

# **POLITICAL-THEOLOGICAL SOURCE OF THE “STATE OF EXCEPTION”: RE-READING SOVEREIGNTY WITHIN THE DIVINE OIKONOMIA**

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*The state of exception is mostly considered within the context of the modern sovereignty. Although the state of exception is thought within the modern paradigm of state governance, it carries a Christian context. The Christian context represents an eschatological way of power that comes in a miracle which cannot be interiorized by present. This divine way of governance therefore refers to a power which occurs as a threshold. The theological-political form of governance, which is also called the divine oikonomia, shows the power of governance in creating an exception which cannot be foreseen by any current contexts. That is why the power of modern sovereignty resembles its archaic model in which the divine power of God is designated as a pure potentiality which cannot be limited within any contextuality. This article aims to explore the theological source of modern sovereignty in order to understand the very meaning of governance.*

## **INTRODUCTION: THINKING THE IDEA OF GOVERNANCE IN THE AGAMBENIAN CONTEXT**

In recent thinking on the genealogy of sovereignty, the archaic modes of governance have come to prominence. Agamben, a prominent philosopher on the archaic types of governmental techniques, describes the two types of governance which are thought as the founders of the idea of governance and sovereignty. Agamben (2011) has tried to bring forth both the oikonomia, which is one of the ancient modes of governance in Greek, and the Christian way of governance, which is called the *divine oikonomia*. Agamben (2011) claims that the providential paradigm of Christian governance arises from the oikonomic form of power which unites and operates all the productive forces being within the social. That is why the Christian way of governance is also thought as a reproductive governance which tries to connect and list all of the productive elements in the politic body.

On the other hand, there is another and alternative interpretation of the Christian way of governance. In this type of interpretation, the idea of governance is thought with the concept of the governmentality that includes a logical organization connecting the subjects and the power modes under a systematic machine (Biebricher 2008). For Foucault (1981), the Christian way of governance should be handled as a biopolitical governance since it represents itself as a “shepherd in front of its ewes.” The figure of the *shepherd* here shows the divine type of governance which is linked with the subjects of the sovereign. However, more importantly, the *divine governance* is symbolized with both the protective and productive function of the sovereign God. The divine governance therefore signifies an ecclesial power over the subjects and, for Foucault (1978), the entire history of pastoral power arises from that paradigm which captures the potentiality of the subjects. For Foucault, the pastoral function of the divine sovereignty shows itself in a “modification” through which any singular body is transformed into a sign of the transcendent power of the divine governance.

In Foucaultian terms, the pastoral power is organized in a teleological context which is seen within the Aristotelian concept of *oikonomia*. Pastoral power signifies a “salvific” aim which guides a multitude of beings in their lives. So, pastoral power is a guidance which tries to show the righteous way for any living being. For Foucault, the political rationality of governance is shown within the divine function which is entrusted to the divine power. The divine power is therefore handled as a task which is linked with the divine authority whose aim is the salvation of its subjects. The pastoral power is therefore best seen in the figure of the shepherd who represents the rationality and savior of governance in itself.

Unlike Foucault, Agamben attempts to trace the divine governance within a different context. Agamben problematizes the sources of the divine government, but he does not question the signifier of the subjectivities. So, Agamben actually questions how the *oikos* has become a universal signifier in the Christian way of governance. For him, the meaning of the *oikonomia* can be seen in a universalization of governance in which the power can become a divine form since it functions as both rational and a *Savior* (Agamben 2013). So, Agamben here indicates an association between the earthly being and divine form of governance. *Oikonomia*, as Agamben argues, functions as both a guidance for souls and government for bodies. The economical-political guidance of the body and soul can represent itself within the context of a universalization through which the power can cover all forms of the being. Agamben therefore refers to Aristotle who establishes a meaningful and functional political world with a separation among all things. In the *Oeconomia*, Aristotle (1920) defines the politics under the notion of a separation which creates a division of labor among productive forces in the city. For Agamben, Aristotle did not actually consider the politics under the context of the separation among bodies. Aristotle rather designated the politics with the notion of a transcendentality which associates both the divine form of governance and the secular type of ruling.

The main difference between Agamben and Foucault can be seen here. While Foucault considers the figurative type of the *pastoral sovereign* (shepherd of the ewes), Agamben rather focuses on analyzing the associative functioning of the power which joins the souls and bodies together. Foucault argues that the Western conception of

governance emerges from a logic of administration that prioritizes the health of the living things for the sake of the commonwealth. This form of power reflects a governance paradigm that always keeps living multitudes (objects of the biopolitical governance) under surveillance and carefully plans and organizes their lives.

The Foucaultian pastoral figure has a public appearance in front of the subjects; it represents itself as a modality of ideal existentiality which the subjects must examine in their own beings. However, Agamben tries to re-define the conception of divine governance within the context of the *oikonomia* which serves and functions as a savior for souls and a reproductive effect for bodies. So, the idea of the government has an unending teleological process in which the bodies are governed and the souls are rescued. In other words, it is very important to see that Agamben adds a connective function to the pastoral power which is characterized by both a calculative-conscious deployment of the means and a righteous governance for each individual in the city. So, the meaning of *oikonomia* cannot be reduced to an obedience, but, rather, it must be seen as an associative function of governance which incorporates any externality into its process. The *oikonomia* therefore is assigned a broad meaning by Agamben since he tries to reveal the divine source of governance in the Christian trinity. For Agamben, the Christian trinity should be understood as an *oikonomical* governance because the trinity divides the unitary being of God in order to incarnate himself on the earth and in any earthly form of living.

So, the *oikonomia* represents a search for the divine governance by which the unitary being of God can be secularized within the pluralistic being of the living. The term *oikonomia*, therefore, corresponds to a moment when the divine power appears as a connective force between irreducible notions. The reason why the *oikonomia* is handled within the conception of connecting the irreducibilities is because the *oikonomia* simply refers to a power which can present itself as an integration between *bodies and souls*. In ancient thought, there is a distinction between the body and soul, and so, they represent different parts of beings which cannot be reduced to each other. While the body refers to the secular form of the being, the soul is identified with the non-secular form of the being. Christian dogma strongly refers to that distinction by establishing a line between “two worlds.” Augustine (1909), for example, builds this distinction on the irreducible differences in both power relations and ways of living that are unique to both worlds. So, the divine power in this kind of interpretation is shown as an exceeding point of a secular form of the power. However, since it seems that the divine must be established through – and within – the secular form, then there is a paradoxical appearance between two “irreducible” forms. The paradox here indicates that there is a moment in which these two irreducibilities are integrated to each other; and this moment is also the time of the coming of divine rule.

In this article, my aim is to discuss the “state of exception” as an example of this appearance in which the irreducible parts are so integrated and related. The integration of the two types of power is the divine source and basic indicator of the sovereignty. This article claims that the state of exception can be thought of as an integral and essential part of the sovereignty which does actually have a root within the concept of divine *oikonomia*. The basic idea of this article is that the “state of exception” should be seen in the context of the *oikonomia*, which should not be reduced to an economical

governance, but should be understood in a theological form of the government. In other words, oikonomia here means an attempt to incarnate the divine being and to authorize this *in the present*. So, the oikonomia is a power to incarnate the potentiality within the divine function of governance; and, more importantly, it is the capability of ordering that combines the pluralistic form of the power under the notion of a monotheistic and monarchic governance. The oikonomia should not therefore be reduced only to division of the forces, but should be handled as an associative power to mediate the potentiality with the actuality. The “state of exception” should therefore be seen within the concept of the oikonomia since it signifies a divine power which resembles God who does not rule directly but is incarnated with an action that creates a threshold in the present, which is also named and known as decisionism.

## GENEALOGY OF OIKONOMIA: FROM ANTIQUITY TO CHRISTIANITY

In Greek thought, the household (*oikos*) and its management (*oikonomia*) refers to an important aspect in understanding the content of Greek political thought including the *polis* since the time of Herodotus. In one of the major texts, Socrates and Nicomachides discuss the ideal version of management of the *oikos* (Xenophon 1994). For Socrates, the *oikos* and the *polis* differ only in “scale,” and, therefore, they are quite close in the sense of governing (Xenophon 1997). Aristotle (1984) also describes the existence of the *oikos* as the basis of the *polis*. The analogical relationship between the *polis* and the *oikos* can be seen in the governmental paradigm. This paradigm designates the idea of governance in a teleological manner which serves as the provider of the common good by separating society into moral and economic zones (Nagle 2006). However, though these zones seem separated, they are actually connected under a transcendent notion which includes the different modes of governance. In other words, the politics in Greek political thought contains moral, economical and legal-institutional aspects together by creating a zone in which those aspects become related with each other. So, the politics is a framework in which the aspects of governance can be related with the other types of management.

The common paradigm between the *oikos* and the *polis* can be seen in a skill in knowing how to make things become useful - *epistamenoï chresthai* (Foxhall 1989). So, the oikonomia, as the basis of governance, is an episteme which establishes a relationship among things that need to be actualized. In other words, oikonomia is the discovery of the incarnation of the potentialities which are teleologically directed to a meaningful existence. The politics is therefore seen as the complementary part of the *oikos*, since the politics is the teleology of the human being (Booth 1981). Oikonomia, then, is an episteme of governing not the present but the potentiality. So, oikonomia is a governmental episteme to which both the potentiality and actuality can be included in order to create an inclusive reasoning to govern things.

Oikonomia is therefore seen as the basis of an ideology of an empire that can be seen in Rome, especially in the aspect of “domination in the household” (Mattingly 2011, 109). The analogical transference from between *oikos* and the police (*polity*) to between *oikos* and the empire (*imperium*) arises from a capacity which transcends the spatial bounds of the lands and mediates the diversities (rule, culture, etc.) under a

complementary notion as well. That is why the empire and its governmental paradigm is the project of an archaic mode of governance which has an art of oikonomical governance in itself. That kind of art of governance is based on a broad economic logic that hierarchically arranges land, subjects and things respectively. As a result of this, the art of governance can create a certain “center” to which all notions must be teleologically directed and it can also designate sub-zones which are transformed as the objects of the empire are nurtured or modified. So, the art of the oikonomia, then, is the logic of establishing the settlement and ordering of the things that are governed. That is why the term oikonomia cannot be reduced to the single logic of economics, because the oikonomia does not only refer to management of things, but it also signifies a governmental logic which seeks to reveal the potentialities and mediate them within the order of the politics (Leshem 2016; Natali 1995). Oikonomia is, therefore, a logic of organizing, sorting and associating things within the scope of the political order. That is why the oikonomia is not a single economical paradigm which is reduced to the science of a rational calculating of the present data (Leshem 2013). Rather, oikonomia is the episteme of a governance that can have the capacity to calculate the potentialities of the future, and, so, oikonomia is the ability to foresee the gap between the present and possible form of the future. That is why the oikonomia is rather seen as a power that has the capacity to be able to transcend the present and that can also actualize the potentialities that exist within the present form of being.

We can see that kind of reasoning in Xenophon’s text in which Socrates claims that a good commander of the city is the person that knows how to design the city according to the functions, needs, etc. (Xenophon 1997). Socrates refers to Cyrus the Great, whose appraisal of politics should be evaluated as the noblest concern since it can relate the *oikos* and *polis* with each other (Murnaghan 1988, 11). The example that Socrates mentions here is the relational status determined between farming and warfare which are seen as irreducible in themselves. As Socrates implies, the good king must have some strategical abilities in order to govern the city according to both its potentialities and needs. The first and perhaps the foremost important ability that the king should have is the ability to divide and determine the dominions that are shaped according to the functional aspects. The king must understand that the interdependent zones in the city can naturally have a potentiality that may be intertwined with each other. That is why Socrates emphasizes the importance of intimacy between farming and warfare that both arise from the familiar reasoning of governance. Secondly, Socrates mentions the importance of the authorization over those zones in which people, things, functions and needs are determined according to the reasonable calculation of the power.

So, it can be argued that Socrates assigns the art of governance with at least four notions. Firstly, the art of governance depends on a division and bordering: the governance is not only a force that divides or separates the zones, but it is a power that can reason to integrate the interdependent zones with each other. Secondly, the art of governance has a reasoning capacity that can functionalize the zones according to their intrinsic capacities and abilities (farming, military, agriculture, etc.). Thirdly, the art of governance assigns the roles within the zones and therefore makes the people as the subjects. And last, fourthly, the art of governance emerges as oikonomia, the

knowledge of positioning each individual part of the city within the general and cosmological order that transcends the political order of the secular polis. As Socratic argument claims, the division of tasks among subjects enhances the accountability of each individual to the king, and therefore the king rules for the collective order according to that accountability. In other words, governance does not only refer to a domination, but it means a plan and program that should be followed by the ruler. The main Platonic theme can be seen here: the ideal king is a person that provides the oikonomic order by organizing the city according to each mission, function and potentiality of the subjects (Singer 1958). The oikonomia is, therefore, the basis of the politics, because the oikonomia reflects that the place that can be organized and planned for the forthcoming possibilities is the place that can be governed for the sake of the good. As Pomeroy (1994) discusses, the oikonomic paradigm in ancient politics can be evaluated as the ideological framework to which the king applies in order to provide a peaceful and governable social context. In the ancient era, the king was therefore called a “shepherd” since he represents both the regard for the good and the productivity of his ewes as well.

However, this theme was used more in Christian narrative; the names of the king and God were used to express each other. The source of this kind of narrative is the function of the only sovereign who can embrace the whole universe with his supreme might. In this narrative, God and his might are understood by the idea of unity encompassing the world (Peterson 2011). Peterson (2011) deepens his claim by referring to an Aristotelian concept of governance which argues that governance must be processed for the sake of the good. That is why Peterson claims that there must be *one and only* sovereign in the world. As Aristotle (1984) claimed, the rule of many may cause there to be disorderliness in which governance cannot be possible. So, the rule of the only is much more preferable than the rule of many, and this is not only about politics but is totally about the governance that contains the political. In other words, the Christian narrative shows us that the idea of governance exceeds the fact of the politics since the politics is reduced to the management of the city (Al-Azmeh 2005).

On the other hand, Christian theology represents a new form of governance by referring to oikonomia, which is understood as the knowledge belonging to God’s might that creates the cosmos within an order (Placher 1983). Thinking of the cosmos within an order shows the might of God and the ideal version of the secular mode of governance as well. The thought of divine monarchy therefore means an ideal version of a secular governance which should follow the universal monarchy of God (Treat 2014). The universal monarch signifies that God and his sovereignty are involved as intrinsic parts of the world, and so, the politics is not separated from theological approaches. As Eusebius (1903, 23) claims, before the establishment of mighty imperialism, “man used to live in polyarchy; but when the Lord and the Savior appeared ... pluralistic polyarchy was dispersed...”. So, the might of God does not only carry a theological meaning; rather, it represents a junction point in which the theology and the politics, the God and the sovereign, the mighty and the sovereignty become synonymous.

The analogy between God and the sovereign is a result of a paradigm which resembles *oikonomia* that handles governance within a pluralistic unity (organization of singular notions). In this narrative, the might of God is represented by the highlighting of a monarchic power. The monarchy is used for rejecting polyarchy which is thought to be able to disrupt the stability of the city. In Gregory of Nazianzus, what can be realized is that the correlation of the divine order and the sovereignty are intertwined. In the letters, it can be noticed that the monarchy is referred to with order, while the polyarchy refers to a lawlessness that is without order (Beeley 2008a). It signifies a symbolic synonymity: divine might not only guides the subjects but also governs them in order to provide the cosmological order. That is why the unity of God is represented with a monarchic concept which refers to a unity within the paradigm of governance that combines the all the units in the city. So, in this governmental paradigm, there is a symbolic division within the supreme might of the divine governance: on the one hand, there is a monarchical power of the divine kingship which cannot be divided or represented; however, on the other hand, since this might refer to a secular monarchy, it is distributed to sub-elements in order to create a cosmological order within the secular city. This indicates both a cosmological principle on which sovereignty must depend and also a form of subjectivity which the subject must obey for the purpose of creating himself as part of the divine order (Beeley 2008b).

The creation of the subject is not only an issue of a transformation in subjectivity, but rather, it is the result of a governmental paradigm that is re-created by the being of the subject. The trinitarian paradigm here signifies that the Christian subject is structured for incarnating the divine kingship in the city. The trinitarian paradigm is represented within a statement of “three-in-one” which emphasizes “the being of God with his logos and his wisdom” (Theophilus 1868, 82). The statement of “three-in-one”, then, shows both a unity and plurality which create the divine kingship together. This statement refers to a form of existence through which the subjects recognize themselves in God’s monarchy; and, also, they can be part of the divine kingship, and this kingship exists within its plural unity. So, the trinitarian paradigm shows that the divine kingship is not only a form of governance but also an existential form in which the divine and cosmological order can be incarnated. The paradigm then indicates that the trinity operates within the *oikonomia* since the divine kingship depends on a being that reflects the cosmological order in itself so that God can be revealed through that form of the being. So, trinitarian *oikonomia* is not the governance of God, but rather the revelation of God through *living beings*.

The notion of the living being is so important in trinitarian *oikonomia* that governance can be handled as an intrinsic context within the fact of the living. However, the notion of the living is not used within the concept of the concrete form of the living, but rather, it is used within a potentiality form that indicates the *livable* form of the living. The potentiality form of life indicates that life carries an inoperative meaning in itself that signifies an openness to the potential of being. The [Christian] subject is therefore understood within its potentiality (*energia*) which is the openness to the being that has not appeared yet. However, the notion of the subject is not only used for ascribing living beings, but it also defines the subjectivity of God. God is

therefore understood with his purely supreme potentiality, as well as his power and capacity (Siisiäinen 2014, 58). The divine subjectivity represented in God, then, is the pure inactiveness (*katapausis*) which indicates a pure potentiality that is also called the mystery. For Siisiäinen (2014, 59), God does not refer to a supreme subjectivity by his power to act, but rather, the supremacy arises totally from inoperativeness and is defined as the Sabbath, the suspension of activity. In other words, God is the perfect subject, but the reason for this perfection is not the omnipotent power but a potentiality that may be actualized at any time. This kind of activity is therefore called the suspended action which not only shows the potentiality but also reflects the source of the divine power. The term *katapausis* here is therefore an important aspect in showing the potentiality of the sabbath, since it reflects a deactivation of God. However, God is [earthly] realized with his sabbath, or, in other words, God gains his divine being by his sabbatical existentiality (Brooke 2018).

The sabbatical *katapausis* indicates that the deactivation becomes a meaningful action by the approval of God. In other words, *katapausis* does not mean an Aristotelian teleology, but it rather refers to a decision that actualizes the potentiality. The supremacy and perfection of God is therefore related to his power to decide the unpredictable. The meaning of the action of God is therefore directed to the future that has not been able to be foreseen. This is the theological form of the *state of exception*, since it implies an exceedance that defuses the present and the normative currencies that are interiorized within the present. This exceedance is metaphorically referred to within the sabbatical action of God. The sabbatical action (*katapausis*) is therefore marked with the exception and the miracle which carries both theological and political meaning in the concept of governance. The miracle – as the movement of God as the potentiality becoming the actuality – is the mark of the exceedance in which the present (potentiality) is transformed into the actuality (God's act).

## **THE STATE OF EXCEPTION: AGAMBEN, SCHMITT AND SABBATICAL SOVEREIGNTY IN THE COSMOLOGICAL OIKONOMIA**

Before attempting a political theological analysis of the state of exception, it is necessary to discuss what political theology is. Political theology, in a general sense, is the relationship between the sacred and power, or the link between political society and religious order. For Assmann (2005), political theology resembles political philosophy since both of them seek to answer a social order through which communal life can be possible. The reason why the term political theology is identified with Christianity is because the Christian paradigm has so many perceptions and discussions on institutional, religious and political issues about providing social order in the community. However, political theology presupposes that justice and order emerge from obedience to a supreme power which provides order against contingency and unpredictability.

Political theology is often mentioned with monotheism which simply refers to the supremacy that can provide the cosmological order. According to this thought, the view of God – the source of the divine kingship – is the product of “the biblical conception of mosaic monotheism” (Jenkins 2011, 513). This monotheistic approach



strongly indicates that any socio-political order is only legitimated by a supreme and transcendent figure who cannot be interiorized by the community. In other words, the figure that can establish order in the community must be outside the secular form in order to maintain political unity without any idolatry. The non-representable form of the sovereign therefore shows that political order cannot be explained by its intrinsic being. On the contrary, the possibility and salvation of political unity is outside the community which can establish the law in a cosmological context including the secular form of the being.

The reason for this resemblance and connection is because of that law providing the cosmological order, and therefore, salvation is analogous to the *creatio ex nihilo* (Gereby 2008, 12). In other words, the law in both cosmological and secular meanings is seen as a result of a supreme power that creates a threshold between the potential and the actual, or, rather, between being and nothingness. The being here signifies the order, stability and security which are the basic reasons of salvation; however, the nothingness, on the other hand, refers to the disorder and chaos in which the divine judgement cannot be incarnated. So, the political theological problem can be seen in two important contexts: firstly, political theology handles the problem of the cosmological being within the concept of *ordering* that includes a supreme power that situates existence in a place sheltered and secured from the chaos. Secondly, by following the former concept, since political theology questions the issue of order with the inevitable existence of chaos and its potentiality, the power in political theology does always exist within the concept of the state of exception. The reason why the state of exception is handled as the fundamental concept of theological sovereignty in politics can be seen in a governmental logic. Governance, which is linked with a struggle with chaos, must have a capacity that exceeds the present order (legal-institutional-political) which is not capable of eliminating the chaotic existence of disorderliness. So, the law that represents the [divine] order must regulate and modulate itself according to necessity. As Agamben (2005, 24) declares, “necessity creates its own law.” The power, then, must potentially function in the threshold since its meaning of being arises from a necessity that cannot be pre-determined or foreseen.

So, as it can be assumed, political theology is concerned with how the power is to be processed in a state of emergency, rather than the way in which it is applied in a given situation. Political theology, therefore, tries to make clear the ideal form of governance in case of an ambivalence. So, political theology differs from political philosophy because of a specificity in the form of the exercise of power. The specificity cannot be interiorized within the scope of a secular form of governance because secular governance can only focus on exercising power in pre-determined circumstances. However, political theology conceptualizes the issue of power in a sabbatical perception in which the power occurs as a miracle which creates a *threshold* inside the present. The threshold is in fact an indication that order can only be established by a power which can go beyond the given order.

This power is called *sovereignty*, which is re-defined with a political-theological concept by Carl Schmitt. Schmitt (1985, 5) deepens his argument with a brief statement: “Sovereign is who decides on exception.” The exception is both the source and potentiality of the sovereignty, since the power that can decide what the exception

is, is the absolute capacity that can cope with the unpredictability, contingency, and, in mythological terms, the chaos. The main idea of political theology is therefore linked with an investigation of a supreme power that can exceed the crisis in modern politics (Wolin 1992). Political power is then understood as a capacity that can cope with exceptionality. In other words, the power in Schmitt's political theology is not a capacity for conflict within the natural borders of the politics, but rather, it is the matter of struggling with the contingency.

Political power is therefore handled within a theological context. Schmitt (2008) actually tries to re-define a *political myth* that compensates for the ontological lack of authority which causes the chaos that may come. Schmitt argues that the chaos may only be prevented by a power that can intervene with the chaos with the capacity of a supremacy. This supremacy, however, cannot be found within the concept of *the rule of law* (Schmitt 2004). For Schmitt, the principle of rule of law cannot struggle with the real enemy of the politics which is the chaotic form of the eschatological figure represented in ancient mythology. The mythological representation of chaos had often been symbolized within religious concepts and Schmitt (1996) describes this symbolization as an attempt to create a *myth* that serves to imagine the chaos and the sovereignty which is authorized to prevent the chaos as well. However, the modern state, which is basically linked with the Leviathan, is not capable of struggling with that kind of chaos, because the Leviathan can only cope with an intrinsic element that is also known as human nature. For Schmitt, the Leviathan is best understood with a paradigm of the modern state that is reduced to establish an order inside the community. However, as metaphorically and mythologically discussed, the chaotic image of disorder can only be understood as an existentiality coming from outside the community. Schmitt therefore differs from Hobbes by arguing that sovereignty must be considered with the capacity of its pre-emptive force against unpredictability.

The reason why Schmitt tries to conceptualize sovereignty with a political theological concept and with a capacity to determine the state of exception can be understood in this manner. The most important thing for Schmitt is to answer the question of how order can be established and how it can be maintained in a world in which sanctity is lost. Schmitt tends to handle the question with a connection of theology and politics including discovery of both order and security. In other words, Schmitt thinks that since modernism secularizes, and, as a result of that, defuses the intrinsic form of the being of the world, it is in a situation where it cannot fulfill what needs to be done. Schmitt therefore tries to conceptualize political sovereignty with a theological concept that can only be processed by a divine power. The term divine power is a very important aspect for Schmitt since he thinks that the modern paradox of sovereignty can only be resolved by a theological intervention. The decision on exception is therefore important, because to decide what the exception is, is the only thing that can prevent the chaotic form of the eschatological end. The sovereign in Schmitt is therefore linked with the form of the *katechon*, which implies a power that can struggle with unpredictability in case of emergency (Hell 2009).

Schmitt refers to the *katechon* while he tries to re-theorize the idea of empire. For Schmitt (2006, 50), the idea of empire can only be seen with a statement of the *katechon* since its reason of existence is to represent a global symbol for the *ordering*

of the world. The imperial image of the *katechon* can be traced within a power that is directed outside the community, which is purely contingent, and therefore, which is outside the spatial and temporal being of the world. In other words, the power as a *katechon* functions as a sabbatical force that gains its capability by carrying a contingency in itself. As referring to the notion of divine oikonomia, it may be suggested that the power of the divine kingship depends on a capability to be directed outside the order – the temporal-spatial unity form of the being, or the political order. So, the divine oikonomia is the division of the political unity: on the one hand, there is the political order through which the secular power – or figuratively, the Leviathan, – is authorized; on the other hand, there is the divine order through which the secular form of the being – which incarnates the divine being of the kingship – is guaranteed. So, as can be seen, the connection between political sovereignty and the theological basis of sovereignty is provided by an oikonomic division between political power and theological power.

## CONCLUSION

The main idea of this article is to claim that sovereignty, and the state of exception, which is the fundamental signifier of sovereignty, should be understood within the concept of the oikonomia and also in the frame of political theology. The concept of the oikonomia and its use within political theology can present a new sense in order to conceptualize the idea of sovereignty in a broader sense. In its archaic form, oikonomia is used for dividing the elements of the social according to the functions that they can perform. In Greek terms, oikonomia represents a governmental logic that depends on organizing the political zone with a distinction. However, this distinction is not an exclusion, because the distinctive part of the social is interiorized within the exclusion. For example, the meaning and function of the oikos emerges from that kind of distinction, since the distinction operates the oikos by excluding it from the political zone. In other words, in Greek terms, oikonomia is developed as a governmental logic which establishes a distinction between shared areas. While those areas represent a pluralistic power, oikonomia emerges as a connective logic that combines and collects them under a monarchic power.

The potentiality of monarchism in oikonomia thus inspires the Christian paradigm which tries to handle the universal unity under the notion of a cosmological order. The trinitarian dogma is based on the same division among the pluralistic power so that the cosmological order can be established by and under the might of God. In other words, the might of God is thought as a monarchic capacity that provides the order in space. The Christian oikonomia is thus based on a governmental logic that assumes the necessity of a transcendent power which surpasses the present form of the power. In Christian terminology, God is thus made sublime with his potential, and, the oikonomic capacity that can exceed the given form of the governmental process. God and his almighty power are therefore presented with the meaning of the miracle, since the miracle shows the incarnation of the divine rule belonging to God’s oikonomia.

Therefore, political theology emerges as an imitation of this Christian paradigm which is based on oikonomic logic. The idea of divine governance which signifies

power as a transcendent might cannot therefore be reduced to a single form of government – which means that the governmental problem only focuses on establishing an order inside the political being. However, governance in the political-theological form of the *oikonomia* is rather a matter of *ordering* against the potential existence of the chaos that threatens the divine order which distributes functions, authorizes, etc. among living beings. Governance is therefore symbolized within the capacity of transcendental power that can struggle with chaos. In other words, the idea of governance is based on a distinction between the inside and outside of the order, and it is believed that the order can only be established and maintained with a capability of struggling with the outside of the order.

The oikonomic logic of governance can therefore be exemplified with the fact of the state of exception. The state of exception does not show the limit of the governance, but rather, it shows the incarnation of the power. The political-theological context of the state of exception is an example of the sabbatical power which is the moment of the divine power that is incarnated from its potentiality. So, the state of exception shows the pure and potential form of the governance since it presents the incarnated form of the power.

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