the individual person, "superior to any limitation and ascription", is preserved.⁴⁶ Throughout *Dictatorship*, Schmitt relies on (but does not explicitly develop) this Catholic presupposition that the individual agent or person forms a point of singularity in excess of mechanistic-rationalist science. Consequently, the work lies predominantly within the "decisionist" framework he retrospectively applies to his earlier texts from the viewpoint of 1934.⁴⁷ However, as Meierhenrich has recently argued, even in *Dictatorship* there is a nascent "institutionalism" already at work.⁴⁸ If the primary function of the task is to limit the authority of the commissary dictator, then the source or substance to which this applied remains under-theorized in *Dictatorship*.

The hierarchical social-order (the "institution") that determines *who* can take on the role of dictator is simply presumed to exist. Schmitt does not discuss the fact that in Rome, as Livy notes, only "men of consular dignity" could be selected for the dictator.⁴⁹ Although Schmitt admits that "[e]verything depends on how dictatorship was embedded in constitutional guarantees," the articulation between the task and the existing order remains neglected. Instead, Schmitt invokes, without explaining, various conceptions of "personal representation" [*Stellvertretung*].⁵⁰ However the problem of the articulation between personal agency and the social-institutional order is central to *Political Theology* (1922) and *Roman Catholicism and Political Form* (1923). As though anticipated by Livy, the key term bridging between the two texts is dignity [*Würde*].⁵¹

In *Political Theology*, Schmitt expands on his conception of the "person" through an account of legal judgment.⁵² Curiously, this is modelled on a distinctly Kantian account of perception.⁵³ Equating the legal decision with the creation of a "legal form" — the application of a "legal idea" to a "factual situation" — Schmitt specifically identifies it as an act of "legal perception".⁵⁴ This act is "human in the deepest sense" and through it "the *complexio* of life in

all its contradictions is molded into a unity of personal representation”.⁵⁵ Where Kant links this capacity to the universal autonomy and “dignity” of humans, Schmitt singles out particular individuals (dignities) through the prerequisite of an *auctoritas interpositio* (authority of application) for the decision.⁵⁶ This requires a “distinctive determination of which individual person or which concrete body can assume such an authority.”⁵⁷

To connect this decisionist understanding of the person with the social-order, Schmitt equivocates between this Kantian understanding of dignity (as autonomy) and the Catholic sense of *imago dei*. The latter is key to Schmitt’s account of representation in *Roman Catholicism* developed through the model of the Priesthood of the Catholic Church.⁵⁸ Connecting *Roman Catholicism* with the problems of *Dictatorship*, Schmitt suggests that the authority of Roman dictator survives in the office of the Priest.

Roman rationalism lives on in the Roman Church...this rationalism resides in institutions and is essentially juridical; its greatest achievement is having made the priesthood into an office [*Amte*] — a very distinctive type of office. The pope is not the Prophet but the vicar [*Stellvertreter*] of Christ.⁵⁹

Schmitt reiterates that a distinctive *juristic rationality* underlies both. As he clarifies in the text, the implied counterpoint is again the liberal-economic rationality typical of the *Rechtstaat*.⁶⁰ This type of rationality rejects “representation”, replacing it (like Machiavelli) with “technical precision”.⁶¹ By contrast, Schmitt insists that the Priest is a “representative” office. Schmitt explicitly rejects Max Weber and Rudolf Sohm’s charismatic account of the religious figure, insisting instead that *Würde* (dignity or hierarchical standing) constitutes the office as “part of an unbroken chain linked with the personal mandate [*Auftrag*] and concrete person of Christ.” Again emphasizing the continuity with *Dictatorship*, Schmitt aligns the Priesthood with the pre-modern form of the “commissary dictator”, rather than the post-revolutionary “modern official”, “the functionary and commissar of republican thinking”.⁶²

But what precisely does Schmitt mean by “representation”? “To represent means to make an invisible being visible and present through a publicly present one.”⁶³ Schmitt distinguishes this from imagistic representation (*Darstellung*) typical of nineteenth-century English debates on parliament and the “mirror of the nation”.⁶⁴ Instead, Schmitt’s conception of representation is a form of “mediation”, by which an idea is given concrete and visible mundane form. In *Roman Catholicism*, the institution of the Church is “representative” in the

sense that it gives concrete form to the divine logos.⁶⁵ However, for Schmitt, this is an inherently hierarchical process. Representation

presupposes a special type being. Something dead, something inferior or valueless, something lowly cannot be represented. It lacks the enhanced type of being that is capable of an existence, of rising into the public being. Words like size, height, majesty, fame, dignity, and honor seek to express this peculiarity of enhanced being that is capable of representation.⁶⁶

Again dignity plays a central role, now as the condition of possibility of representation itself. Dignity concretizes the “*complexio oppositorum*” of the Church itself, its ability to “contain antitheses” holding them in stasis without resolution.⁶⁷ This paradoxical “as-well-as” is also captured in Juan Donoso Cortés remarks that despite its hierarchical form Catholic dignity can “raise so harmoniously and evenly the level of all things”. The paradox of divine “dignity” is that it can be shared equally despite its hierarchical structure.⁶⁸

Returning to the four criteria giving specificity to the commissary dictator: (iv) the visibility of the Church reiterates the aspect of publicity [*Öffentlichkeit*]; (iii) Schmitt is careful to distinguish the Church from a political sovereign, (if also insisting that the Church must align with worldly powers to achieve world peace), but the task of the Church, which is simply the “normative guidance of human social life”, lacks both (i) the concreteness of the problem and the (ii) temporal/spatial limits typical of dictator.⁶⁹ As the representative of Christ and mediator for the idea of the Last Judgement, the orientation to the concrete problem is lost. Schmitt seems to realize that reducing the aims of the Church to a “general task of administration” brings him uncomfortably close to Fyodor Dostoevsky’s “Grand Inquisitor”.⁷⁰ Although he explicitly derogates Dostoevsky’s portrait as an anarchistic and atheistic projection, a grossly distorted vision of the Church, he struggles to mount a strong rebuttal.⁷¹ If “Catholic rationality” is simply the “rationality of the purpose [*Zweck*]” (in this case the Last Judgement), then against the Grand Inquisitor this is inadequate. In the name of the *general* administration of human existence, the Inquisitor admits the Last Judgement, while accepting his fate as a martyr for peace against Christ himself.⁷² Thus the Grand Inquisitor disavows Christ’s personal mandate for an impersonal will of God resembling that of the *pouvoir constituant*.

Without resolving the problem, Schmitt appears to shift focus for a few years to problems of democracy.⁷³ What then sparked a return in 1928 to the “strange” situation of the Church, and its “eager and efficient people” who “are now building huts and shelters ... and

transforming the expectant into a workforce”⁷⁴ In the same year Erik Peterson, a close friend throughout the 1920s, was working on a short essay titled “The Church”.⁷⁵ Without explicitly invoking the *katechon*, Peterson writes that “the Jews are *delaying* the return of Christ by their unbelief” and he questions the relationship between the “concrete eschatology” promised by Christ and the “doctrine of Last Things”, the point of tension between Schmitt and Dostoevsky.⁷⁶ If Christ will return and establish the Kingdom of God, what relation should the genuine Christian maintain to worldly political issues in the present? In an essay of 1936, which Schmitt likely read, the theologian Oscar Cullmann links precisely this question to the long theological debate on the *katechon*.⁷⁷

Cullman inverts Peterson’s interpretation, arguing that the doctrine of the *katechon* is itself a transferral of Judaic sources. He argues it is a classic Talmudic question: “Who is delaying? Who is delaying the Messiah?”. One common answer was that “the Kingdom of God can come only when all Israel shall have repented.”⁷⁸ In pre-Christian Judaism the delay was thus linked to missionary efforts to exhort all Israel to repent. Anticipating Schmitt’s phrasing in “Three Possibilities for a Christian Conception of History”, Cullman describes the Christian *katechon* as “a great task”, the cure for “eschatological paralysis” [*Lähmung*], one that “gives to the period between Christ’s resurrection and the Parousia its meaning for redemptive history.”⁷⁹ However, for Cullmann this task was the “mission mandate” [*Missionsauftrag*], Christ’s command to the Apostles “Go ye into all the world and teach all peoples”. Thus the *katechon* is identified with the apostles who “are only the executive instruments of the eschatological plan of salvation”.⁸⁰

II. The Task and Dignity of the *Katechon*

Schmitt rejects Cullmann’s Apostolic *katechon*, aligning himself with the tradition of the “Rome-interpretation”, as Grossheutschi describes it.⁸¹ However, like Cullmann, I argue, Schmitt interprets the doctrine of the *katechon* as the specification of a task, a commission that renders its bearer an “executive instrument” of Christ, and thus a kind of eschatological “dictator”. Lacking explicit textual support, I admit my thesis remains somewhat speculative— Schmitt’s notebooks and diaries between 1934–1946 remain untranscribed and unpublished.⁸² Nonetheless, the parallels between *Dictatorship* and Schmitt’s “mature”

theory of the *katechon*, elaborated primarily in *Nomos of the Earth* (1950), are difficult to brush aside.

What connects these roles is the specific structure of authority on which they are based. While it is not static, but exhibits shifts in the articulation of its “agentive” (decisionistic) and “institutional” aspects, continuity is given by Schmitt’s insistence that a non-mechanistic “human” form of limited authority can only be derived from a concrete task and a concrete social-order.

The bibliographical details of Schmitt’s doctrine of the *katechon* are discussed extensively already by Grossheutschi, Nicoletti and de Wilde, so I will only touch on this briefly.⁸³ As Grossheutschi and de Wilde show, Schmitt’s early comments on the *katechon* in the *Nachlass* fragments and various publications in the early 1940s are mostly concerned with identifying “who” (the USA, Rudolf II, Tomáš Masaryk, etc) is the *katechon* in each period of history.⁸⁴ On this point Schmitt echoes precisely the Talmudic line of thought identified by Cullmann: “Who is delaying?”⁸⁵

However, in 1947 we find a more substantial engagement. In the *Glossarium* Schmitt writes that “[e]very great medieval Christian emperor fully believed himself to be the *katechon*, and so indeed he was.”⁸⁶ In another text, originally intended as a review of Karl Löwith’s *Meaning and History*, Schmitt reiterates (without mentioning) Cullmann’s interpretation, writing that the doctrine of the *katechon* legitimates active and conscious participation in history. The “eschatological faith” entailed by the *katechon* provides the Christian with a historical orientation that is neither progressive nor regressive but a suspended industrious expectation of salvation.⁸⁷ As De Wilde shows, the *katechon* becomes a confession of faith for Schmitt. He writes in his *Tagebuch*, “I believe in the *katechon*.” The type of knowledge is not scientific-theoretical knowledge but one based on “concrete experience”.⁸⁸

However, as Lievens notes, this confessional register is key to the philosophy of history entailed by the *katechon*. The *katechon* is a defense against “world unity, total mechanization and the end of history”. Drawing out parallels with Walter Benjamin, Lievens elaborates Schmitt’s conception of historical singularity.⁸⁹ The *katechon* offers a third alternative to the dichotomy of progress or regress that drove Juan Donoso Cortés to assert a pessimistic philosophy of history in which Europe is the “greatest catastrophe of history”.⁹⁰

Instead, Schmitt inverts the “as-well-as” of the Catholic *complexio oppositorum*, and describes the *katechon* as a “neither-nor” with respect to the usual philosophies of history.

Beyond these thematic continuities in Schmitt’s work, the substance of my thesis rests on the return of a specific structure of authority and in support, I claim that the *katechon* recapitulates the four aspects of the “commissary dictator” identified above. If *Nomos* represents Schmitt’s most thorough elaboration of the doctrine of the *katechon*, then the paradigmatic figure of *katechontic* authority is not the Roman empire of Tertullian, but the Christian empire of the Medieval *Respublica Christiana*.⁹¹ And as the head of that Empire, the most concrete embodiment of the *katechon* is the office of the Holy Roman Emperor.⁹²

Firstly, like the commissary dictator, the authority of the *katechon* is linked to a specific concrete task. As de Wilde also points out, Schmitt insists that the “work of the *katechon*” is given as “concrete tasks and missions”. These tasks, assigned by the pope, could include missions and crusades as “the peacemaker, the settler of disputes, and the fighter of tyrants”.⁹³ Echoing the external or exceptional nature of the concrete problem that breaks into the system of legality, Schmitt insists that the commission “stemmed from a completely different sphere”. It appears as an external exigency uncontained by the ordinary activities of the monarch who takes on the role as emperor. Like the *ad hoc* solutions to the concrete problem, the *katechon* relies on a “continuity” that is “found not in norms and *general ideas*, but in the concrete orientation to Rome.”⁹⁴ On the same grounds, the *katechon* intervenes only in the concrete issues of the day — bread, food, conflict — and eschews the grand plans proposed by progressivist philosophies of history. The *katechon* is anti-utopian. The theoretical disavowal of the “general” is most evident in Schmitt’s, rather forced, attempt to concretize the demand for peace.

Peace, in particular, was not a free-floating, normative, *general* concept, but rather, one oriented *concretely* to the peace of the empire, the territorial ruler, of the church, of the city, of the castle, of the marketplace, of the local judicial assembly.⁹⁵

Abstract demands are recoded as “spatial concepts” in order to give the task of the *katechon* a connection with objective reality and the “power of the facts”.⁹⁶ Even at its most general, the task of the *katechon* is to restrain *the* Antichrist, a weakly particularized alternative formulation to what would otherwise be the *general* guidance of human existence of *Roman Catholicism*.

Secondly, in this passage we see Schmitt's attempt to apply limits to authority through spatio-temporal means rather than the general norms characteristic of a "regular office". The Christian empire was based on a "concrete sense of history" and a "monarchy grounded in a country and its people". Spatial limits are applied by reference to the territory and *nomos* of the Christian empire, but as Horst Bredekamp's temporal reading suggests, the eschaton itself constitutes a *Frist*, an unknowable but specifically finite term defining an absolute temporal limit for the office of the *katechon*.⁹⁷ Nonetheless, Schmitt himself explicitly invokes more short-term limits through the task itself. The emperor would voluntarily "[lay] down his crown after completing a crusade". The imperial crown was also a "precarium" rather than a set of rights subject to ownership. Like the office of the commissary dictator, "there are no rightfully acquired rights to the position of the *katechon*."⁹⁸ In fact, according to Schmitt, the transformation of the emperorship into a "right of ownership" at the end of the thirteenth century, by which it was treated like a regular office and bundled with other rights and claims of royal dynasties, led directly to its demise.

He also hints toward the theoretical-philosophical stakes in the background and common to *Dictatorship*: his emphasis on the exception in opposition to systematic conceptions of law and the state. The *katechon* stands against "great philosophical systems" and "neutral generalizations": an allusion to the heritage of systematic philosophy embodied Hans Kelsen's systematic and legalistic conceptions of political forms. Just as the distinction between the personal ordinance and general law functioned as the condition of possibility of the distinction between the commissary and sovereign dictators, Schmitt notes that the emperor, who "received their mandates for missions and crusades... from the pope", "did not *destroy* but rather *confirmed* the orientations and orders grounding the unity of the *respublica Christiana*."⁹⁹

Schmitt does not link these two specificities to the human creativity of the *katechon* that in *Dictatorship* would guarantee the humanity of the intermediary authority of the bureaucracy, marking a shift away from his earlier decisionism. However, on the third specificity, the non-sovereign status of the commissary dictator, Schmitt offers a particularly nuanced reading of the hierarchical position of the Christian Emperor. Although the possible candidates for the emperor were local sovereign monarchs, Schmitt insists that in their jurisdiction as emperor they exercise only the authority of an intermediary, a representative [*Stellvertreter*] of the pope. The coronation of an emperor is the "elevation of a crown, not a vertical intensification — not a kingdom over kings, not a crown over crowns, not a

prolongation of a monarch's power". It's difficult to grasp what he has in mind, but the structure mirrors that of the paradoxical hierarchy supported by Christian conceptions of dignity described by Donoso Cortés.

In order to maintain the balance of two "diverse orders", however, Schmitt must distinguish the Christian form of empire from the Caesarist and Napoleonic alternatives.¹⁰⁰ This theme is anticipated in the *Tagebücher* fragments, where Schmitt claims the legitimacy given to the Christian empire as *katechon* is finite, limited and does not strive for "world unity", but to overthrow such a universalist imperial crown.¹⁰¹ In *Nomos*, Schmitt writes that in both its ancient and modern forms, "Caesarism is a typically *non-Christian* form of power". One that results precisely from "disregarding the *katechon*".¹⁰² Given the Roman context of the dictator, this would appear to contradict my reading of the *katechon* as dictator. But, on the contrary, Schmitt's focus on Caesarism confirms the proximity between the dictator and the *katechon*, insofar as it is the "disregard" for the limits of one's role as either dictator or *katechon*, that in either case leads to Caesarism. Nonetheless, in both *Dictatorship* and *Nomos*, Schmitt is reluctant to tackle the ease by which this transition to Caesarism can occur.

On the fourth specificity, the antithesis of technical problems and publicity, like the commissar, Schmitt identifies the emperor as the "visible agent" of the *respublica Christiana*.¹⁰³ And despite the goal-based orientation of the task, there is no suggestion that the emperor relies on an *arcana imperii*, or technical knowledge.¹⁰⁴

Finally, turning to the importance, for the emperor, of the "dignity" granted by an existing hierarchical social-order, echoing his works of the 1920s, Schmitt depicts the amalgam of the task and the "*Würde des Königtums*" as constitutive of the specific form of authority of the *katechon*. If the institutional social-order was merely presupposed in *Dictatorship* and roughly sketched in *Roman Catholicism*, then *Nomos* marks a shift in Schmitt's attention. As the title suggests the central concern is now the "concrete-order", the *nomos*, on which the unity of the legal system is constituted. Despite the importance of the *katechon* to the texts of this period, in *Nomos of the Earth* it represents only a particular historical instance of a more general theory of the *nomos*: "*Recht* as a unity of order and orientation."¹⁰⁵ Dissecting *nomos* into the tripartite formula: *nomos, nehmen / teilen / weiden* (taking or appropriation / distribution / grazing or production), Schmitt inverts Ferdinand Tönnies gradualist and peaceful characterization of the "community of homeland or *native soil*": *bewohnt / bebaut / besessen* (inhabited, cultivated, possessed) and again takes a

“political realist” position, emphasizing now concrete task of violent appropriation.¹⁰⁶

Does the shift of emphasis from decisionism to concrete-order mark a theoretical break in the structure of authority between *Dictatorship* and *Nomos*? Ostensibly, Schmitt’s “three types of juristic thought” suggests so.¹⁰⁷ Decisionism, normativism and concrete-order thinking are distinguished by the “ultimate foundation” by which each *conceives of Recht*. However, the ambiguity of “conscious or unconscious” foundations in the opening sentence of *Three Types* undermines any epistemological certainty.¹⁰⁸ As my analysis shows, even in *Dictatorship* the existing social hierarchy remains an un-thematized presupposition for Schmitt. Thus, the *unconscious* basis for Schmitt’s sense of authority remains intact.

Despite its Greek etymology, Schmitt depicts *nomos* as a trans-cultural and trans-historical category that spans Greek, Roman and Christian contexts. It is the “foundation” of all subsequent legal regulation. Citing the institutionalist theorist Maurice Hauriou, Schmitt distinguishes “state law” from the “law that proceeds the state” (that is, the *nomos*).¹⁰⁹ As Schmitt’s references John Neville Figgis suggest, the Christian instantiation of the *nomos* is based on the model of the doctrine of divine right.¹¹⁰ Supported by the hierarchy of Being, the doctrine of divine right was utilized to support both the pontifical order of the Papacy, (a key reference in Schmitt’s account of the dictator) and hierarchy of secular rule in the monarchy. But again the operative concept sustaining this hierarchy was dignity [*Würde*]: the true source of “legitimacy” on which the civil service was based and the precondition of public responsibility [*Verantwortlichkeit*] that preserves the human flexibility of the administrative.

In summary, the dictator and the *katechon* share these four marks of specificity by which their task-orientation distinguishes them from both the regular office and the usual conceptions of an unlimited and absolute sovereign authority. And, in addition both presuppose a “concrete” social-order through which a paradoxically defined hierarchical concept of dignity can be defined.

Conclusion

By focussing on the task, my account demonstrates a clear structural continuity, largely overlooked, linking Schmitt’s model of the commissary dictator to his interpretation of the *katechon*. Tracing the development and transposition of this structure of authority through

Dictatorship, Political Theology, Roman Catholicism and Nomos of the Earth, reveals Schmitt's persistent concern for the problem of intermediary authority, expanding on and augmenting the common, narrow reading of Schmitt as primarily a theorist of sovereignty. His concern with the means and conditions of possibility of the transmission of authority is oriented throughout against proceduralist models of the state, which reduce the activity of civil servants to rule-following. However, for Schmitt, this is not simply a secular matter. With applications to both civil and ecclesiastical structures, Schmitt's model of commissary authority ultimately draws on a Christian anthropology and is situated in a framework of Christian eschatology. While the outlines of this model are sketched in his writings of the 1920s, it is only given body through the figure of the *katechon* in the 1950s. Admitting a shift in emphasis between the agentive decisionist earlier writings and the concrete-order of the *nomos* in the later, the central structure of commissary authority remains largely in place in both periods

Notes

¹ I thank the two anonymous reviewers at *Political Theology* for their productive comments and suggestions.

² Schmitt, *Nomos*, 62.

³ Palaver, "Hobbes"; Agamben, *The Time That Remains*; Rasch, "From Sovereign Ban," 106–7; Virno, *Multitude*; Hell, "Katechon"; Prozorov, "The *katechon*"; de Wilde, "Politics between Times"; Schmidt, "Return of the Katechon"; Dillon, "Specters of Biopolitics"; Williams, "Decontainment," 161; Esposito, "Passage: Katechon"; Lievens, "Carl Schmitt's Concept of History"; Heron, "Zoē Aiōnios"; Nichols, "Figures of History"; Bradley, "Unleashed."

⁴ 2 Thess 2:4; Cacciari, *The Withholding Power*, 2–4; Michael D. Coogan, Mark Z. Brettler, Carol A Newsom, *Oxford Bible (4th Ed)*.

⁵ Cacciari, *The Withholding Power*; de Wilde, "Politics between Times"; Grossheutschi, *Carl Schmitt*.

⁶ de Wilde, "Politics between Times," 124.

⁷ Bredekamp, "From Walter Benjamin," 252–3.

⁸ Hoelzl, "Before the Anti-Christ," 105–7. Hoelzl draws a curious, if somewhat forced, parallel between the Antichrist and Schmitt's remarks in *Political Romanticism* (1919) that "humanity and history" have "usurped God's place".

⁹ Williams, "Decontainment," 161; McCormick, "From Constitutional Technique," 201; Meierhenrich, "Fearing the Disorder of Things," 186.

¹⁰ Nicoletti, "Religion and Empire," 368–9.

¹¹ Schmitt, *Tagebücher 1925 Bis 1929*, 438, 34r. In the *Paralleltagebuch*, not all entries are explicitly dated, but a nearby previous entry records 20.6.28.

¹² The former is documented in Vinx, Schmitt, and Kelsen, *Guardian*. The latter is remains a major thread in much of Schmitt's writings of the 1920s, see for instance Schmitt's insistence that the effectivity of the 19th-century bureaucracy is derived not from its "legality" as Weber claims, but the residual *Würde* (dignity or honor) inherited from the earlier hierarchical social structure of the nobility. Schmitt, *Legality*, 12–3.

¹³ Schmitt, *Der Schatten Gottes*, 385. The wry humour of the remark is obviously why the editors took this as the name for the volume.

-
- ¹⁴ Schmitt, *Staat, Großraum, Nomos*, 17.
- ¹⁵ Kelly, “Schmitt’s Theory of Dictatorship,” 227. Against Cristi and McCormick, I agree with Duncan Kelly’s claim that an important aim of the work is to present the dictator as “an ordinary technique of political management”. See Kelly, 218; Cristi, “Authoritarian Liberalism,” 12; McCormick, “The Dilemmas of Dictatorship,” 175–181.
- ¹⁶ See Schmitt’s 1937 essay: “The State as Mechanism in Hobbes and Descartes” Schmitt, *The Leviathan in the State*, 91–103; Schmitt, *Dictatorship*, 99.
- ¹⁷ Livy, *The History of Rome, Books 1-5*, bk. 2.2–9.
- ¹⁸ The “dilemma” of McCormick’s essay (and Arato’s) overlooks the importance of this taxonomy and arises only because he expects the “sovereign dictator” of *Dictatorship* should be equated with the “sovereign” of *Political Theology*. McCormick, “The Dilemmas of Dictatorship,” 163; Arato, “Good-Bye to Dictatorships?,” 926–7.
- ¹⁹ McCormick incorrectly asserts that the dictator has as “sole aim the restoration of the previously standing legal order”. McCormick, “The Dilemmas of Dictatorship,” 165; de Wilde, “Silencing the Laws,” 2; McCormick, “From Constitutional Technique,” 197–8; Tuori, “Schmitt and the Sovereignty,” 96; Kalyvas, *Democracy and the Politics of the Extraordinary*, 89–90.
- ²⁰ Schmitt, *Dictatorship*, 35. Kalyvas ignores precisely the “creativity” of the dictator in his rather forced reading in which dictatorship is “coercive and repressive” while sovereignty is “creative and productive”. See Kalyvas, *Democracy and the Politics of the Extraordinary*, 91.
- ²¹ Galli, *Janus’s Gaze*, 15. Galli for instance, also recognizes that the “formation of the modern State depends crucially” on the commissarial dictatorship as well as the sovereign dictatorship.
- ²² Schmitt, *Dictatorship*, 31. The English translation is in error. Stoelz translates “*daß alle Staaten am Anfang ihrer Entwicklung nicht ordentliche Beamte, sondern nur Kommissare verwenden*” with the clause “that all states in the origin of their development are employing not just regular officials but also commissars.” However, the Schmitt clearly suggests that in the beginning there are “only commissars” and no regular officials.
- ²³ Schmitt, 39.
- ²⁴ Schmitt, *Staat, Großraum, Nomos*, 19.
- ²⁵ Schmitt, *Dictatorship*, 32.
- ²⁶ de Maistre, *Works Maistre*, 110.
- ²⁷ Schmitt, *Dictatorship*, 32. Schmitt cites Locke, *Of Civil Government*, bk. II, chap. XVIII, “Of Tyranny”.
- ²⁸ Schmitt, 23, 27.
- ²⁹ In critiques of Schmitt, a common strategy rejects this tripartite schema, arguing that the ordinance itself is “an-archic” and hence *anomic*. See for instance, the chapter ‘Force-of-Law’ in Agamben, *Omnibus*, 193–200. or Bradley, “Unleashed,” 152–3.
- ³⁰ Cristi, *Schmitt Authoritarian*, 12; McCormick, “The Dilemmas of Dictatorship,” 165.
- ³¹ Schmitt, *Dictatorship*, 121; Schmitt, *Crisis*, 55.
- ³² Schmitt, *Dictatorship*, xxxix.
- ³³ Schmitt, *Volksentscheid*, 48. My Italics.
- ³⁴ Schmitt, *Dictatorship*, 26.
- ³⁵ Schmitt, 11–15, 29.
- ³⁶ Schmitt, 1–2.
- ³⁷ Schmitt, 35.
- ³⁸ Schmitt, 4.
- ³⁹ Schmitt, *Staat, Großraum, Nomos*, 19.
- ⁴⁰ Schmitt, *Dictatorship*, 4.
- ⁴¹ Schmitt, 117. My italics.
- ⁴² Schmitt, 115–7.
- ⁴³ Schmitt, 14.
- ⁴⁴ Schmitt, *Roman Catholicism*, 14. This is overlooked in Guilhot’s Machiavellian reading. Guilhot, “Automatic Leviathan: Cybernetics,” 130.
- ⁴⁵ Schmitt, *Dictatorship*, 11–15, 28–29.
- ⁴⁶ Schmitt, 98–9.

-
- ⁴⁷ Schmitt, *Three Types*.
- ⁴⁸ The influence of the “institutionalist” legal theories of Maurice Hariou and Santi Romano on Schmitt’s conception of “concrete-order thinking” has only recently been addressed in the secondary literature. While this is an important topic, Hariou’s extremely broad category of the “institutionalism” does provide great analytic purchase on Schmitt’s work. See Bates, “Political Theology”; Croce and Salvatore, *The Legal Theory of Carl Schmitt*; Meierhenrich, “Fearing the Disorder of Things”; Croce and Salvatore, “Little Room for Exceptions.”
- ⁴⁹ Schmitt, *Dictatorship*, 1–2.
- ⁵⁰ Schmitt, 20, 23, 39, 51, 146.
- ⁵¹ This equivocal sense of “dignity”, remains at work in the present Declaration of Universal Human Rights, as Carlo Invernizzi Accetti and others have argued. See Accetti, *What Is Christian Democracy?*, 2.
- ⁵² On the difference between Schmitt’s Catholic personalism and Hobbes’s account of personation as a “legal fiction”, see Kahn, “Hamlet or Hecuba: Carl Schmitt’s Decision,” 78–9.
- ⁵³ There are clear resonances with Kant’s account of the “imagination [*Einbildungskraft*]” as an “indispensable function of the soul”, which plays the central role in unifying and subsuming sensation (the “manifold of intuition”) under the categories, “the pure concepts of the understanding”. See Kant, *CPR*, A78–80/B103–8; Schmitt, *Political Theology*, 28–30.
- ⁵⁴ Schmitt, *Political Theology*, 28–30.
- ⁵⁵ Schmitt, *Roman Catholicism*, 33.
- ⁵⁶ The thematic connection with *Dictatorship* is also evident in Schmitt’s return to Locke and the distinction between *commissio* and law. See Schmitt, *Political Theology*, 23.
- ⁵⁷ Schmitt, 31.
- ⁵⁸ See also Kelly, “Carl Schmitt’s Representation.”
- ⁵⁹ Schmitt, *Roman Catholicism*, 14.
- ⁶⁰ In 1932 Schmitt polemically remarks that the *Rechtsstaat* of the 19th century, “was, in reality, only a legislative state [*Gesetzgebungsstaat*].” Schmitt, *Legality*, 3; Schmitt, *Legalität und Legitimität*, 7.
- ⁶¹ Schmitt, *Roman Catholicism*, 20.
- ⁶² Schmitt, 14; Schmitt, *Dictatorship*, 143–5.
- ⁶³ Schmitt, *Constitutional*, 243; Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation*, 144; Kelly, “CS’s Representation,” 113.
- ⁶⁴ Conti, *Parliament the Mirror*, chap. 1.
- ⁶⁵ Schmitt, *Roman Catholicism*, 51.
- ⁶⁶ Schmitt, *Constitutional Theory*, 243.
- ⁶⁷ Schmitt, 9, 14.
- ⁶⁸ Donoso Cortés, *Essays*, 244.
- ⁶⁹ Schmitt, *Roman Catholicism*, 12.
- ⁷⁰ In the *Tagebuch* dated February 1923, Schmitt concocts a hypothetical scene which clearly alludes to Dostoevsky: Schmitt writes that if the Church was to represent Christ like a theatre actor represents a hero then the return of the actual hero, whether it was Wallenstein or Christ, would appear as an inconvenient disturbance of the performance of an historical drama. Dostoevsky, *Brothers Karamazov*, 214–28; Schmitt, *Der Schatten Gottes*, 446 (13. 2. 23).
- ⁷¹ References to Dostoevsky and the Grand Inquisitor litter Schmitt’s *Tagebücher* from 1912 and onwards. Against Palaver’s claim that Schmitt was “an admirer of the Grand Inquisitor throughout his life”, I argue that Schmitt saw in the figure a danger to be avoided. Palaver, “Hobbes,” 69.
- ⁷² Schmitt, *Roman Catholicism*, 32.
- ⁷³ Schmitt, *Crisis*, 18–21.
- ⁷⁴ Schmitt, *Tagebücher 1925 Bis 1929*, 438, 34r.
- ⁷⁵ See Mehring, *CS: Biography*; Nichtweiß, *Erik Peterson*.
- ⁷⁶ Peterson, *Tractates*, 32. My italics.
- ⁷⁷ Although he does not explicitly include Cullmann, Marc de Wilde argues that Schmitt’s interpretation was drawn from the contemporary debate among German theologians such as Martin Dibelius, Adolf Zahn and Willem Stapel. de Wilde, “Politics between Times,” 116–9; Cullmann, “Der eschatologische Charakter”; Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, 157–63.
- ⁷⁸ Cullmann, “Der eschatologische Charakter,” 156.

- ⁷⁹ Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, 157; Cullmann, “Der eschatologische Charakter,” 335–6; Schmitt, “Three Possibilities”; Schmitt, “Drei stufen,” 929.
- ⁸⁰ Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, 162. Cullman reiterates the core of the 1936 text in English in *Christ and Time*.
- ⁸¹ Grossheutschi, *Carl Schmitt*, 53–6.
- ⁸² Written in a stenographic shorthand, his notes require “deciphering” into a legible German. The completion of Phillip Manow and Florian Meinel’s *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* project, which aims to transcribe the diaries for the years 1943–44, may offer further evidence on Schmitt’s *katechon* interpretation.
- ⁸³ Nicoletti, “Religion and Empire”; Grossheutschi, *Carl Schmitt*, pt. II; de Wilde, “Politics between Times.”
- ⁸⁴ On this I agree with de Wilde, that Grossheutschi’s thesis of a “negative” evaluation in the early 1940s is incorrect. See Grossheutschi, *Carl Schmitt*, 63; de Wilde, “Politics between Times,” 125–6; Schmitt, *Land and Sea*, 68; Schmitt, *Staat, Großraum, Nomos*, 435; Schmitt, *Glossarium*, 1991, 85, 364, 94, 47.
- ⁸⁵ Schmitt, *Glossarium*, 2015, 47 (19.12.47).
- ⁸⁶ Schmitt, 47 (19.12.47).
- ⁸⁷ Schmitt, “Three Possibilities,” 169–170.
- ⁸⁸ Schmitt, *Glossarium*, 2015, 47 (19.12.47); de Wilde, “Politics between Times,” 123.
- ⁸⁹ Lievens, “Carl Schmitt’s Concept of History,” 415–8.
- ⁹⁰ Donoso Cortés, Letter of 24 August, 1849, to Monnsignor Gaume, B.A.C., II, 228, cited in Neill, “Juan Donoso Cortés: History and ‘Prophecy,’” 401; Donoso Cortés, “Catholic,” 170; Schmitt, *Political Theology*, 59.
- ⁹¹ Schmitt, *Nomos*, chap. 3.
- ⁹² Schmitt, 63.
- ⁹³ Schmitt, 66.
- ⁹⁴ Schmitt, 59, 62. My Italics.
- ⁹⁵ Schmitt, 59. My italics.
- ⁹⁶ Schmitt, 64.
- ⁹⁷ Bredekamp, “From Walter Benjamin,” 252–3.
- ⁹⁸ Schmitt, *Nomos*, 64–5.
- ⁹⁹ Schmitt, 62. My Italics.
- ¹⁰⁰ On the difficulty maintaining this distinction, see Cacciari, *The Withholding Power*, 19–20, 29–30.
- ¹⁰¹ Schmitt, *Glossarium*, 2015, 124 (16.6.48).
- ¹⁰² Schmitt, *Nomos*, 63. My italics.
- ¹⁰³ Schmitt, 59.
- ¹⁰⁴ Schmitt’s insistence that publicity is the cure for *arcana* is also apparent in his review of Friedrich Meinecke. Schmitt, “Remarks on Friedrich Meinecke,” 62.
- ¹⁰⁵ Schmitt, *Nomos*, 42.
- ¹⁰⁶ On *nomos* see Zartaloudis. Zartaloudis, *The Birth of Nomos*; Tönnies, *Tönnies: Community and Civil Society*, 223–4.
- ¹⁰⁷ Schmitt, *Three Types*.
- ¹⁰⁸ Schmitt, 43.
- ¹⁰⁹ Loughlin, *Foundations*; Schmitt, *Nomos*, 83.fn7.
- ¹¹⁰ Schmitt describes Figgis as “a true historian”, and regularly cites *Divine Right of Kings* (1914), *From Gerson to Grotius* (1907) and *Churches in the Modern State* (1913). Schmitt, *Crisis*, 101n29; Schmitt, *Nomos*, 61fn8, 115.

Bibliography

- Accetti, Carlo Invernizzi. *What Is Christian Democracy?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019.
- Agamben, Giorgio. *The Omnibus Homo Sacer*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2017.
- . *The Time That Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans*. Translated by Patricia Dailey. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005.

-
- Arato, Andrew. "Good-Bye to Dictatorships?" *Social Research* 67, no. 4 (2000): 925–55.
- Bates, David. "Political Theology and the Nazi State: Carl Schmitt's Concept of the Institution." *Modern Intellectual History* 3, no. 3 (November 2006): 415–42.
- Bradley, Arthur. "Unleashed: Schmitt and the Katechon." In *Unbearable Life*, 141–62. New York: Columbia University Press, 2019.
- Bredenkamp, Horst. "From Walter Benjamin to Carl Schmitt, via Thomas Hobbes." Translated by Melissa Thorson Hause and Jackson Bond. *Critical Inquiry* 25, no. 2 (1999): 247–66.
- Cacciari, Massimo. *The Withholding Power: An Essay on Political Theology*. Translated by Edi Pucci. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018.
- Conti, Gregory. *Parliament the Mirror of the Nation: Representation, Deliberation, and Democracy in Victorian Britain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019.
- Cristi, Renato. "Authoritarian Liberalism." Cambridge, University of Wales Press, 1998.
- . *Carl Schmitt and Authoritarian Liberalism: Strong State, Free Economy*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1998.
- Croce, Mariano, and Andrea Salvatore. "Little Room for Exceptions: On Misunderstanding Carl Schmitt." *History of European Ideas* 0, no. 0 (2021): 1–15.
- . *The Legal Theory of Carl Schmitt*. Routledge, 2013.
- Cullmann, Oscar. *Christ and Time: The Primitive Christian Conception of Time and History*. Translated by Floyd V. Filson. London: SCM Press, 1951.
- . "Der eschatologische Charakter des Missionsauftrags und des apostolischen Selbstbewußtseins bei Paulus (1936)." In *Vorträge und Aufsätze 1925–1962*, edited by Karlfried Fröhlich, 1962:305–36. Tübingen: J.C.B Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1966.
- Dillon, M. "Specters of Biopolitics: Finitude, Eschaton, and Katechon." *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 110, no. 3 (July 1, 2011): 780–92.
- Donoso Cortés, Juan. *Essays on Catholicism, Liberalism, and Socialism: Considered in Their Fundamental Principles*. Translated by Rev William M'Donald. Dublin: MH Gill & Son, 1879.
- . "The Church, The State, and Revolution." In *Catholic Political Thought, 1789-1848*, edited by Béla Menczer, 160–76. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1962.
- Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *The Brothers Karamazov*. Edited by Susan McReynolds Oddo. Translated by Constance Garnett. Norton Critical Edition. New York: Norton & Company, 2011.
- Esposito, Roberto. "Passage: Katechon." In *Two: The Machine of Political Theology and the Place of Thought*, translated by Zakiya Hanafi, 76–82. New York: Fordham University Press, 2015.
- Galli, Carlo. *Janus's Gaze: Essays on Carl Schmitt*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2015.
- Grossheutschi, Felix. *Carl Schmitt und die Lehre vom Katechon*. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1996.
- Guilhot, Nicolas. "Automatic Leviathan: Cybernetics and Politics in Carl Schmitt's Postwar Writings." *History of the Human Sciences* 33, no. 1 (2020): 128–46.
- Hell, Julia. "Katechon: Carl Schmitt's Imperial Theology and the Ruins of the Future." *The Germanic Review: Literature, Culture, Theory* 84, no. 4 (2009): 283–326.
- Heron, Nicholas. "Zoē Aiōnios: Giorgio Agamben and the Critique of Katechontic Time." In *Agamben and Radical Politics*, edited by Daniel McLoughlin, 141–64. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016.
- Hoelzl, Michael. "Before the Anti-Christ Is Revealed: On the Katechontic Structure of Messianic Time." *The Politics to Come: Power, Modernity, and the Messianic*, 2010, 98–110.
- Kahn, Victoria. "Hamlet or Hecuba: Carl Schmitt's Decision." *Representations* 83, no. 1 (2003): 67–96.
- Kalyvas, Andreas. *Democracy and the Politics of the Extraordinary: Max Weber, Carl Schmitt, Hannah Arendt*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Pure Reason*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Kelly, Duncan. "Carl Schmitt's Political Theory of Dictatorship." In *The Oxford Handbook of Carl Schmitt*, edited by Jens Meierhenrich and Oliver Simons, 217–44. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.
- . "Carl Schmitt's Political Theory of Representation." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 65, no. 1 (2004): 113–34.
- Lievens, Matthias. "Carl Schmitt's Concept of History." In *The Oxford Handbook of Carl Schmitt*,

-
- edited by Jens Meierhenrich and Oliver Simons, 401–24. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Livy. *The History of Rome, Books 1-5*. Edited by Valerie M. Warrior. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1926.
- Loughlin, Martin. *Foundations of Public Law*. Oxford: Oxford University press, 2010.
- Maistre, Joseph de. *The Works of Joseph de Maistre*. Edited by Robert Nisbet. Translated by Jack Lively. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1965.
- McCormick, John P. “From Constitutional Technique to Caesarist Ploy: Carl Schmitt on Dictatorship, Liberalism, and Emergency Powers.” In *Dictatorship in History and Theory: Bonapartism, Caesarism, and Totalitarianism*, edited by Melvin Richter Peter Bahr, 197–220. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- . “The Dilemmas of Dictatorship: Carl Schmitt and Constitutional Emergency Powers.” *Can. JL & Jurisprudence* 10 (1997): 163–87.
- Mehring, Reinhard. *Carl Schmitt: A Biography*. Cambridge: Polity, 2014.
- Meierhenrich, Jens. “Fearing the Disorder of Things.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Carl Schmitt*, edited by Jens Meierhenrich and Oliver Simons, 171–216. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Michael D. Coogan, Mark Z. Brettler, Carol A Newsom, ed. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version With the Apocrypha*. Fully Revised Fourth Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Neill, Thomas P. “Juan Donoso Cortés: History and ‘Prophecy.’” *The Catholic Historical Review* 40, no. 4 (1955): 385–410.
- Nichols, Joshua. “Figures of History, Foundations of Law: Acéphale, Angelus Novus, and the Katechon.” *Journal of Historical Sociology* 31, no. 1 (March 2018): e98–126.
- Nichtweiß, Barbara. *Erik Peterson: neue Sicht auf Leben und Werk*. Freiberg: Herder, 1994.
- Nicoletti, Michele. “Religion and Empire Carl Schmitt’s Katechon between International Relations and the Philosophy of History.” In *International Law and Religion: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, edited by Martti Koskeniemi, Mónica García-Salmones Rovira, Paolo Amorosa, 363–82. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Palaver, Wolfgang. “Hobbes and the *Katéchon*: The Secularization of Sacrificial Christianity.” *Contagion: Journal of Violence, Mimesis, and Culture* 2, no. 1 (1995): 57–74.
- Peterson, Erik. *Theological Tractates*. translated and edited by Michael J. Hollerich. Cultural Memory in the Present. Stanford University Press, 2011.
- Pitkin, Hanna F. *The Concept of Representation*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967.
- Prozorov, Sergei. “The *katechon* in the Age of Biopolitical Nihilism.” *Continental Philosophy Review* 45, no. 4 (December 1, 2012): 483–503.
- Rasch, William. “From Sovereign Ban to Banning Sovereignty.” In *Giorgio Agamben: Sovereignty and Life*, edited by Matthew Calarco and Steven DeCaroli, 92–108. Stanford University Press, 2007.
- Schmidt, Christoph. “The Return of the Katechon: Giorgio Agamben Contra Erik Peterson.” *The Journal of Religion* 94, no. 2 (April 1, 2014): 182–203.
- Schmitt, Carl. *Constitutional Theory*. Edited and translated by Jeffrey Seitzer. London: Duke University Press, 2008 [1928].
- . *Der Schatten Gottes. Introspektionen, Tagebücher und Briefe 1921 bis 1924*. Edited by Ernst Hüsmert u. Wolfgang H. Spindler Gerd Giesler. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2014.
- . *Dictatorship: From the Origin of the Modern Concept of Sovereignty to Proletarian Class Struggle*. Translated by Michael Hoelzl and Graham Ward. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014 [1921].
- . “Drei stufen historischer sinngebung.” *Universitas* 5, no. 8 (1950): 927–31.
- . *Glossarium. Aufzeichnungen aus den Jahren 1947 bis 1958: Erweiterte, berichtigte und kommentierte Neuausgabe*. Edited by Gerd Giesler and Martin Tielke. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2015.
- . *Glossarium Aufzeichnungen Der Jahre 1947 - 1951*. Edited by Eberhard Freiherr von Medem. Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 1991.
- . *Land and Sea: A World-Historical Meditation*. Telos Press Publishing, 2015.

-
- . *Legalität und Legitimität*. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1988.
- . *Legality and Legitimacy*. Translated by Jeffrey Seitzer. London: Duke University Press, 2004 [1932].
- . *On the Three Types of Juristic Thought*. Translated by Joseph W. Bendersky. London: Praeger Publishers, 2004 [1934].
- . *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*. Translated by George Schwab. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005 [1922].
- . “Remarks on Friedrich Meinecke’s Machiavellism: The Doctrine of Raison D’état and Its Place in Modern History.” *Max Weber Studies* 17, no. 1 (2017): 54–63.
- . *Roman Catholicism and Political Form*. Edited by George Schwab and G. L. Ulmen. Translated by G. L. Ulmen. London: Greenwood Press, 1996 [1923].
- . *Staat, Großraum, Nomos: Arbeiten aus den Jahren 1916-1969*. Edited by Günter Maschke. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1995.
- . *Tagebücher 1925 Bis 1929*. Edited by Martin Tielke and Gerd Giesler. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2018.
- . *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*. Translated by Ellen Kennedy. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988 [1923].
- . *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes: Meaning and Failure of a Political Symbol*. University of Chicago Press, 2008.
- . *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum*. Translated by G. L. Ulmen. New York: Telos Press Publishing, 2006 [1950].
- . “Three Possibilities for a Christian Conception of History.” *Telos*, no. 147 (2009): 167–70.
- . *Volksentscheid und Volksbegehren: ein Beitrag zur Auslegung der Weimarer Verfassung und zur Lehre von der unmittelbaren Demokratie*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Company, 1927.
- Tönnies, Ferdinand. *Tönnies: Community and Civil Society*. Edited by Jose Harris. Translated by Jose Harris and Margaret Hollis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001 [1887].
- Tuori, Kaius. “Schmitt and the Sovereignty of Roman Dictators: From the Actualisation of the Past to the Recycling of Symbols.” *History of European Ideas* 42, no. 1 (2016): 95–106.
- Vinx, Lars, Carl Schmitt, and Hans Kelsen. *The Guardian of the Constitution: Hans Kelsen and Carl Schmitt on the Limits of Constitutional Law*. Translated by Lars Vinx. Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 2015.
- Virno, Paolo. *Multitude Between Innovation and Negation*. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2008.
- Wilde, Marc de. “Politics between Times: Theologico-Political Interpretations of the Restraining Force (katechon) in Paul’s Second Letter to the Thessalonians.” In *Paul and the Philosophers*, edited by Ward Blanton and Hent de Vries, 105–26. New York: Fordham University Press, 2013.
- . “Silencing the Laws to Save the Fatherland: Rousseau’s Theory of Dictatorship between Bodin and Schmitt.” *History of European Ideas* 45, no. 8 (2019): 1107–24.
- Williams, Gareth. “Decontainment: The Collapse of the Katechon and the End of Hegemony.” In *The Anomie of the Earth Philosophy, Politics and Autonomy in Europe and the Americas*, edited by Federico Luisetti, John Pickles, and Wilson Kaiser, 159–73. Durham: Duke University Press, 2015.
- Zartaloudis, Thanos. *The Birth of Nomos*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Edinburgh, 2019.