

"THE NEW WORLD" OF KARL BARTH: THEOLOGY, POLITICS AND LEGACIES  
Liisi Keedus, University of York

**The author:**

Liisi is a historian of modern political thought, with a particular interest in the political imagination of inter-war Europe. She has worked on twentieth century German-Jewish political thinkers, Weimar social, legal and humanist thought, historicism, as well as on the making of the “new political science” in post-World War II America. She recently published her first monograph: *The Crisis of German Historicism: The Early Political Thought of Hannah Arendt and Leo Strauss* (2015, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Her current research focuses on the interdisciplinary roots, connections and implications of inter-war political thought, as well as on the emergence of shared political concerns and ideas across different national contexts in Europe. She studies these topics by inquiring into the novel concepts of time and historicity after the Great War. This new project explores intersections between varieties of anti-progressivisms and anti-historicisms in European political thought, as well as their legacies for creating a myriad of novel understandings of the human world.

She earned her PhD at the Department of History and Civilization at the European University Institute in Florence. Before joining the political theorists’ group at the University of York, Liisi was a research fellow at the Institute of Politics and Government at Tartu University and a Marie Curie fellow at the Erik Castrén Institute for International Law and Human Rights at the University of Helsinki.

**The paper:**

It is only recently that few histories of interwar European political thought have come to acknowledge that the interwar crisis in relations among men was closely interwoven with upheavals in the ways Europeans rethought and debated God. The first aim of the paper is to restore to Karl Barth (1886-1968) a more central place than is generally known and acknowledged in twentieth century intellectual history. Secondly, it seeks to correct the commonplace association of his theological revolution with radical and authoritarian political ideologies by presenting and reflecting on Barth’s lifelong political engagement, and then, on some of his politically and intellectually most influential ideas. The third aim of the paper is to reflect on the wider implications of rethinking Barth’s role in the history of social and political thought.