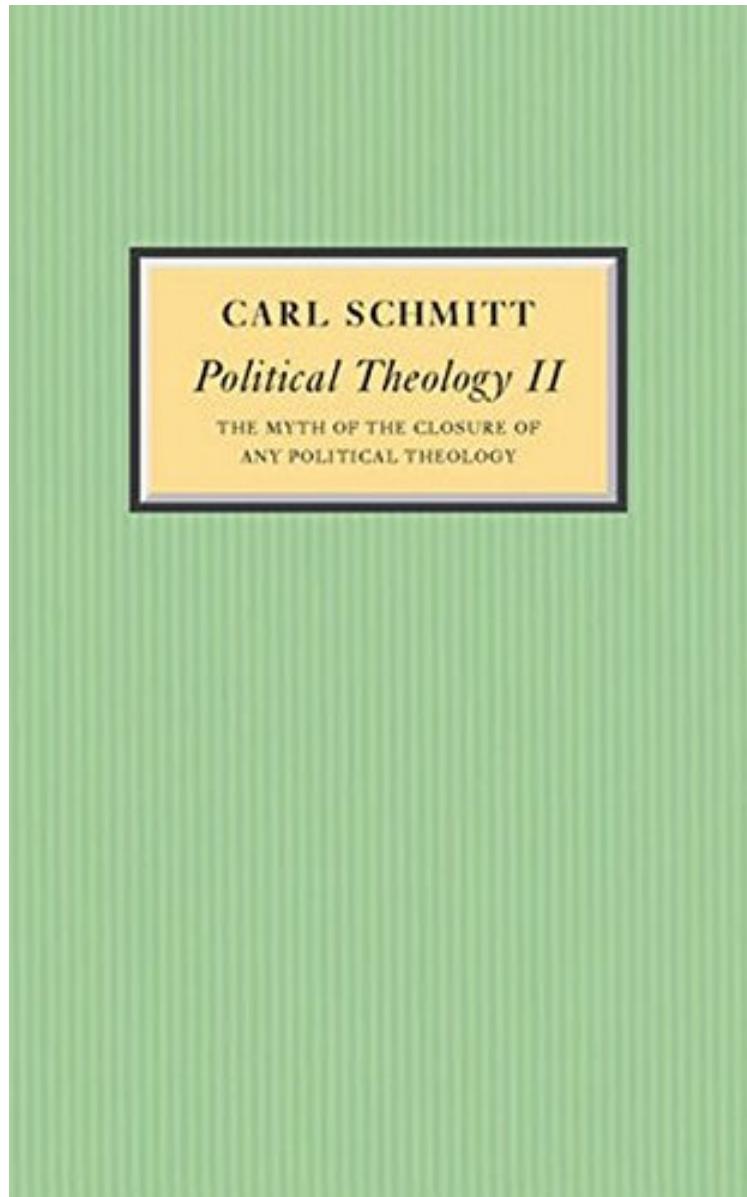


Political Theology II: The Myth of the Closure of any Political Theology

Carl Schmitt

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Carl Schmitt : Political Theology II: The Myth of the Closure of any Political Theology before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Political Theology II: The Myth of the Closure of any Political Theology:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. The Political Theology of Undivided Sovereignty By Joseph Martin

This book is seemingly (and certainly at times) a rather tedious point by point refutation of Erik Peterson's 1935 'Der Monotheismus als Politisches Problem', which, unfortunately, has only recently been translated into English. (See Theological Tractates (Cultural Memory in the Present)) Erik Peterson was a Lutheran who converted to Catholicism, I believe in 1930. In his book, Peterson wishes to show that a Christian 'Political Theology' is impossible. This book by Schmitt is his attempt to refute this. Thus the terms 'Myth' and 'Legendary' in the chapter headings refer to Peterson's thesis, not political theology itself. Now, I have not seen Peterson's essay, so I cannot judge whether Schmitt has accurately represented his argument. But for the purpose of this review, I will assume that he has done so.

The first chapter consists of not only Peterson's argument but also the stances of several others involved in the controversy regarding the possibility of a Christian political theology. We are told that Peterson builds his argument around Augustine's division between the earthly and the heavenly cities. Schmitt argues, conclusively I think, that for the representative of the Heavenly City here on earth (i.e., the Catholic Church), there is no impermeable separation. Schmitt endeavors to point out that, in fact, theologians have been political all along. In another untranslated essay, 'Was ist Theologie', Peterson (as quoted by Schmitt) writes, "Only because of dogma is theology separated from its association with that most dubious of all academic disciplines, the so-called Humanities. It is liberated from the contexts of the history of civilizations, the history of literature, art history, philosophy of life, or whatever they might be called. (quoted on p. 41)" You see, Peterson has a very pristine understanding of Theology. Schmitt goes on to quote Peterson, "Neither the Jews nor the pagans have a theology; theology exists only in Christendom and only on the precondition that the incarnated word spoke of God. The Jews may do exegesis and the pagans mythology and metaphysics; but theology, in its proper sense, only began when the incarnate one spoke of God. (p. 42)" Theology, for Peterson, is about God - and nothing else. "But given the changing friend-enemy constellations throughout history, theology can become a political tool of the revolution as well as of the counter-revolution. (p. 42)" That, of course, is Schmitt speaking. This whole essay is a meditation upon (and demonstration of) how theological political commitments have changed over time. "The spiritual-temporal, this world and the hereafter, transcendence-immanence, ideas and interests, superstructure and substructure - can only be determined according to the struggle between the subjects. (p. 44)" Now that the Political has separated itself from the State, Christianity must get its hands dirty if it wants to survive. The slogan of the sixties, 'Everything is Political', was of course anticipated by Schmitt: the political has no discreet object. And it is precisely in this vicious all-encompassing storm that the Church must somehow find its way. What our author believes to be at stake here is the church's very survival. And Schmitt most certainly thinks that the post Vatican II Church has lost its way! However, Schmitt will timidly utilize the work of the theologian Hans Barion to make this point. But that is not really the issue here; the issue is political theology. Against Peterson Schmitt shows that there are indeed theologians who specifically have a political theology, for instance, the left-leaning J. B. Metz. In the controversy over Metz's work the notion of political theology, and Schmitt himself, were often at issue. It seems in these contemporary controversies that while it was possible to believe in a political theology of revolution, a political theology of counter-revolution was ruled out. How very convenient! (Now, since Metz has been understood to be offering a political theology of Revolution, it is perhaps not merely an exaggeration or a mistake to believe that our author is presenting a political theology of Counter-Revolution in these pages.) But all these oppositions (left/right, reactionary/progressive, revolution/counterrevolution) change over time. Commenting on Ernst Feil's contribution to the controversy over political theology Schmitt writes, -What is new today is old tomorrow. Feil comes alarmingly close to progressive theologians of the nineteenth century like David Friedrich Strauss. For them, at that time, Christendom was the revolutionary new compared with pagan polytheism, and Christian monotheism was progressive compared to such pagan polytheism and pluralism. Julian the Apostate was seen as both a romantic and a reactionary, while the holy Athanasius was seen as a revolutionary. Today the situation is reversed. Today, the traditional Christian church represents the old and the reactionary, and progress as such is the new. (p. 52.) - So, you don't like being called a reactionary or a revolutionary? Wait a few decades (or centuries) - and you are practically guaranteed to be called the opposite! We will often be reminded that the problem of 'progress as such' and 'the new' are also Schmitt's targets in this book. "I think that such a progressive, plurivalent, hominising society permits only that kind of eschatology which is immanent to the system and therefore also progressive and plurivalent. (p. 54)" Everything, including eschatology, today rests on Man. (We are not stunned by this; Schmitt wishes we were.) Regarding our book's main concern, political theology, part of the problem is that "the pure emphasis on an unreflected catchphrase, 'divine monarchy' (rather than 'political unity')" has obscured the question. Indeed. Schmitt argues that Political Theology, understood as political unity, is always relevant. I want to here insist upon one point: what is vital for Schmitt has very little to do with any monarchy; the crucial point for him is always undivided sovereignty. The contribution of Ernst Topitsch to our controversy is said by our author to praise Peterson because he "has 'clearly distinguished' the Catholic religion from the Arian ideology of the Empire. (p. 55.)" The Arian position in this controversy, of course, has to do exclusively with divine and earthly monarchy. The "victory of the doctrine of the Trinity over Arian monotheism was in itself 'clearly of eminent political significance' (p. 56)." But all this has little to do with contemporary circumstances. This book we are reviewing was published in Germany in 1970. The postmodern

was already stirring:-The immensely polymorphous realm of political theology or metaphysics contains naive projections, numinous fantasies, reflective reductions of the unknown to something that is known, analogies between being and appearances, ideological superstructure over substructure. (pp. 57-58.)-And so, for our author, Political Theology is always (at least potentially) relevant, it can be anything; and this is true whether we are subjects of an Arian(-leaning) Emperor or 'living the dream' in our wretched capitalist postmodernity. After this discussion of the current state of the controversy Schmitt, in the next chapter, turns to consider the original 1935 treatise by Peterson, 'Monotheism as a Political Problem'. Schmitt begins by examining an earlier monograph by Peterson called 'Divine Monarchy'. Regarding any possible attempt to achieve a Divine Monarchy in this world we learn that "[w]hoever would attempt such a realization imitates the antichrist" of whom it is said "he alone will have rulership over the whole world. (p. 62)" It must be noted that Schmitt agrees with this point by Peterson. He too fervently believes that there can never be a single ruler of the entire planet. Sovereignty in this world, for Schmitt, must certainly be internally undivided; but it must also always face other undivided sovereigns. The interactions between these sovereigns are to be ordered by international law. Now, as to the difference between the 1931 and 1935 treatises by Peterson we are told that "the essential, and decisively significant, addition is a confrontation between Bishop Eusebius and St Augustine as a transition to the conclusion (p. 62)." Schmitt observes that the "rationale for the argument is simply that the epoch of the Roman Empire and the case of Eusebius should be exemplary for the whole problem of political theology. (p. 63)" Of course, Schmitt completely denies this. This is not "a convincing argument for all the different forms into which political theology can be translated. (p. 63)" The concrete situation of the age of Constantine, who Eusebius went so far as to understand as the Bishop(!) of those 'outside' (episkopos ton ekton), is simply too unique to be applicable to all subsequent history. At this point Schmitt mentions Varro and his fecund distinction between mythical theology (poets, theatre), natural theology (philosophy, the world), and political theology (polis, the city). (For an extended discussion of Varro and Theology see Augustine's 'City of God', especially books 6 and 7. The City of God (De Civitate Dei) (mobi) (Penguin Classics)) Following this Schmitt says, -Political theology is part of the Nomos and constitutes the public sphere through the worship of the gods, rites of sacrifice, and ceremonies. It belongs to the political identity and continuity of a people for whom the religion of the fathers, regulated public holidays and the deum colere kata ta nomima ['to worship God according to custom'] is essential in order to identify one's heritage, one's legitimate succession and oneself. (p. 65)-Political theology has to do with the customary; that is to say (insofar as there are no eternal customs), changeable fashion! But is Christianity merely then but another religious custom, like paganism? "The Church of Christ is not of this world and its history, but it is in this world. (p. 65)" And in order to survive, the Church must take the world into account. This means, for Schmitt, that Christianity must, in some ways, be like other religions. "There are many political theologies because there are, on the one hand, many different religions, and, on the other, many different kinds and methods of doing politics." (p. 66) According to our author, in a fragmented world, political theology is split into several specific types based on different religions, polities, and I dare say, cultures, laws and ethnicities too. That is to say, Christianity (whether it wants to or not) inhabits several different nomoi (or, if you prefer, cultural traditions). I suspect that once postmodern particularism eclipsed modern secular universalism, the revival of Schmitt's atomistic understanding of political theology was well nigh inevitable. But for "Peterson, political theology is over." Schmitt at this point mentions Peterson's use of the phrase 'le roi rgne, mais il ne gouverne pas' (the king reigns but does not govern) in the 1931 treatise. Obviously, this phrase could not have originated in the early christian milieu that Peterson is considering. (I believe it originates with Benjamin Constant.) Its deistic undertones are duly noted by Schmitt. "The parallel between the monarch of a parliamentary regime (who does not interfere with his government's decisions, and who reigns rather than governs because of a notional transcendence accorded him by that parliamentary government or a cabinet) and the idea of a passive being from a higher sphere is striking. (p. 68)" Now, Peterson, of course, is alleging this of paganism, not christianity. In Peterson's 1935 treatise this argument is 'significantly developed and emphasized'. What does this phrase regarding kings indicate for the theologian Peterson? That for the pagans, "the almighty god reigns, but national gods govern. (p. 69)" Obviously, all this is "acceptable for Peterson because they do not concern christian monotheism and its doctrine of the Trinity. (p. 69-70.)" Why is it acceptable? Because for Peterson, the monarch of political theology is "an arche as a singular person" and therefore it "is impossible to transfer the concept of monarchy to a Trinity within which arche and potestas 'have a meaning of their own'. (p. 70, 71.)" But is this understanding of paganism as monarchistic legitimate? No. Schmitt tells us that each pagan polity is a people, and that even the Jews (as God's People) and Christians (as ecclesia, as God's New People) were thought of in a similar manner.-At this point it becomes evident that the accurate, central, and systematic concept for the politico-theological problem that Peterson discusses cannot be oriented towards monarchy, but has to be oriented towards political unity and its presence or representation. (p. 72)-We are reminded that Hobbes "has systematically positioned the concept in that way: the Highest, the sovereign, can be a single human being, but also an assembly or a majority of people capable of action. (p. 72)" Peterson's 'One God - One King' understanding of political theology is to be replaced by the 'One God - One People/Polity' understanding of Schmitt (and Hobbes). "The plausible coincidence between monotheism and monarchism breaks down and is no longer valid. (p. 72)" I believe Schmitt is right in this understanding of Political Theology. And so one is theologically tempted to

say that while there is political strife here on earth, peace reigns in heaven. "The decisive argument for the Trinity that St Gregory of Nazianzus offers - that in the Trinity stasis is no longer imaginable - is, for a correct political theology, far away from being as irrelevant as Peterson claims (p. 75.)" The (ahem) 'political situation' of the Trinity is something Schmitt will return to at times through the remainder of the book. At this point Schmitt will content himself to noting how Peterson limits his treatise. "'Monotheism as a political problem' does not mean anything more for Peterson, than the Hellenistic transformation of the Jewish belief in God. (p. 76)" Islam, for instance, is entirely ignored by Peterson. But Christian Trinitarianism was in turn ignored by them. "All attempts failed to make the unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit plausible for other monotheistic faiths. (p. 76)" Monarchianism was once such attempt. It failed to convince almost everyone. Again, for Peterson, "the doctrine of the triunity of the One God serves, without any qualification, as an argument for the impossibility of any political theology. (p. 77)" Therefore non-Trinitarian monotheism is "expressly conceded to have the potential for a political theology. (p. 77)" Peterson claims that only Trinitarianism saves us from political theology; of course, this is precisely what Schmitt needs to contest. Schmitt indicates that whenever Peterson finds examples of political theology in early Christians (Schmitt here not only mentions Eusebius, but also St Ambrose, St Jerome, and St Cyril) Peterson justifies this as Christians not yet being independent of the Jewish-Christian milieu or he argues that the pagans have 'forced' Christians into political theology due to the controversy between them. Of course, this last will turn out to be part of the case against Peterson. - Exactly when has Christianity not faced enemies? And if not ever, how can politics and theology be entirely separated? Also, Christology itself seems to forbid such strict separation. "Peterson wants to uphold the absolute separation between the two domains, but, where the doctrine of the Trinity is concerned, an absolute separation would only be possible in the abstract, given that the second person of the Godhead represents the perfect unity of the two natures, the human and the divine... (p. 82-83)." Another point Schmitt makes here is that the emphasis on Eusebius' heresy by Peterson is irrelevant to the main point: "Countless church fathers and canonical teachers, martyrs and saints throughout the ages have passionately engaged in the political struggles of their time because of their Christian convictions. (p. 83)" Christians, whether heretical or not, have played at politics. The 'heresy' of Eusebius (Arianism) is only crucial to the argument if the orthodox never engaged in political theology. But this is not the case. And Schmitt continues his assault with the point I found especially telling: the Christian Church exists between the Incarnation and the Second Coming. "Within this long interim, there emerge continually numerous new worldly interims, larger and smaller," and it is this ceaseless parade of political positions that the Church-in-this-world must deal with. The only permanence is that the Church must always find a way to survive while awaiting the return of the Savior, and thus all its politics must be temporary. Schmitt points out that Peterson was once well aware of this. In a 1929 essay (*Die Kirche*) Peterson writes, "[...] the church is not simply not a purely spiritual entity in which concepts such as politics and dominion are entirely prohibited, something which has restricted itself entirely to service. The intrinsic ambiguity of the church can be clarified through the interpenetration of empire and church. (pps. 86-87)" But again, this is also Schmitt's point. One now finds oneself wondering if Peterson's 1935 treatise is itself a politico-theological exercise? Perhaps the Sacred and the secular cannot be entirely separated. And who knows - maybe even the laity practice political theology? "[...] all Christian peoples praised the champions of Christ and the defenders of his church, and even venerated them as saints. There was never a Christian people who would not have seen a providential, and therefore to some extent theological, meaning in the earthly success or defeat of Christ's church. A church is not only composed of theologians... (p. 87)" But the Church itself practices "a liberal *tolerari potest* [it can be tolerated]." Even if this is only done in a theologically non-dogmatic way, it is still done. Schmitt will note that during the thirties the Church herself would achieve a *modus vivendi* regarding fascism "*tant que cela dure* [for as long as it lasts]". (See pages 88-90.) Technically, a 'wrong' Political Theology could only come from a heretical Christian. If not, Political Theology itself (for the Church) is then but a temporizing maneuver, waiting on the return of Christ. Eusebius' mistake was that he "greatly exposed himself as a panegyrist and glorifier of the Roman Empire. (p. 91.)" For him, Constantine completes what Augustus began: "The Roman Empire is the peace, the victory of order over uproar and over the factions of the civil war: One God - One World - One Empire. (p. 91)" Schmitt even hints that, for Eusebius, this 'Pax Romana' might be the *Katechon* itself, the Restrainer who holds back the advent of Antichrist. But this is going off on a tangent. "Peterson's argument revolves around the distinction between the purely theological and the impurely political, in an abstract and absolute disjunction which enables him to circumvent the mixed nature of the spiritual-secular combination of any specifically historical event. (p.92)" Eusebius is dismissed by Peterson as a Christian ideologist who employs rhetoric to make propaganda. But why does Peterson insist that Eusebius be emblematic for question of the Political Theology? "We are dealing here with a political answer to a political question which has emerged from the crisis of Protestant theology between the years 1925-35. Peterson believed that he had evaded the crisis through a return to an unproblematic dogmatism and through the discovery of a safe haven of pure theology. (p. 95)" So you see, the great essay disproving Christian political theology was, according to Schmitt, both an evasion and an example of it. Schmitt even calls Peterson's use of Eusebius and his caesaro-papism a 'political myth' that is ultimately based on the work of Jacob Burckhardt. Now we finally come to the confrontation between Eusebius and Augustine. Schmitt dismisses it as a mere maneuver. We are told that "you cannot compare the context of a Greek church father of the

Nicaean Council with that of a Latin church father under the rule of the Vandals. (p. 98)" Of course Augustine knows that the Roman Empire falls! As far as our author is concerned, the whole argument "demonstrates nothing but the superiority of someone born later, who makes judgments post festum on people who have acted in the past. (p. 100)" Regarding the Pax Romana Schmitt argues that "Peterson calls such forms of peace 'questionable', and he juxtaposes the Augustan peace with the authentic Christian Augustinian peace, which will only emerge at the end of time, with the return of Christ. (p. 101)" But that too is Schmitt's point. Only the Second Coming brings Eternal Peace; an authentic christian political theology merely allows the Church to survive in changing circumstances until then. It certainly does not (and absolutely cannot!) bring eternal peace. The final chapter is a meditation on the consequences of the fact that there is no generally accepted answer to the question "quis iudicabit? [who will decide?]" (p. 114)" The problem is that, in this world, there is no (and Schmitt believes there never can be any) generally accepted authority. Theology, since it is anchored in the 'next world' can, if it chooses, take a 'pure' stand, but the price is terrestrial irrelevance. If this is not to be the case, theology (even as an academic discipline) must speak to someone. But who? Schmitt argues that "theology's academic twin, which is - when not diluted into history - the theory of law. (p. 108)" And it is precisely in the conversation between these two that state and church can communicate. Why? Because the legal theorist and the canon lawyer both belong to 'concrete orders'. They are both also performances that are not limited to pure theory. "A conflict is always a struggle between organizations and institutions in the sense of concrete orders. It is a struggle of institutions over stances. (p. 114)" These various 'stances' (whether personal, philosophical or theological) Schmitt holds in utter contempt. God knows theory can be done irresponsibly; - if our postmodernity has 'proven' anything it is that! But the performances of State and Church are no merely private matters. What is the political-theological question? - Who answers in concreto, on behalf of the concrete, autonomously acting human being, the question of what is spiritual, what is worldly and what is the case with the *res mixtae*, which, in the interval between the first and the second arrival of the Lord, constitute, as a matter of fact, the entire earthly existence of this spiritual-worldly, spiritual-temporal, double creature called a human being. (p. 115)-And though he does not here say it, everything besides the concrete institutions of various Churches and States is but an invitation to anarchy. To recapitulate, Peterson claims that Theology only proclaims the Truth of the Triune God and His Salvation of Man. This is because "the mystery of the Trinity only exists in the divinity itself, not in the creature. Likewise, the peace that the Christian seeks is not granted by any Caesar, but is only a gift by Him who is 'higher than any rationality'. (p.132)" However, Schmitt counters that political theology must remain operative between the time of His ascension and His return because circumstances, in the City of Man, continually change. And it is these changing circumstances (until the Second Coming) that we are always mired in. Peterson wished to salvage Christian Theology's purity; all he has done, according to our author, is to assure its irrelevance and impotence. And I believe that this situation is not unique to Christianity. Any universalism, whether secular or transcendent, that fails to bring the world under its sway must always be surrounded (from its point of view) by various particularisms. These particularities are the sea in which every non-hegemonic universalism flounders. Therefore, every universalism has its (ahem) 'political theology', whether it wants to or not. This is due to the fact that each universalism must (at the very least) find a way for its singular Truth to survive in a world of outright enemies and indifferent unbelievers. And that is why Schmittian Political Theology has become so interesting to the marxisant left, they no longer believe in the imminence (or perhaps even the necessity!) of their victory. In our awful postmodernity, all universalisms are today treading water in a stormy sea of particularities. - They study Schmitt in order to learn how to swim. All of the above, however, is (I believe) foreground to Schmitt's most important purpose. He is rebelling against nothing less than the progressive turn of modernity itself, which has occurred both within Christianity and far beyond it. At the beginning of this book, in his 'Guideline for the Reader', our author announces that, -The thematic development of my political theology from 1922 takes a general direction which departs from the *ius reformandi* [right of reformation] of the sixteenth century, culminates in Hegel and is evident everywhere today, from political theology to political Christology. (p.32)-Schmitt is at war with modernity. At bottom, he believes that modernity is everything Hegel said it was. It begins with the rejection of Papal Authority by the Reformation, gathers steam in the Enlightenment, and culminates in Hegel's dialectical philosophy of ever-moving Spirit. On page forty of this text we learned that "critique is the essence of Protestantism." For Schmitt, reformation critique was but the first step towards secular modernity. And this is the root, I believe, of Schmitt's anti-modernism. This acidic criticism (whether it stems from Reformation, Enlightenment, or Hegelian Dialectic is unimportant) tears everything apart. But isn't that what happens within the sphere of 'The Political' anyway? After all, the premodern world was itself a festival of war! Yes, but reform, secular enlightenment and revolution (that is, the critiques that make them possible) eat away at all established institutions from within. These critiques are not (or at least not necessarily) enemies that one faces over a border. They count your neighbors as adherents. This is why Schmitt so often insists upon the importance of having well-defined enemies throughout his books. Every sovereign polity, he believes, must exclude the Other in order to survive. The Protestant Reformation, liberal secular enlightenment, and Hegelo-Marxist dialectics are, for our author, (at least potentially) the stance of the traitor within. For Schmitt, modern pluralistic societies no longer are *loci* of sovereignty, they are mere debating societies. But what is really at stake here? For Schmitt, as always, there is only one thing that ultimately matters:

Sovereignty, and what it commands and forbids. (At minimum, who it designates Friend, who it designates Enemy.) And so, for our author, divided sovereignty is very bad indeed. The Postscript to this book ends thusly: -stat pro ratione Libertas, et Novitas pro Libertate [Freedom replaces Reason, and Novelty replaces Freedom]. (p.130)-This should be read as a theological statement: Reason = God the Father, Freedom = Christ, Novelty = Holy Spirit. One ends up suspecting that Schmitt's private 'Christology' boils down to an entirely Sovereign 'God The Father', with His Word, the Christ, merely as His Herald, and the ever-moving Spirit under house arrest for subversive activities!"The One - to Hen - is always in uproar - stasiason - against itself - pros heauton. (Postscript, p. 122)"Schmitt explains that stasis means 'quiescence, tranquility, standpoint, status' but on the other hand it also means 'unrest, movement, uproar and civil war'. A bit later he adds that at "the heart of the doctrine of Trinity we encounter a genuine politico-theological stasiology. Thus the problem of enmity and of the enemy cannot be ignored. (p. 123)" It is genuinely stunning that a catholic would even imply that within the 'inner life' of the Holy Trinity enmity occurs. So you see, there is for Schmitt more to the argument regarding political theology than merely our 'sublunary' world. Tumult may (God help us!) smolder in the Trinity Itself. Although I am quite sure he doesn't mind being understood as only speaking of this world. As always with Schmitt, there is more than one thing going on. And so, I would argue that although Schmitt often makes a great show of his catholic orthodoxy, he is, I believe, quite nearly a crypto-Arian. When I put this book down I couldn't help suspecting that Schmitt wishes God the Father had retained His Singular Authority and ruled entirely alone. Even The Trinity, to Schmitt, must always (at least potentially) be an endless source of 'tumult'. Hegel famously said that the only sin was the sin against the Holy Spirit. Schmitt, however, says (in effect) that the only Sin is the sin against undivided sovereignty. This is the heart of his discomfort with both the Trinity (at least as it is understood today) and progressive modernity. They 'sin' against undivided authority. Therefore, while his 'political Arianism' is certainly not necessarily committed to any particular form of theological monarchism, it is always unreservedly committed to the notion of undivided sovereignty. Obviously, throughout this essay Schmitt is playing the part of a dutiful Catholic. It is Peterson (the former Protestant!) who has misunderstood the concrete situation of the Church. In an endnote where Schmitt affirms that he is merely a jurist he states, "I would not dare, as a non-theologian, to enter a discussion on theological aspects of the doctrine of the Trinity with theologians. The unfortunate case of Donoso Cortes teaches us what happens to lay theologians and to their efforts in this direction. (p. 148, note 2)" Now, Cortes was, to the best of my meagre knowledge, neither excommunicated nor did he even suffer any interdiction when some of his statements were deemed heretical by the Abb Gaudel, Vicar-General of Orlans. Although I am not sure what Schmitt's point is here I will venture a guess. Cortes is, like Schmitt, a catholic reactionary who was disgusted with modernity. Perhaps he means to indicate that the post Vatican II Papacy cannot be relied upon to defend his very peculiar 'conservative' orthodoxy? But ...in his surprising (but covert) anti-Trinitarian animus, how can Schmitt in any sense expect to be deemed orthodox? This is an extremely suggestive essay. I have only touched on some themes I thought especially pertinent today. But, as circumstances change, Schmitt would certainly expect us to find other things worth mentioning. This is purposely a book which will be read a bit differently every generation. It is a truly great political-theological performance!

10 of 7 people found the following review helpful. church and state dispute in Europe By sailing up chit speak We are concerned here . . . as a consequence of the totalitarian ambitions of [Hitler's] National Socialist regime. The new crisis impacted upon all Christian confessions, Protestants and Catholics, but in different ways, because the Catholic church had signed a Reichskonkordat with Hitler in 1933. (p. 43). Most of Political Theology II, The Myth of the Closure of Any Political Theology by Carl Schmitt, is concerned with an essay in 1935 by Erik Peterson, quoted in an Appendix: Peterson's Conclusion and Concluding Footnote (pp. 131-132) which mentioned Schmitt's Political Theology (1922) in which Schmitt provided an intellectual sketch of the nature of institutional problems arising from church and state being concerned about the same social problems in a society which was secularizing religious sentiments, about which Peterson footnoted his remark: Here we have tried to demonstrate, by a concrete example, the theological impossibility [Unmöglichkeit] of any 'political theology'. (p. 132). Nuns fret not about demanding a paycheck. I believe a German who became Pope had a part in removing German Catholics from political activity in Germany so Hitler would face less political opposition making National Socialism a totalitarian movement within Germany. Whatever support Carl Schmitt may have provided for the Nazis, he is not above an attempt when I was in Vietnam to pick on a religious view that claimed: Likewise, the peace that the Christian seeks is not granted by any Caesar, but is only a gift by him who is 'higher than all rationality.' (p. 132). Is being a writer any worse than Timothy McVeigh driving the truck? Carl Schmitt was a survivor of some bloody hell years in Germany and he was a prisoner of the victors during the war crime trials that followed World War II, who did not press charges against him, before Schmitt wrote: Political Theology II The Myth of the Closure of any Political Theology (1970, English translation 2008). Is Carl Schmitt really Kenneth Burke? A note on page 134 locates a comparison of Schmitt and Georges Bataille in the work of J. Habermas, The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity. The subtitle for Burke's book Permanence and Change (1954, 1965, 1984) was An Anatomy of Purpose. Schmitt is clear that each nationalistic political theology is supposed to provide temporary cover for whatever form of government seeks some kind of divine right. In the history of church doctrine, Eusebius is seen in confrontation with Augustine in section 6 of Chapter 2, The Legendary Document. A political triangulation of triple cross theology

created the times leading up to a bloody hell Germany in which Carl Schmitt was a legal scholar and author in opposition to the failures of liberalism. The political theory which Schmitt is famous for writing of friends being allies for warfare against the biggest threat has a lot in common with American government being unrepresentative of godless Commies. The vile nature of consensus that keeps shifting as political theology gets its triple crosses in order makes it easy for continuous self-justification of the has been bigwig to maintain the intellectual authority on complexity in thought that can line himself up with Hans "Barion's critique from 1968 of the over-progressive theory of the state made by the Second Vatican Council." (p. 46). Barion would not allow official theology to stretch so far that it made only a single political model "theologically legitimated" (p. 46). Schmitt declares with a quote of Barion: The time for Roman ecclesiastical triumphalism is over, and the glorious pomp of a form of power that impacted on the history of the world, which I was talking about in my essay, has become 'only the glorious pomp of a dysfunction in the history of the world'. (p. 48). Barion wrote about Peterson's treatise in 1968. Then in February 1969 Hans Maier saw Political Theology in the "theology of revolution" (p. 49) which was becoming popular. J. B. Metz was defended by Ernst Feil with a note on the context: Adding to the misfortune, the vanquished loses the possibility of a political theology. Since the (at least in its origin) positive evaluation of the concept of political theology by C. Schmitt, it would seem that there has hardly been anyone who agrees with this evaluation." (p. 52). The church maintains a certain purity if it can keep itself from being identified with the strategies which keep producing so many vanquished political hopes. Once Political Theology II is seen mainly as a reply to an institutional reaction by a form of theology that did not like Martin Luther, it hardly seems necessary to add a finger to the cosmic pogo stick up to an analysis of this book.

Political Theology II is Carl Schmitt's last book. Part polemic, part self-vindication for his involvement in the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP), this is Schmitt's most theological reflection on Christianity and its concept of sovereignty following the Second Vatican Council. At a time of increasing visibility of religion in public debates and a realization that Schmitt is the major and most controversial political theorist of the twentieth century, this last book sets a new agenda for political theology today. The crisis at the beginning of the twenty-first century led to an increased interest in the study of crises in an age of extremes - an age upon which Carl Schmitt left his indelible watermark. In Political Theology II, first published in 1970, a long journey comes to an end which began in 1923 with Political Theology. This translation makes available for the first time to the English-speaking world Schmitt's understanding of Political Theology and what it implies theologically and politically.

Why study Schmitt? Like the great thinkers of all ages, he addressed issues that transcend the moment. Political philosophers and political theorists, constitutional lawyers and legal theorists, international relations theorists ideologues of all colors find answers to burning political questions that revolve around the concept of sovereignty. George Schwab, National Committee on American Foreign Policy and The City University of New York (City College and Graduate Center) The publication in English of Carl Schmitt's Political Theology II constitutes an important event in the Anglo-American reception of Schmitt's thought. In the late 1960s, as the Roman Catholic Church reconciled itself with secular modernity and West Germany's liberal democracy resorted to extra-legal measures in the midst of political crisis, Schmitt decided to revisit the questions that motivated his thinking in the early Weimar Republic: can morality only find justification in transcendental theological sources and must political authority rest ultimately with an extraordinary sovereign authority? Obviously, these questions still haunt our world as we move further into the 21st century. John P. McCormick, University of Chicago Every student of Schmitt will need to probe his post-1945 writings and will be fascinated by this superb new translation which brings out Schmitt's self-imposed continued wrestling, despite opposition, with the relation between the political and theological realms. The Introduction gives a full account of why this thoroughly disturbing thinker continues to mean so much to both Right and Left. Jeremy Tambling, The University of Manchester "The importance of this text lies not simply in the arguments herein, important as they are, but especially as an additional means of situating some of the central concerns that continuously provoked Schmitt's writings." Political Studies From the Back Cover Political Theology II is Carl Schmitt's last book. Part polemic, part self-vindication for his involvement in the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP), this is Schmitt's most theological reflection on Christianity and its concept of sovereignty following the Second Vatican Council. At a time of increasing visibility of religion in public debates and a realization that Schmitt is the major and most controversial political theorist of the twentieth century, this last book sets a new agenda for political theology today. The crisis at the beginning of the twenty-first century led to an increased interest in the study of crises in an age of extremes - an age upon which Carl Schmitt left his indelible watermark. In Political Theology II, first published in 1970, a long journey comes to an end which began in 1923 with Political Theology. This translation makes available for the first time to the English-speaking world Schmitt's understanding of Political Theology and what it implies theologically and politically. About the Author Translated by Michael Hoelzl and Graham Ward