

## From the Editor

This issue of STASIS deals with the topic of “political theology.” Although the term has a wide range of meanings, the articles presented here deal with the more radical forms of both politics and religion. The catch that emerges is that such radicalism may be either reactionary, seeking to restore a lost and mythical Golden, or it may seek a progressive and revolutionary overthrowing of the current situation. This tension within radicalism pertains not merely to politics, but very much to religion itself. So, how does one assess such a tension? The articles in this issue do so by means of either theoretical interventions or case studies.

Niko Huttunen focuses on the political ambivalence of arguably the most influential ideologue within Christianity, the apostle Paul. While Paul’s political realism saw him attempt a spiritualising reading, especially of eschatology, he could hardly foresee the ground-shaking implications that move would have in politics. Sanna Tirkkonen is interested in a similar problem—the political ambivalence of religion—albeit in terms of the Cult of Dionysus in light of Foucault’s reading. While the intense ritualism of the cult initially created an anti-system in opposition to prevailing practices, the very same cult later provided a crucial source of the techniques for governing the self and others (governmentality.) Joe Bartzell is concerned more with providing a theoretical framework to identify a viable model for religious revolutionary action, drawing upon the idea of the radical prophet and creatively bringing together the contributions of Max Horkheimer and Antonio Gramsci.

The case studies deal with both sides of this ambivalence. Jouni Tilli analyses the fascinating process in which the Lutheran ideologues of Finland provided theological-cum-rhetorical justifications for an offensive war alongside Hitler and against the Soviet Union (1941–44.) Conversely, Tamara Prosic offers a culturalist proposal for the success of the communist revolution in Russia, suggesting that the collective focus of Russian Orthodoxy provided its cultural context. Moving from the western parts of the Eurasian landmass to its east, Chin Kenpa traces the influence of one of the early Chinese Christian materialists, W.T. Chu, on shaping creative engagements between Marxism and Christian theology in the period leading up to and immediately after the Chinese Revolution. Finally, Lars Lih undertakes an ambitious project identifying an ancient redemptive narrative that is at once political and religious. From Virgil’s *Aeneid* to Marx, he spies the narrative of a collectivity that, by the very act of fighting for survival in a hostile world, is destined to carry out a mission of world-historical significance.

*Roland Boer*