The Père Marquette
Lecture in Theology
2009

THEOLOGY AND THE SPACES OF APOCALYPTIC

CYRIL O'REGAN

MARQUETTE
UNIVERSITY
PRESS

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOGING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA

O'Regan, Cyril, 1952-
Theology and the spaces of apocalyptic / Cyril O'Regan.
p. cm. -- (The Père Marquette lecture in theology ; 2009)
Includes bibliographical references.
ISBN-13: 978-0-87462-589-9 (clothbound : alk. paper)
ISBN-10: 0-87462-589-0 (clothbound : alk. paper)
1. Apocalyptic literature--History and criticism. I. Title.
BS646.O74 2009
220'.046—dc22 2009003255

Manufactured in the United States of America
Member, Association of American University Presses

♾ The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of the American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1992.

Association of American University Presses

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY PRESS
MILWAUKEE

The Association of Jesuit University Presses

FOREWORD

The 2009 Père Marquette Lecture in Theology is the fortieth in a series commemorating the missions and explorations of Père Jacques Marquette, SJ (1637-75). This series of lectures was begun in 1969 under the auspices of the Marquette University Department of Theology.

The Joseph A. Auchter Family Endowment Fund has endowed the lecture series. Joseph Auchter (1894-1986), a native of Milwaukee, was a banking and paper industry executive and a long-time supporter of education. The fund was established by his children as a memorial to him.

CYRIL O'REGAN

Born in Ireland, Cyril O'Regan received his BA and MA degrees in Philosophy in the middle to late 1970s at University College Dublin. He studied Theology and Philosophy of Religion at the Department of Religious Studies at Yale from which institution he received his PhD in 1989. He has held academic positions at the School of Theology, Saint John's, Collegeville, as well as in the Department of Religious Studies at Yale. For the past ten years he has been on the faculty of Theology at the University of Notre Dame, where currently

he is the Huisking Professor of Theology. Professor O'Regan identifies himself as a systematic theologian who is interested in a wide variety of topic areas and contemporary figures in theology, both Catholic and Protestant. He is especially interested in Trinitarian thought, eschatology, and the variety of forms of postmodern theology, and has paid particular attention to modern theologians such as Balthasar, Przywara, and de Lubac. He has published widely on Balthasar, and 2010 will see the appearance of two large manuscripts on Balthasar's relation to Hegel and Heidegger respectively. Two more volumes on Balthasar are planned. In addition, Professor O'Regan has deep historical interests that extend from Newman and the Tübingen School in the nineteenth century through Aquinas, Bonaventure, and Eckhart in the medieval period to the patristic period. In the patristic period he has done considerable work on Irenaeus and Augustine. The areas of mystical theology and clarification of orthodoxy and heterodoxy are of special interest. In the area of mystical theology Professor O'Regan has written on such figures as Maximus and Eckhart, and is currently working on Ruysbroeck. The second-century figure Irenaeus is a foundation stone for his exploration of the return of Gnosticism in modernity. Two volumes of a planned seven volume series have thus far appeared: *Gnostic Return in Modernity* (SUNY, 2001) and *Gnostic Apocalypse: Jacob*

Boehme's Haunted Narrative (SUNY, 2002). Trained originally as a philosopher, Professor O'Regan has done considerable work in continental philosophy. He is the author of *The Heterodox Hegel* (SUNY, 1994) as well as numerous other essays on Hegel. Another book on Hegel is well under way and is slated to be the third volume of the Gnosticism in Modernity series. He has published on Heidegger, Jean-Luc Marion, and Kant among others.

Robert M. Doran, SJ

THEOLOGY AND THE SPACES OF APOCALYPTIC

CYRIL O'REGAN

HUISKING PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

While exceptions may be made for particular brands of political theology, in general the ascription of apocalyptic to Christian theological production in the modern and contemporary world is likely to be an embarrassment for an institution anxious about its disciplinary credentials and concerned about its credibility and standing in the modern world. Regarded as a phenomenon irredeemably past, and thus anachronistic, when it does make its appearance, apocalyptic seems to be the prerogative of the fringe whose vitriolic condemnation of the present structure of the world is matched only by the hysteria announcing a new world order in which the protagonists are as eloquent as they are vague about the content of the new. At least as a social phenomenon, the predilection to apocalyptic has had more vitality in North America than in Eu-

rope; in addition to a significant minority being open to its message, it has found expression in cults and perhaps more innocuously in the literature of rapture. Although a distinction between apocalypticism as psycho-social reality and apocalyptic as a literary discursive phenomenon can in principle be sustained, the fact of the matter is that apocalypticism in Western culture is tied to the reading of the Bible, and often quite directly associated with the reading of the apocalyptic books, with a focus on apocalyptic motifs, and above all with a privileging of the book of Revelation. Albeit marginal and/or underground, apocalyptic stubbornly refuses to die the death that has been assigned it. Although it is not difficult to point to its social location at a distance from Christian high culture, still it continues to have a measure of vitality, with visions of a world of total corruption demanding radical change that cannot but be catastrophic, a sense of being both communally and individually on the razor's edge, and an exigent sense of a demand for new practices and forms of life.

Even if apocalyptic is repressed rather than defeated, there is widespread agreement within the broader culture as well as in the scholarship which reflects on it, that a defensive posture is necessary. In a time in which there is an explosion of scholarship on ancient apocalyptic, from the apocalypses of the Qumran community to the apocalypses of

Nag Hammadi,[1] there is not only widespread skepticism in secular culture about the intelligibility of apocalyptic modes, but also not a little questioning within the guild of biblical studies regarding its justification. Apocalyptic texts, especially ancient apocalyptic texts, are curiosities, certainly engaging, maybe even in some respects moving, but their ways of seeing are impossible to us now, and their prescriptions of practices and forms of life appear to us ludicrous when not outrightly morally reprehensible. Indeed the state of research on ancient apocalyptic texts evinces an emerging preference for non-canonic apocalypses.[2] While the reasons adduced for preference are usually more genetic than ethical – that is, non-canonic apocalypses give the interpreter purchase on canonic apocalypses in a way that study of canonic apocalypses alone do not – arguably such preference is fueled by the interest in getting as much distance as possible from reception in fundamentalist circles of canonic biblical apocalyptic in general and Revelation (book of) in particular. This is a view, however, which *prima facie* is shared in large part by the modern theological guild as a whole. Here it is not difficult to espy an introjection of an essentially Enlightenment diagnosis of Revelation as obscurantist and fanatical and inclined to violence. Theologians who speak for the mainline churches do not appear to have a wholly different affect than D.H. Lawrence,[3]

who inveighed against Revelation as the bloodiest of bloody texts. In any event, the not so subtle message is that this strange text, which is a veritable cornucopia of symbols, and the aggressive transformative orientation that it represents and recommends, should be ignored.

One should avoid the implication, however, that once again we are dealing solely with modernity's sanitizing of religion and extrusion of otherness. A cowardly accommodation with modern culture, and an uncritical adoption of Enlightenment suppositions and/or fears, is surely not the whole story. Throughout its long history, theology has developed largely in non-apocalyptic directions that variously feature doctrine, institution, spiritual and moral disciplines and practices. Even with those inclined to a dose of nostalgia for the early church, there is a general recognition that the emergence of catholic Christianity seriously debilitated, even if it did not sign the death warrant of, biblical apocalyptic, already riven by disappointment regarding the parousia. This was not the only reason for reservation with respect to Revelation in the ancient world, but it was an ingredient in it. Moreover, throughout history, when faced with the prospect of an apocalyptically exercised Christian community, the spokespersons of the mainline theological tradition took exception to it. The Joachimism rendered so vibrant by Umberto Eco in *The Name of the Rose*

is precisely calculated to excite suspicion about itself and Revelation as its Ur-text. The apocalyptic, or meta-apocalyptic of Joachim of Fiore (1135-1201),[4] consists of symbols and proceeds by association and analogy; its code requires translation with no validation procedures available, and incites change in the political as well as the religious status quo. An Aquinas committed to rational argument and translucent explication of what have to be accepted as premises in the realms of both reason and faith offers an influential critique of the apocalyptic theology of Joachim. According to the *Summa*, Joachim's trinitarianism (1, qq. 39, 43) is as suspect as his Christology (3, q. 104), and in granting the kind of autonomy he does to the Spirit, Joachim also deals a serious blow to the status of the church as representing Christ, and to the efficacy of the sacraments (3, qq. 103-106).[5] And Bonaventure,[6] who is more focused on the realization of the Christian life, is similarly exercised by Joachimism, and believes that Joachim's departures from an Augustinian view of history and eschatology spell disaster for Christian life as well as thought.

The repression of apocalyptic, however, is not simply a Catholic phenomenon, as the sad case of the repression of Thomas Müntzer by followers of Luther in the sixteenth century eloquently testifies. Later outbreaks of apocalyptic discourse in Lutheranism came in the form of the seventeenth-century

speculative thinker Jacob Boehme (1575-1624) and the eighteenth-century Pietists Johann Albrecht Bengel and Friedrich Christoph Oetinger.[7] Within the Protestant tradition, Kant famously wrote against enthusiasts,[8] and one can read the great biblical scholar Rudolph Bultmann as adopting a neo-Kantian posture with respect to apocalyptic when he argues for demythologization. For nowhere are myth and the cosmological hierarchy more evident than in apocalyptic texts, which provide us with an unparalleled vision of divine action in history and thus divine figuration. In the theological appropriation of Kant, an epistemic is added to an ethical presumption that puts a theological block on apocalyptic: apocalyptic is unratifiable as a discourse. Although this doubling is most typical of liberal Protestantism, it has by and large been accepted also by Catholic theology. This is, arguably, true of the transcendental turn in Catholic theology, whereas older, more formal styles of Catholic theology exclude apocalyptic on doctrinal and/or ecclesial grounds. And it is no argument against the exile of apocalyptic from current Catholic theology that the books of C.S. Lewis or Tolkein can legitimately be read as examples of apocalyptic. For while both *Narnia* and *Lord of the Rings* could be interpreted as improvisation on the book of Revelation, not only is Revelation one influence among other influences coming from the entire history of

epic and romance, but the very fact that apocalyptic is delegated to the imagination confirms rather than falsifies the view that contemporary theology seems to have build a *cordon sanitaire* around itself to repel apocalyptic infection.

THE APOCALYPTIC TURN

With respect to the assimilation of apocalyptic in theology, or even more, the construction of a genuine apocalyptic theology that continues to have association with high culture, the prospects, then, look pretty bleak. There seems to be a binary opposition in the modern world between apocalyptic and the discipline of theology. Moreover, the history of theology seems largely to be the history of the marginalization of apocalyptic. On closer look, what have been functioning as major and minor conclusions at the very least are in need of qualification. I begin with some questioning of the view that the mainline theological tradition is bereft of apocalyptic impulse.

A look throughout the centuries reveals that apocalyptic discourse keeps on returning despite the numerous proclamations of its death and the stiff defenses erected against its appearance or reappearance. I will want to argue that the 'revenance,' to use the French word which in modern discourse means return and haunting, does not simply apply to the heterodox theological tradi-

tion, but also – although obviously in an entirely different way – to the more mainline theological traditions. It is certainly true that apocalyptic finds a number of outlets in high-culture discourses of heterodox vintage. The replete symbolic and interpretive discourse of Joachim of Fiore, which speaks to a new age and state of community, is not a bad place to start. From there one could proceed to the manifold apocalyptic discourses of Puritan England, which find an outlet in Milton's *Paradise Lost*.[9] From there to the highly speculative forms of Protestant apocalyptic instanced by Jacob Boehme (seventeenth century), and in the eighteenth century by Emmanuel Swedenborg, Albrecht Bengel (1687-1752), and Friedrich Christoph Oetinger (1702-1782).[10] Plausible nineteenth-century stops in the heterodox apocalyptic itinerary would include the discourses of Romanticism, especially that of the visionary William Blake,[11] whose commitment to the 'human form divine,'is intended as a whole-scale revision of orthodox Christianity; the discourses of German Idealism, that of Schelling as well as that of Hegel,[12] and perhaps also the various brands of Hegelianism, most notably the apocalyptic allegiances of the Hegelian left, but not entirely excepting the right-wing Hegelianism of, for example, Ferdinand Christian Baur. This trajectory might be thought to have a possible terminus in the apocalyptic discourses of the Russian religious

thinkers Bukarhev and the better known Soloviev,[13] which exercise a significant influence over Eastern Orthodox thought in the very different forms of apocalyptic thinking of Nicholas Berdyaev and Sergei Bulgakov.[14]

What I have indicated above abbreviates considerably a very complex story, which has any number of narrators, and two superb Catholic representatives, who take responsibility for the medieval and modern forms of the story. We do not need the imprimatur of Hans Urs von Balthasar to judge that one of Henri de Lubac's finest works is his genealogy of Joachimism from the medieval to the modern period, *La postérité spirituelle de Joachim de Fiore*.[15] This is as comprehensive an account of the trajectory of Joachimism as is available, even if some of the aspects have been covered by others. And in his magisterial *Apokalypse der deutschen Seele* (1937-39) Balthasar himself adds depth to the apocalyptic genealogy by characterizing most high-culture discourses from the eighteenth century on as being apocalyptic in basic figuration, with the interesting exception of theology.[16] Since both of these afficionados of the entire *Catholica* obviously have serious problems with the forms of apocalyptic that they render so well, this could easily give the impression that they both ratify and embrace theology as a non-apocalyptic discipline. It is, however, far from clear that the resistance to apocalyptic in their case or

another entails a commitment to a non-apocalyptic form of theology. Indeed, from a logical point of view it is possible that theological discourses can be or even should be more rather than less apocalyptic in order to function adequately as a diagnostic and refutation of apocalyptic forms of thought. More of this later.

The question arises: is there only a heterodox tradition of apocalyptic theology? An unequivocal affirmative answer seems unwarranted. For example, it seems evident that one can make a case that Irenaeus's *Against Heresies* is in some significant ways an apocalyptic text,[17] with the Book of Revelation playing an important role in defeating Valentinianism as a spurious form of apocalyptic. While the late second-century text *Against Heresies* lacks a typical feature of apocalyptic, the arrogation of authority to a 'seer,' in its interpretive rather than 'originary' economy it articulates many of the most salient features of apocalyptic: a view of history in which fundamental decision is called for by communities and individuals; a view of the church as both persecuted but also subject to intellectual seduction by narrative-speculative counterfeits that either dissolve traditional Christian practices (prayer, hospitality, table fellowship) or metaphorize others (baptism) and rule out specifically Christian forms of life (e.g., martyrdom); a figuration of God, who far from 'lying against time,' as the Gnostics would

have it, is superbly the righteous and merciful lord of history. Allowing for the interpretive and ecclesial shift, Balthasar suggests what others more nearly demonstrate, that *Against Heresies* is in effect Christian apocalyptic by other means, indeed, a form that itself suffers significant marginalization in later centuries despite the importance of Irenaeus both as a doctrinal theologian and as a theologian deeply committed to salvation history and a trinitarian scoping of it. As is well-known, apocalyptic is not entirely unknown in subsequent centuries, as the case of Lactantius suggests.[18] Lactantius seems to have in play many – if not most – of the features that characterize biblical apocalyptic: vision of the pattern and meaning of history; sense of God as sovereign judge, imminent expectation in terms of the 'hour' and 'now' tradition of apocalyptic of the Synoptic Gospels and the Pauline Writings (1 and 2 Thessalonians *inter alia*), and the sense of the requirements of radical decision with respect to practice and form of life.

Lactantius, however, is an interesting, but at best somewhat marginal figure, and does not really help to make the case that apocalyptic has a reserve in the mainline theological tradition as such. Now while ultimate characterization of Augustine's theology as a whole, and even of *The City of God* alone, may prove elusive, one might do well to avoid the stereotype that this text more nearly represents the

overcoming of apocalyptic than a highly significant improvisation.[19] It is true that Augustine's great text puts an exclamation point to the relenting of expectation of an imminent end. It is equally true that when Augustine is deployed by both Aquinas and Bonaventure to cull the chiliastic apocalyptic of Joachim, he tends to get constructed anachronistically not only as an ecclesial theologian (which all apocalyptic theologians are), but as an ecclesiastical theologian. Yet, it is not evident that the criterion used to forbid Augustine 'apocalyptic' ascription is decisive, since it is not clear that the presence or absence of this feature of expectation of imminent end trumps all the other features that are generally found in apocalyptic texts. Most often the case for a non-apocalyptic reading is not explicitly argued, and may, indeed, be unarguable. In *The City of God* Augustine clearly puts himself in the situation of a reader of the signs of the times, who is obedient to the words of scripture (apocalyptic in the hermeneutic mode), who not only speaks against persecution and expresses the hope for peace, but also speaks out against the parade of the similitudes of truth in history. That one can reasonably read the text, then, as something like an application of Revelation is most evident in Books 20-22 in which Augustine attempts a hermeneutic of Revelation with a focus on the end. One can argue that to the extent to which this text was productive, and not simply

instructive, in the theological tradition, Augustinian theology possessed the negative capability of continuing apocalyptic within the mainline theological tradition. Very much under the influence of de Lubac, Pope Benedict XVI is very interesting in this respect. His early work on the eschatology of Bonaventure allows for two competing interpretations:[20] the first, that Bonaventure represents a formally correct antidote to Joachimite apocalyptic, and the second, that bathing in the same apocalyptic waters as Joachim, Bonaventure's thought represents a visionary and thus apocalyptic answer from within the magisterial tradition. However, even if the first option was the one that on exegetical grounds best conformed to Bonaventure's texts, one can certainly see in the late medieval period other kinds of replies to Joachim and Joachimism that have significant Bonaventurean coloration. Here I am thinking especially of the *Divina Commedia*.[21] For this to be plausibly true, one would have to read Dante's great text both (i) from the point of view of the *Paradiso*, in which genuine community is figured as normative precisely because it is eschatological, and (ii) with the view that the temporalization into 'before' and 'after' of pre- and post-eschatological cannot be firm, since one of the effects of the *Commedia* is a radical transformation of our behavior in the here and now before a God who, if ineluctably merciful, is also just.

It is possible, then, to think of the mainline theological tradition as having within it two related but distinct apocalyptic strands, the Irenaean and the Augustinian, neither of which eschew the Trinity as the ultimate horizon for the enactment of salvation, but which vary somewhat with regard to emphasis on the economy, on the dramatic quality of redemption figured in the sacrifice of Christ, on the level of distinction between the pre-eschatological and eschatological state of human being in relation to God, and on the calibration of the ratios between justice and compassion in the sovereign God. The importance of this distinction for our reflection on twentieth-century and contemporary theology will, however, only gradually become relevant.

Before I get to the frame of this essay, which concerns the presence of apocalyptic in more or less contemporary examples of theology, it is necessary to draw attention to the fact that the marginalization of apocalyptic from the Reformation on not only found a counterpoint in heterodox varieties of apocalyptic, but also in experimental forms of thought conspicuous for their orthodoxy. It would not be going too far to say that Johann Georg Hamann (1730-88) brings out the recessive apocalyptic elements of Lutheranism copiously displayed in the latter half of the sixteenth century,[22] while at the same time representing something of an antithesis to the chiliastic (Bengel) and speculative (Oetinger)

forms of apocalyptic that were the preferred styles in German Protestant thought in the second half of the eighteenth century. And though Hegelian apocalyptic and/or its derivatives were rebuffed by most Catholic thinkers in the nineteenth century, in the work of the Tübingen theologian Franz Anton Staudenmaier (1800-56),[23] we find something like an apocalyptic rebuttal to Hegelian apocalyptic in that Hegelian discourse is regarded as a simulacrum of revelation, indeed, a counternarrative that twists every individual aspect of the biblical narrative, and makes impossible genuine Christian practices (i.e., Eucharist) and forms of life (e. g., genuine holiness or sanctity).

This brief rehearsal of the pattern of survival of apocalyptic both within and without the mainline theological traditions is a requirement if we are to get purchase on the twentieth-century and contemporary 'turn' to apocalyptic. That the 'turn' is also a 'return' does not so much gainsay originality as suggest that most twentieth-century and contemporary forms of Christian apocalyptic either refer to or construct a tradition or both. This tradition of apocalyptic discourse, whether within or without mainline Christianity, by and large functions critically with respect to the discourses, practices, and forms of life of modernity that are inhospitable to Christian revelation. The turn or return is significant enough in terms of range and depth to make

rumors of the 'death of apocalyptic' greatly exaggerated. To play with but reverse the Hermetic axiom of God being everywhere and nowhere, one might say with respect to apocalyptic that in the twentieth century and contemporary theology it is nowhere and everywhere. If its presence is not saturating, it is definitely more than a leaven. Most certainly, it is not limited to the guild of experts on non-canonic and canonic apocalyptic. The least that can be said with respect to modern or contemporary theology is that apocalyptic inflection is conspicuous enough to deserve a place at the theological table.

Apocalyptic forms of theology find representatives in all the Christian confessions. Apocalyptic finds Catholic representatives in Hans Urs von Balthasar, Johann Baptist Metz, Gianni Vattimo,[24] possibly some forms of liberation theology, where the emphasis falls on the not-yet of the kingdom of God, and latterly in Jack Caputo; Protestant representatives in the very different discourses of Jürgen Moltmann, Thomas Altizer, Catherine Keller; an Anglican representative in Milbank and perhaps also thinkers influenced by him; and Eastern Orthodox representatives in Bulgakov and also in the contemporary theological aesthetics of David Bentley Hart. There are various complex interactions between all these representatives both inside and outside their confessional brackets. And all have proximate and distant apocalyptic ancestry.

To speak to just two representatives, which due to space restrictions will not get a significant amount of play in my text: the self-consciously heterodox Altizer promotes a form of apocalyptic he believes continuous with the apocalyptic forms of Romanticism (Blake) and Idealism (Hegel). Less proximally, given his strong epochal sense of things, Altizer would not reject the view that he is articulating the 'eternal Gospel' of a metanarrative of the self-emptying divine in which the deletion of transcendence involves the apotheosis of humanity. Another example would be the 'apocalypse sans apocalypse' of Jack Caputo, which depends significantly on the philosophical discourses of Blanchot and Derrida, both of whom suggest a place for a very refined form of apocalyptic discourse beyond the discursive practices of philosophy and theology. Yet this form of apocalyptic is also understood to disturb in particular more recognizably apocalyptic discourses, whether non-biblical – for example, the enthusiastic visionary discourses that were the object of Kant's scorn – or biblical apocalyptic discourse, especially the apocalyptic discourse which tends towards a kind of total knowledge or total myth, that is, Revelation. As quintessentially critical forms of discourse, these two particular forms of apocalyptic theology, indeed modern and contemporary apocalyptic theology in all its variety, are united by their dissatisfaction with the regimes

of discourse, practices, and forms of life of modern or contemporary Christianity as they flounder either by endless concession to secular culture or by getting caught in a reaction formation. Broadly speaking, there are two basic concerns in modern and contemporary theology of apocalyptic vintage, with different dominant-recessive relations between them – although most will attempt a synthesis. The first concern is the attenuation of Christian identity consequent to the corrosive effect of the Enlightenment on Christian discourse and practice (e.g., Balthasar, Bulgakov, Hart, Milbank), the second concern is that of justice (Moltmann, Metz, liberation theology, the feminist theology of Catherine Keller, Caputo).

As is already apparent, modern and contemporary apocalyptic theology is not monolithic. It takes various forms and has various interests. When it comes to forms of apocalyptic, instead of speaking of types, which tends to repress rather than exhibit the plurality of apocalyptic discourses, I prefer the metaphorics of space. Here 'space' is better understood in terms of mechanics than of geometry: it indicates fields of force that attract some discourses and repel others. A space of apocalyptic suggests a constellation of discourses that bear close family resemblances to each other. One can expect that most Christian confessions will tend to have more than one space of apocalyptic, although the variety will

tend to be more or less. These spaces arrange themselves along two different axes: an epistemic and an ethical axis, which correspond very roughly to the two concerns that I noted above, the concern with Christian identity and the concern with justice.

With respect to the epistemic axis, the issue is how full is the disclosure of divine reality and its relation to the world and history and how directive is it of specifically Christian practices and forms of life.

With respect to epistemic competence, I am persuaded that there are three fundamental options, which in turn are primarily responsible for the organization of the entire space of apocalyptic theology or the space of spaces. The first option is a visionary form of apocalyptic theology which discloses a great deal about God's intention for the world and what God has done, is doing, and is going to do for it, and unveils our place in the movement of history and its destination. In and through this vast conspectus God discloses his justice and mercy. The content, or eidetic,[25] level of this form of apocalyptic theology is extraordinarily high. Typically, 'cross and resurrection' provides the interpretive key for a rendition of the entire biblical narrative, and the theocentric horizon is often – but not always – defined by reference to God not only as self-sacrificial but as triune.

A second option is, from the point of view of content, much more minimal, and tends towards emphasizing a complete interruption or tear in standard modes of knowing, practice, and form of life, without fully specifying the alternatives. If the first option allows a variety of maximally eidetic versions of apocalyptic that display different degrees of hospitality and hostility towards each other, this option has its correlative in a space of discourses all of whose representatives are characterized by a conspicuous lack of content. At the same time, all of the discourses of this space are marked by vehement critique of the discourses, traditions, and structures of religions as well as society at large, and sometime take particular aim at both the reception of apocalyptic within the Christian tradition and its pivotal text, that is, the book of Revelation.

The third option falls between the maximalist and minimalist options, and is a space that essentially overlaps with what appear to be mutually repelling spaces of maximally and minimally eidetic apocalyptic forms. It overlaps with the space of maximalist apocalyptic to the extent to which the self-gift of the divine and the corresponding elevation of human being is at its core. And it overlaps with the minimal space of apocalyptic and its theological varieties, as well as their proximate and ultimate traditions, to the extent to which (a) it hesitates with respect to description of – if not necessarily reference

to – a God who fundamentally transcends history, (b) in some measure it embraces the rhetoric of the radically new, and (c) it demonstrates either disinterest in or hostility towards institutional Christianity and towards doctrine as the fruit of interpretation of Christian faith and witness.

At grave risk of making the obscure more obscure, I will suggest using the language of *pleroma* (fullness) and *kenoma* (empty) and *metaxu* (between), or better the three adjectival forms of these Greeks terms, *pleromatic*, *kenomatic*, and *metaxic* as labels for the spaces that correspond to fundamental decisions about apocalyptic. A terminological clarification is in order. Our use of these terms is pragmatic. While each of these terms has very specific textual locations – for example, *pleroma* is both a New Testament and a Valentinian term,[26] *kenoma* is the Valentinian antipode to *pleroma*, and *metaxu* is a Platonic term indicating human-being's in-between status – in borrowing them, I am not committed to the meaning any term had in its original setting. Although I underscore that each of these spaces has multiple theological representatives, I should note that I will not supply detailed description of any of the theological representatives within the particular spaces that I have just christened. In terms of pages I should confess that I will privilege forms of apocalyptic in pleromatic space on the ground that this space overall displays the greatest productivity

and differentiation between instances and shows the most determined engagement, negative as well as positive, with the theological tradition in general and with the apocalyptic tradition or traditions in particular. Again as a preliminary, it is worth putting out as a hypothesis at least that differences between representatives from different spaces of apocalyptic theology will generally be more pronounced than differences between representatives within a particular space. For example, Balthasar's mode of apocalyptic, which belongs to pleromatic space, differs much more from Benjamin's form of apocalyptic, which belongs in kenomatic space, than it does from the maximalist eidetic form of apocalyptic of David Bentley Hart, which, like Balthasar, involves a rich rendition of the theological tradition. Similarly, Metz, whose form of apocalyptic belongs in metaxic space, differs more from Moltmann, whose apocalyptic form belongs in pleromatic space, than from the apocalyptic type of Keller, with whom he shares metaxic space.

I have said quite a bit about the epistemological axis of apocalyptic, and have more or less organized the spaces of apocalyptic according to it. It is time to say something, however, about the ethical axis or the axis of justice, which here has been relegated to a secondary status. In terms of emphasis at least, it seems sensible to hypothesize that the axis of superordinate-subordinate tends to go in the opposite direction to the epistemological. Even with the caveat that we are, indeed, speaking of a tendency, nonetheless, on the surface at least it would seem that while the issue of justice is only variously important for instances of apocalyptic theology in pleromatic space, in contrast, justice is the constitutive concern, albeit in different ways, for such individuated theological articulations of the kenomatic space of apocalyptic as are found in Derrida, Blanchot, and Caputo.

With respect to justice, the metaxic is once again 'between.' Yet, importantly, it might reasonably be supposed that when it comes to the emphasis on justice more influential forms of apocalyptic theology, for example, those of Metz and Keller, and some forms of liberation theology and theology based on Critical Theory, have more in common with the instances of apocalyptic theology in kenomatic than in pleromatic space. If this proved to be so, then we might be justified in raising as a question whether there is something like a law of inverse proportion at work between the levels of eidetic and ethical commitment. Raising the question, however, does not mean that we can expect an affirmative answer. *Prima facie* the ethical concern seems to cut across all three spaces. Still, on the basis of our discussion of the epistemological axis, it is reasonable to conjecture that there are bigger differences between representatives of our three spaces of apocalyptic

theology than between instances within a particular space. The issue of justice much more nearly exercises Benjamin than Bulgakov, or Derrida than Balthasar. But this is not to say that there are not big differences between forms of theology within a particular space of apocalyptic. For instance, with respect to the issue of justice – although not necessarily his theology as a whole – the apocalyptic theology of Hart's *Beauty and the Infinite* is much closer to the 'Augustinian' apocalyptic of Milbank than to the self-consciously apocalyptic theology of Bulgakov.[27] At the same time the metaxic instances complicate, for in the case of Metz and some forms of liberation theology, it is difficult to see that justice is any less exigent than it is in instances of apocalyptic theology in kenomatic space.

In what follows I will essentially make two passes over the entire modern and contemporary field of apocalyptic. With the first, essentially I restrict myself to giving brief descriptions of a number of representatives (but not all) within each of the three spaces of apocalyptic. This task, however, has difficulties of its own, and however economical, nonetheless, requires a significant number of pages. With the second, the focus changes. On the basis of the exemplars of the three spaces of apocalyptic, I attend first to two different kinds of overlap and tension. The first concerns overlaps and tensions – especially the latter – between representatives of the different spaces of apocalyptic, and by implication between these spaces. My second, and supplemental, concern has to do with overlaps and tensions between apocalyptic representatives within a particular space. I conclude this essay by offering some critical assessment of the specifically theological merits of these spaces of apocalyptic and their representatives, in which I attempt to intimate the future direction of the crafting of apocalyptic theology.

ORGANIZATION OF THE SPACE OF APOCALYPTIC

As I have already indicated, the space of apocalyptic theology is a space of spaces, more specifically three spaces which I have labeled pleromatic, kenomatic, and metaxic. With respect to each of these spaces I will discuss at least two representatives, although this will mean that a number of important representatives will get bracketed until the second section, and more specifically until the second part of my discussion of overlaps and tensions between representatives, specifically the overlaps and tensions between particular representatives of theology within the same space of apocalyptic. Although I will (re)mark the religious persuasion and confessional allegiance of each apocalyptic discourse that comes in for discussion, as advertized I am focally interested in the epistemic register of the form of

apocalyptic – although hardly indifferent to whether and in what way the issue of justice gets raised – and the constitution of apocalyptic as a critical discourse that points to modernity as a form of forgetting and perhaps even worse a form of willed forgetting or misremembering. In related fashion, I discuss the extent to which criticism is brought to bear on church as institution, on doctrine, on liturgy and forms of life. At the same time, in line with my general emphases, I attend to whether and in what way the apocalyptic representatives relate to biblical material in general and biblical apocalyptic material in particular. I also do not leave go without comment the way in which the apocalyptic representatives examined encode themselves in particular traditions of apocalyptic, while taking aim at other such traditions.

THE PLEROMATIC SPACE OF APOCALYPTIC: MOLTMANN, BALTHASAR, BULGAKOV

There are more representatives of pleromatic apocalyptic than these, but, arguably, these three are the obvious choices, even if it may come as a surprise that Balthasar is just as self-consciously an apocalyptic theologian as Moltmann, who represents the Reformed tradition, and Bulgakov, who represents Eastern Orthodoxy. I begin with Moltmann, who is perhaps the best known apocalyptic theologian of the three.

Moltmann began his theological career with *Theology of Hope* (1967),[28] which represents a theological appropriation of the self-consciously apocalyptic thought of Ernst Bloch, as this vision is articulated in his sprawling three-volume *The Principle of Hope*.[29] In this volume's articulation of a future (*Zukunft*) that is not simply the future of the present and the past (*Futurum*), Moltmann finds a clue to the renovation of the original apocalyptic impulse of Christianity that has been covered over by the doctrinal and theological traditions, which essentially opted for a realized eschatology in which redemption has been secured in and through the saving action of Christ, and in which the institutional church comes to be regarded as the indispensable medium of redemption. In this early text Moltmann essentially lays down the path for all his later work by highlighting what he understands to be a deformation of the fundamental Gospel message concerned with the kingdom that is not yet, whose realization requires human commitment and agency. Moltmann can appeal to Käsemann among others for interpretive support with respect to his biblical claim while, nonetheless, putting it to more critical use in his reading of the theological tradition as corrupted by the static ontological categories of Greek thought and affected by the idolatry of power politics. In any event, 'hope' is the category which, unlike knowledge, is genuinely

open to the future and gives critical leverage on what is. By definition states of affairs are devoid of internal legitimation; they can, and often should, be imagined otherwise. In important senses, *Theology of Hope* represents a critique not only of the Christian past, but also of the contemporary world and of Hegelian philosophy. The latter presents the acme of a realized eschatology in the philosophical sphere, although, as Moltmann shows himself fully aware, Hegel understands himself to be a Christian philosopher, indeed, one whose conceptuality rehabilitates Christian symbol and narrative as it appropriates them. Since in Hegel's thought, however, 'is' and 'ought' coincide, it can only be judged to articulate a theodicy, which the magisterial theological tradition often fails to avoid.

As an evangelical theologian, Moltmann will give the Bible an emphasis that, obviously, is not matched by Bloch, although Bloch quite clearly thinks both that Christianity emerges from the crucible of apocalyptic discourse and, arguably, plays both a generative as well as sustaining role in the various apocalyptic traditions of the West. From as early as *Theology of Hope*, it is evident that Bloch has laid down a number of guidelines which Moltmann does not contravene, even as the focus of his theology undergoes considerable shifts, for example, from the focus on the cross and the Trinity, through creation and ecology, and back once again

to eschatology: (i) apocalyptic is polymorphously present in scripture rather than located in particular texts that instantiate a particular genre of biblical literature; (ii) the governing concern of apocalyptic inside biblical literature, as well as outside, is that of injustice; (iii) Revelation is a highly problematic text; (iv) biblical apocalyptic is not only a critical discourse in general, but either directly or indirectly through forms of theology in which it is embedded has functioned throughout history as an alternative discourse to mainline Christianity; (v) finally, and relatedly, there is an apocalyptic counter-history in which Joachim de Fiore is given a prominent role. Textually speaking, I will confine myself to *The Trinity and the Kingdom* (1981) in tandem with *The Crucified God* (1974)[30] and Moltmann's book on eschatology,[31] which, he argues, completes his 'systematic theology.'

The Trinity and the Kingdom represents a development beyond *Theology of Hope* in a variety of ways. The most salient of these is, of course, its trinitarian conspectus, which provides the horizon for the cross as expressive of the extremity of God's love for the world and especially for human beings. The cross, for Moltmann, is the *coincidentia oppositorum* of divine passivity and activity, for the more obvious vulnerability of the tortured body is a sign of the capacity of the divine to be affected by our tears and our hopes. Moltmann is not only apparently, but

really, offering a doctrine of God, which Bloch not only is not prepared to do, but on first principles cannot do.[32] In the tradition of left-wing critiques of Hegel, the future is the category that displaces God, rather than simply qualifying him, as Bloch provisionally suggests when he follows Buber in translating Exodus 3.14 *'eh'je asher eh'je* as 'I will be who I will be' (*PH* 3, 1235-36). Although a revisionist, Bloch is still a historical materialist who refuses to sanction talk of a reality that transcends history in some important respects. Given Moltmann's aversion to the theological tradition, which effectively recycles Harnack's 'acute hellenization hypothesis,' he can take theological advantage of this opening. The Septuagint translation of 'I am who am' represents a deformation that funds the overtaking of scripture by metaphysics. Should he have attended to it, Moltmann could only say that Gilson's reading of the passage,[33] which leaves the Septuagint intact, buttresses precisely the purloining of Bible of which he accuses theology as well as philosophy. *The Trinity and the Kingdom* also continues the renegotiation with Hegel that began in *The Crucified God*, in which the glory of Hegel's thought consists of his trinitarian and agonistic view of God. The terms of negotiation, however, become somewhat more stable in the later text. Whereas *The Crucified God* somewhat reversed the course set down by *Theology of Hope* by making Hegel a theological answer

rather than a problem, *The Trinity and the Kingdom* brings back a number of important criticisms of the Hegelian project, especially its totalitarian impulse and the requirement of the end of history.

While there are any number of other developments and individuating features, it cannot truly be said that the apocalyptic tendency of Moltmann's thought is diminished in any significant way in his more christologically and trinitarianly focused texts. *The Trinity and the Kingdom* elaborates a trinitarian form of apocalyptic, which keeps faith with the essentials of the apocalyptic position elaborated in *Theology of Hope*. It does not locate apocalyptic in a particular genre of texts, whether Revelation or First and Second Thessalonians; nor does it especially privilege the 'hour' passages in the Synoptic Gospels. Concerned with what is not yet, the apocalyptic strand in the Bible has a larger base than usually conceived. It is intrinsically linked to prophecy as the discourse of condemnation and hope. Since the coming of God's kingdom is connected with the overcoming of injustice – the sense of which has been heightened in the twentieth century – even the book of Job counts as in some sense a prophetic text,[34] and by derivation an apocalyptic text. As Moltmann in *The Trinity and the Kingdom* articulates a view of apocalyptic at the antipode to a genre analysis, it is evident that he is not especially engaged with the issue of Christian

identity. This is not to say, however, that the issue is of no concern, but rather that in attending to the issues of justice and injustice, Christian identity is secured. The relegation of Revelation to the margins becomes even more evident in an environment in which the Johannine corpus is appealed to quite liberally as setting the overall terms of the biblical narrative, its essential meaning as love, as providing brackets that suggest that redemption is unrealized (John 16.7), and as intimating that a powerful and fruitful way of understanding the Trinity is through the category of glory. Moltmann effectively separates Revelation out from the Johannine corpus. Although, arguably, the violence and certitude of the text provide sufficient justification, the separation has two other benefits: it discourages an emphasis on Christ as the realization of the eschaton, but also discourages an emphasis on the liturgical, which, in Moltmann's view too readily suggests a controllable site for the presence of the kingdom.

The objection to realized eschatology is pretty much grist for the mill in *The Trinity and the Kingdom*, in which, even if some magisterial figures such as Luther and Calvin are excepted, the main lines of Christian theology are submitted to vigorous critique. By comparison with *The Crucified God* it is not clear that any patristic figure escapes fundamental censure;[35] a no-exception rule seems to be in place with respect to all medieval theology. Both

Aquinas's trinitarian and Anselm's christological reflections are anathema. And in the modern sphere, Moltmann finds fault not only with Hegel's reflection on the Trinity, but also with Rahner's (*TK*, 144-48) and, most interestingly, with Barth's (*TK*, 139-44). The relationship with Hegel is especially complicated throughout the text: the critique of Hegel's monistic ontology of divine subjectivity is balanced by an acceptance of the Hegelian axiom that history is essentially the history of God; the rejection of Hegelian system is balanced by a positive attitude with respect to access to a speculative metanarrative that renders God as such; the rejection of Hegelian 'mediation' (*Vermittlung*) is balanced by an insistence on a logic of divine love; the rejection of Hegel's dismissal of divine agency is balanced by an acceptance of a developmental ontology in which history, and by implication the human suffering within it, represent a condition of God's self-realization. Finally, perhaps nowhere else in Moltmann's *oeuvre* is the construction of a counter-tradition so palpable. Needless to say, this counter-tradition will reflect the issue at hand. In *The Trinity and the Kingdom* this means that Moltmann is centrally interested in religious thinkers marginal to the mainline theological traditions, who testify directly or obliquely to divine passibility – it is value added if any of the thinkers testify to the triunity of the divine. In the opening

chapter of the text, as Moltmann calls on his cloud of witnesses, it becomes evident that only two of the figures mentioned could be called apocalyptic religious thinkers in the strict sense, that is, Jacob Boehme (*TK*, 34-36) and Nicholas Berdyaev (*TK*, 42-47). Still, given what is going on in this text in terms of the articulation of a speculative trinitarianism, which addresses the relationship of God and history, it is appropriate that one takes their contribution to be more indicative of what is going on in Moltmann's most famous text than, for example, the various other twentieth-century religious figures to whom he refers: the Spanish existentialist writer Miguel Unamuno, the Anglican theologian G. E. Rolt, or the Jewish thinker Abraham Heschel. If Boehme and Berdyaev provide indications with respect to the apocalyptic inflection of Moltmann's trinitarianism, the concluding chapter of the text confirms it. Chapter 6 of *The Trinity and the Kingdom* represents a paean to Joachim (*TK*, 202-21; esp. 202-10),[36] as it deploys him in what is simultaneously an apocalyptic reconstruction of trinitarian thought, and a trinitarian figuration of apocalyptic, but, arguably, more the latter than the former. At the end of the text, Moltmann has not really moved that far from *Theology of Hope* and from Bloch. Hegel's own apocalyptic becomes serviceable if subjected to a high dose of Joachimism.

In fact, *The Coming of God*, which essentially completes Moltmann's unsystematic 'systematic' theology, confirms this royally. Moltmann does integrate a number of elements of his theological journey subsequent to *Theology of Hope*, especially the emphasis on the cosmos and on glory or the glorification of God in and through creation and history.[37] The influence of Bloch's *Principle of Hope*, however, is still constitutive, something that Moltmann seems quite happy to acknowledge (*CG*, xii-xiii), and there is still a fierce loyalty to Joachim both as a historical figure and a prime carrier of Christian apocalyptic discourse.[38] In this text Bloch very much stands for himself. But in certain respects he also represents the prime instance of the recovery of messianism by Jewish thinkers in the twentieth century, which in Moltmann's view represents an incalculable gift to Christian theology. Bloch's messianism, first outlined in *The Spirit of Utopia* (*CG*, 30-33), is essentially supported by Rosenzweig's *The Star of Redemption* (*CG*, 33-36), Scholem's *The Messianic Idea in Judaism* (*CG*, 36-38), and even by Benjamin's 'Theses on the Philosophy of History' (*CG*, 38-41).[39] Even if in some respect the examination of twentieth-century Jewish messianism has something of the feel of a literature review on the topic, it serves the obvious rhetorical purpose of suggesting that Christian theology must take something like an 'apocalyptic cure,' which is not read-

ily available in Christian theology.[40] Along the way, Moltmann notes disagreements among the carriers of the messianic idea, and especially between Bloch and Rosenzweig, on the one hand, and Scholem and Benjamin, on the other. The central concern seems to be the presence of the anticipation of the kingdom in the former and its denial in the latter. Now, whether he fails to see the nuances between Scholem and Benjamin here is beside the point. What is pertinent is that in the Bloch-Rosenzweig form of messianism that he supports, there is both some element of vision and some kind of presence of the future embedded in the present. Apocalypticist though he may be, Moltmann thinks that Scholem's and Benjamin's form of apocalyptic too readily supports the kind of dialectic view of the relation between nature and grace embodied in Protestant theology by Barth.

Moltmann uncontroversially offers a good example of a form of theology that belongs to and helps to articulate the pleromatic space of apocalyptic. Is there a specifically Catholic counterpart? There is a clear, but not unsurprising, answer, that is, the Swiss theologian, Hans Urs von Balthasar. Balthasar is, indeed, the *ressourcement* figure with perhaps the widest intellectual range of any of this group of twentiteh-century Catholic theologians that represent this movement. Famously, however, he commences his fifty-year writing career with

Apokalypse der deutschen Seele,[41] which represents a critique of the apocalyptic dimensions of German literature and philosophy since the eighteenth century, and takes special aim against the apocalyptic inflection of German Idealism and Romanticism (vol. 1), on the one hand, and the apocalyptic aspects of the philosophical discourses of Nietzsche and Heidegger (vol. 3), on the other. And when Balthasar comes of age as a theologian, the feature of his work that is most enthusiastically embraced is his theological aesthetics. In the seven-volume *The Glory of the Lord* (*GL*), the critique of the Western discursive tradition for having eclipsed the category of beauty, and of theology for having failed to be mindful of 'glory' as the form in which the triune God is given, serves as both presupposition of and counterpoint to a massive operation of retrieval of the aesthetic dimensions of both scripture and tradition and a sustained argument as to how theological aesthetics represents the way forward. On both the genealogical and the constructive side, Balthasar's contribution to this greatly neglected vista in theology is enormous. While Marion showed in *Idol and Distance* (1978) that it is possible to see an apocalyptic strain in Balthasar's theological aesthetics,[42] certainly one could not entirely blame the reader of *The Glory of the Lord* – the first part of Balthasar's triptych[43] – for concluding that Balthasar's thought does not seem to be especially apocalyptically in-

clined. Morever, the careful reader of *The Glory of the Lord* would not lack for evidence that Balthasar takes a decidedly negative stance against apocalyptic, this time ancient rather than modern forms of apocalyptic. In the penultimate volume of *The Glory of the Lord*,[44] which reflects on the Old Covenant, Balthasar makes it plain that he has no truck with the messianism and apocalypticism of the intertestamental period, whose forms are usually thought to define the biblical genres (*GL* 6, 321-42).

Whatever the value of the direct evidence of antipathy to biblical apocalyptic – and on inspection it turns out to be less impressive than it first appears – the entire landscape changes when we turn to *Theo-Drama*, the second part of Balthasar's triptych. As the volumes get theologically specified and trinitarianly deeper, so also does the apocalyptic exigence. This becomes explicit in *Theo-Drama* 4, in which the reader finds a sustained treatment of the book of Revelation; and the apocalyptic dimension is carried forward into the apocalyptic trinitarianism of *Theo-Drama* 5,[45] in which the commentaries of the visionary Adrienne von Speyr both on John and on Revelation are a constant presence. *Theo-Drama* 4 describes in detail how Revelation is *the* theodramatic text, that is, the biblical text that supplies the blueprint for God's providential engagement with the world which, nonetheless, respects human response. At the center of this text is the

Lamb who is offered up and offers himself up, and whose gift is distributed to the church by the Holy Spirit. For Balthasar, this text is as ineluctably trinitarian as it is paschal, and in both these respects it cannot be sundered from the fourth Gospel or from other Johannine material. This is a point that separates Balthasar from quite different kinds of apocalyptic theologians, both those intrigued by a vision of a future that is 'not yet' and those disturbed by what they consider to be sectarian features of the most visionary or eidetic of all biblical apocalyptic texts. The unapologetic embrace of Revelation in *Theo-Drama* 4 sheds retrospective light on Balthasar's reflections on messianism and apocalyptic in *The Glory of the Lord* 6 (303-43). In *The Glory of the Lord* 7 Balthasar refuses to separate Revelation from the Fourth Gospel.[46] Even more telling is what forms of apocalyptic merit objection. Balthasar worries in *The Glory of the Lord* 6, on the one hand, about a messianism that focuses on the kingdom of the future for which human beings are in some fundamental respect responsible (303) and, on the other, about the speculative Enochian and Ezra traditions that seem to have cut loose altogether from prophecy and are marked by curiosity concerning the constitution of the transcendent world (324-39). But Balthasar exempts Daniel from the charge that it is either excessively immanentist or otherworldly, and determines that one can and

should draw a line from it to Revelation (324, 339). Canonicity is crucial to Balthasar, and a theology that claims to be apocalyptic should be regulated by the canonic biblical forms. As Balthasar makes perfectly clear, however, the priority of Revelation by no means suggests a binary opposition between it and the leaner apocalyptic divagations of Thessalonians and First Corinthians (*TD* 4, 45).

It is not simply a matter of accurate profiling that Balthasar considers Revelation to be a symbolic rather than a conceptual text all the way through. The symbolic nature of the text is the very condition of its functional apophasis, its pointing to God, who as glory is grasped as ungraspable. 'Glory' remains a key category that links theodramatics to theological aesthetics. As it does so, it also continues to enact the kind of separation Balthasar demands between his own project, which is formally similar to that of Hegel, and the great German Idealist. What is more evident in *Theo-Drama* is that Balthasar simultaneously takes aim at Hegel's putative predecessors and successors. Belonging to the former group, Balthasar insists, are Valentinianism (*TD* 5, 32-34, 150-51) and Joachimism (*TD* 5, 558), the first being more speculative, the second more messianic,[47] and belonging to the latter are left-wing Hegelians and Marx, but also Moltmann (*TD* 5, 168-75) and theologians influenced by him. The focused opposition to Hegelian-style

apocalyptic in *Theo-Drama* 5 provides the rationale for Balthasar's emphasis in his account of Revelation on the Antichrist as less the spirit of persecution than the spirit of semblance and dissimulation (*TD* 4, 56-58).[48] Hegel's trinitarian eschatology is, of course, only one of many Christian counterfeits in history, but like Valentinian apocalypse it is as systematic as it is captivating. Hegel is the most dangerous of friends, since he is convinced that, if only ultimately, knowledge is a match for all the dimension of the divine-world relationship and their why. Moreover, at the level of subtext at least, the pivot of Hegel's thought is the cross as the Trinity provides the infinite dimensions. Hegel, however, overcomes the symbolic matrix of Christianity, deletes its apophatic element, alters the meaning of Christ, and provides an analysis of the Trinity that not only dismisses any separation between ontological and economic Trinity, but also discounts a hypostatic interpretation of triunity, and insists that the trinitarian divine is one of self-becoming and self-development.[49]

It is not a little interesting that in his articulation of an apocalyptic theology, which he believes cannot be other than an apocalyptic trinitarianism, as he sets aim against a tradition of apocalyptic – which includes the venerable Bloch – embraced elsewhere in the pleromatic apocalyptic space, Balthasar constructs his own ancestry of theologi-

cal apocalyptic. Obviously, this tradition will neither dismiss Revelation or Daniel, nor separate it out from the biblical text as a whole. Although this tradition is not grounded in Augustine's theology, should a choice be forced between Hegel or Augustine, or Joachim or Augustine, then Augustine is the clear winner in both contests. More importantly, however, this apocalyptic tradition, which is both paschal and trinitarian, is anticipated in a number of other figures, none of whom can be claimed unequivocally to belong to the Augustinian tradition. This is most obviously the case with Irenaeus, whose influence in Balthasar's triptych exceeds even the most generous of extrapolations from the fine essay that adorns *The Glory of the Lord.* In *Theo-Drama* Balthasar makes clear that Irenaeus is not simply an aesthetic thinker, but a dramatic thinker,[50] which in turn is to imply that Irenaeus is an 'apocalyptic' thinker. In important respects, the genealogical-constructive lineaments of *Against Heresies* provides the overall structure of Balthasar's project. Moreover, Balthasar's attack against Hegelianism as a *Doppelgänger* has as its model Irenaeus's attack against the parodic rendition of the Christian narrative rendered by Gnosticism. As Book 5 of *Against Heresies* makes clear, however, Revelation's symbol of the 'Antichrist' provides the energy as well as the content of a Christian diagnostic. As practiced by Irenaeus, and taken up by Balthasar,

the point is neither exclusion nor incitement to violence, but rather 'de-scission,' a separating out of what appears to be Christian from what really is so.

The eighteenth-century Lutheran religious thinker Hamann, admired by both Hegel and Kierkegaard but for very different reasons, certainly belongs to the apocalyptic tradition upon whom Balthasar relies. Again, it is not an impediment that this religious thinker is considered to have elaborated a theological aesthetics.[51] Hamann's emphases throughout his writings on the cross and the trinitarian persons as constitutive of the overcoming of death and the formation of the heavenly Jerusalem, the obvious importance of Revelation and its intratextual connections not only with New Testament material but with the entire Bible, his determined opposition to both rationalistic and esoteric-apocalyptic substitutes for Christianity, and his self-stylizing as a hieratic thinker who deals in signs, all suggest that he belongs to the apocalyptic line of which Balthasar can approve. The third apocalyptic figure on whom Balthasar depends is Sergei Bulgakov, who it so happens is also my third major entry in my sketching of the structuring of the pleromatic space of apocalyptic. I am relieved, therefore, from saying more than that this exploratory Russian thinker is a major influence on Balthasar, indeed one who becomes more rather than less important over the years. While Balthasar does initially enter-

tain reservations regarding Bulgakov's orthodoxy and the traditions (apocalyptic and otherwise) to which his sophiology might be indebted,[52] he never associates him with Nicholas Berdyaev, who is judged harshly in *Apokalypse*,[53] and he only associates him with the equally apocalyptically oriented Soloviev, concerning whom he has managed to assure himself that the apocalyptic traditions Soloviev calls on are neither those of Gnosticism, nor the speculative apocalypses of the Intertestamental period.

Before we conclude our cursory reflection on Balthasar's apocalyptic commitment, a few words should be said about Balthasar's prioritization of the epistemic over the ethical axis of apocalyptic, and his prioritization of Christian identity over justice. Throughout the triptych Balthasar is, arguably, more concerned with the gift given to Christianity than with teasing out the consequences of the anomaly between happiness and deserts. He tends to resist, therefore, elaborating a theodicy. This is not to say, however, that the issue of justice is ignored altogether. It is no accident that in *Theo-Drama*, which is the prime apocalyptic site in the triptych, theological reflection is conducted under the spotlight of action and the good. It is equally true that throughout the triptych, as well as in his numerous essays, Balthasar leaves the reader in no doubt that in the end Christianity is a vision of reality in which

each person is called to participate in the cross and the joy of resurrection to a maximum extent, and that the goal of Christianity is the making of saints, who will attempt to discern Christ's will in particular, even unrepeatable circumstances and to enact it. Justice, then, is hardly unimportant to the assimilation of the Christian to Christ, as Balthasar's reflections on the prophets and their commitment to the 'poor' (*anawim*) in *GL* 6 in particular shows. Still, Balthasar refuses to make securing justice constitutive either of God or of the Christian. There are deep theological grounds as to why Balthasar goes in this direction, which include the sense that Christ is more than justice, and what he thinks are the sacramental, doxological, and mystical ineluctables of Christianity. But, arguably, he is also influenced by the kind of apocalyptic reflection to be found in Soloviev and the Grand Inquisitor section of *The Brothers Karamazov*, in which Dostoyevski worries about the hunger for justice replacing the word and work of Christ rather than expressing it. These Russian thinkers pose a question that will have to be asked again and again,[54] and which is taken up into Catholic thought by the French poet Paul Claudel:[55] can justice become the banner of the Antichrist?

With this hyperbole, we turn now to our third and final example of a theological form that belongs to the pleromatic space of apocalyptic. While one

has to argue for an 'apocalyptic' characterization of Balthasar's theology, the theology of the Russian Orthodox theologian Sergei Bulgakov is self-evidently apocalyptic and arguably one of the most concertedly apocalyptic species of theology in the twentieth century. Bulgakov distinguishes himself from much of Eastern Orthodox theology not only by the experimental nature of his thought, but also by its apocalyptic drift, which unembarrassedly announces that central to Christianity is a vision of God and the movement of history in which the paschal lamb is quite literally the crux. Throughout his great trilogy of *The Bride of the Lamb* (*BL*), *The Lamb*, and *The Comforter*,[56] but especially in the first of these, Bulgakov makes it plain that Revelation is constitutive for his elaboration of an apocalyptic trinitarianism. As is evident from what we have said already, the selection of Revelation as the textual lynchpin of an apocalyptic theological form in pleromatic space is far from automatic. This decision in turn funds a number of finely grained hermeneutic decisions, which not surprisingly remind of Balthasar, who has the example of Bulgakov before him. These include tying Revelation firmly to the Johannine material, assuming that, despite its incredibly comprehensive historical and cosmic canvas, Revelation is complementary to rather than competitive with the apocalyptic set-pieces of Matthew 24-25 and First and Second Thessalonians

(*BL*, 319-20), and in terms of discursive primogenitors focusing on Daniel rather than on the extra-canonic Enoch and Ezra material.

Although continually submitted to scrutiny by the more traditional-leaning thinkers of Eastern Orthodoxy, Bulgakov considered himself to be an ecclesial rather than an unaffiliated religious thinker such as the similarly apocalyptically disposed Berdyaev, who is heavily invested in the speculative apocalypse of Boehme and the anti-idealist thought of the 'later' Schelling. Still, although Bulgakov worries about Soloviev's lack of discrimination between canonic and extra-canonic apocalyptic material, as well as his attraction to some Gnostic texts in the elaboration of his sophiology,[57] he does not think of Soloviev as belonging to the heterodox wing of Western apocalyptic that finds a safe haven from the scourge of the Enlightenment in nineteenth-century Russia. Bulgakov judged Soloviev's apocalyptic thought to be discontinuous with heterodox forms of apocalyptic, which found different expressions in Hegel and Schelling. He also considered his and Soloviev's form of apocalyptic theology to be other in their foundation than that of these German religious thinkers: other in their commitment to the church over society and the state, other in their commitment to the paschal mystery of Christ, and finally other in their elaboration of

tri-hypostatic Trinity, only ambivalently supported by Schelling and roundly rejected by Hegel.

We have seen already the speculative apocalyptic traditions that Bulgakov rejects. But it is equally obvious that, as a thinker formed in the crucible of the Russian Revolution, he rejects the messianic or world-transforming spirit of Marx and his epigones. In a text such as *The Bride of the Lamb*, Bulgakov makes it abundantly clear that he believes real transformation of our estate is vested in the triune God rather than in human being, and that it is the essential task of human being to consider what God has done in Christ and what is promised in the eschaton. Rather than simply insist on the transcendence and sovereignty of God, Bulgakov emphasizes the discontinuity between the law of immanent development and the eschatological state of being in which we have trust and concerning which we have an outline and a myriad of guesses. Bulgakov shows himself more open than most theologians in the apocalyptic tradition, including those who privilege Revelation, to both the cosmological dimension of salvation and the catastrophic dimension of the transition from the pre-eschatological to the eschatological state of existence. If we ask the question whether, correspondingly, Bulgakov is himself an heir to an apocalyptic tradition, the answer would have to be yes. Proximally, of course, this means Soloviev (maybe also Bukharev), and ultimately Revelation. There is, indeed, a much longer standing apocalyptic current in Russian religious thought of a nationalist ilk, but this would be just the kind of apocalypticism that Bulgakov would worry gives succor to the messianism of the Revolution, and possibly also the messianism against which Dostoyevski inveighs in *The Possessed*.[58] But if we rule this strand out, are there any other candidates? More specifically, is there anything that matches up with what we find in Moltmann and Balthasar? In the strict positive sense, the answer would probably be no, especially if one admits into the equation the relatively late acceptance in Eastern Christianity of Revelation as a canonic text. If one lowers the bar, however, then apocalyptic has a number of carriers. If one had to choose one particular theological figure it would be Irenaeus, whose visionary trinitarian thought Bulgakov so much affirms in *The Bride of the Lamb*. And if one had to choose a particular line of discourse as a carrier, it would have to be pneumatology.[59] For a Russian orthodox thinker such as Bulgakov, Joachim is not the central figure he is for modern Protestant and Catholic theologians. Moreover, it is clear that as an ecclesial theologian, Bulgakov would have no truck with a view of the Spirit as something of a free radical. The Spirit cannot be separated from Christ, nor from the Father as origin.[60] Whatever his objections to Western trinitarian theology,[61] Bulgakov would es-

sentially take the side of Aquinas and Bonaventure in his critique of any form of apocalyptic in which particular social arrangements seem to count more than the gift of the triune God.

Of all varieties of theology that articulate the pleromatic space of apocalyptic, that of Bulgakov is most clearly determined by a hermeneutic of Revelation. There is an unapologetic emphasis on 'seeing,' even if the seeing, which the theologian and the church participates in, is not a 'knowing' in the strict sense. This confusion is what worries him in extra-canonic and Gnostic apocalypses, as well as in the apocalyptic and messianic discourses of the nineteenth century. The non-knowledge of Revelation is embedded in the symbolic nature of the text, which escapes univocal determination and invites participation perhaps more than understanding (*BL*, 348). There is, then, an apophatic element to Bulgakov's discourse, although its level falls well below that espoused by figures of the twentieth-century Eastern Orthodox revival such as Lossky and Florovsky. Bulgakov, however, is persuaded that scripture takes precedence over the patristic tradition, which means also the penchant for the kind of apophasis displayed in Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzen, and even Maximus the Confessor. Bulgakov is convinced that Christianity fundamentally is a vision of reality (with qualifiers of its status being secondary), and that, furthermore, Christianity can only compete in the modern world if it has a determinable content. From his perspective, this content is eschatological, paschal, and trinitarian, and finds its most dramatic and panoramic disclosure in Revelation. Bulgakov's conviction that vision is the issue of modernity helps to explain his distinctive interpretation of the Antichrist. Bulgakov thinks that Revelation (17.8) has advantages over other biblical texts such as Daniel and 2 Thessalonians (2.2-10) in thinking of the Antichrist as plural rather than singular (*BL*, 30, 329-30), and in specifying as one of the characteristic behaviors of the Antichrist that of 'false teaching' or the 'lie' (*BL*, 330). Thus, in a sense wherever the 'lie' is, there is the Antichrist.

This is to go down an Irenaean track, one we also saw Balthasar follow. It is even more interesting in Bulgakov's case than in Balthasar's, given his flight from communist Russia, that he does not equally think of the Antichrist as a persecutor, which would be a perfectly reasonable interpretation of Revelation and for which there seems to be abundant textual support. At a few points (*BL*, 343-44) Bulgakov links Revelation and the call to martyrdom, but generally in his articulation of apocalyptic justice takes a backseat to truth, as injustice is secondary to the lie. It would be ludicrous, however, to think that Bulgakov has no interest in justice, or that he reneges on avowing divine providence or the over-

whelming goodness of God. Although one has to probe beneath the surface, at play are a number of concerns about justice determining Christian witness. First, Bulgakov is sensitive to the horrors that have been committed in the name of justice throughout history and proximally in the Russian Revolution. The thirst for justice all too quickly becomes indistinguishable from blood thirst and reverse hierarchy. Second, he is persuaded of the real social historical effects of the lie or ideology. Ideas do change the world, and oftentimes for the worst. Soloviev and Dostoyevski are the prophets of this prospect. Third, the concept of justice almost invariably inscribes an anthropological paradigm and comes to dictate the way God as well as human beings should behave. Fourth, and finally, as a leading concept, 'justice' tends to be totalitarian, determining what matters and what does not. The beauty of God, the beauty of the world, the beauty even of a life of impoverishment cannot play a role in its regime, which tends towards calculus. It is tempting to think of Alexander Solzhenitsyn's Nobel Prize speech on the topic of 'Beauty Will Save the World' (1973) as representing a counter not so much to justice, but to its totalitarian application.[62]

THE KENOMATIC SPACE OF APOCALYPTIC: BENJAMIN AND DERRIDA

It is time to turn to a space of apocalyptic, occupied and structured by religious proposals which are conspicuously low or empty of content. Thus, if the forms of theology in pleromatic apocalyptic space are maximally eidetic, the forms of theology in kenomatic space are minimally so. As their representatives are at the antipodes at least along the epistemic axis, pleromatic and kenomatic spaces operate to some extent as contraries. But can one find *bona fide* theological representatives of apocalyptic forms that tend towards zero content? Obviously, this is unlikely to be easy, since using the terms 'Christian' or 'Christianity' carries some obligation for determinacy. It is possible to see something of what I imply about the low or zero eidetic in Kierkegaard's 'leap of faith' and, of course, Barth's dialectical theology with its emphasis on an unmediated interruption. For in the case of both, if there is any content supplied by Christianity, it is supplied only in and through an act of negation, in the first case the negation of the ethical, in the second case the negation of all non-biblical discourses, including the religions and not excluding Christianity understood as one religion among others.

Yet, to take advantage of the emphasis on verticality that breaches all assumption and discourse

is to short-circuit an investigation in which 'apocalyptic' should be at least as much self-ascription as description of a discourse, and in which also there ought to be some evidence of concern with its relation to biblical apocalyptic, its derivatives or substitutes, and also its positive and negative relations to influential traditions of apocalyptic discourses. With all of these considerations in mind, I suggest that the discourses of Benjamin and Derrida are the two 'religious' discourses of the modern period that most transparently declare themselves as exemplars of this apocalyptic space. At the same time that I recommend these discourses, however, I am required to enter caveats. The apocalyptic discourses of Benjamin and Derrida are both self-consciously religious, without being 'theological' in the strict sense,[63] with Benjamin suggesting that his 'messianism' devolves from the tradition of the Kabbalah, and with Derrida proposing that the attenuated form of apocalyptic he subscribes to is in line with a faith that gives thought and proceeds from it.[64] In the strict sense, these apocalyptic discourses become 'theological' only in their adoption and adaptation by the disciplinary discourse of Christian theology, in which they get used to critique religious institutions, doctrines, dominant forms of theology, religious practices, and forms of life. Benjamin has significant currency in Catholic theology largely due to Metz's adoption and adaptation of the Jewish thinker's messianism, and similarly Derrida's apocalyptic discourse has something of a theological life due to its being taken up by Protestant and Catholic revisionists, inspired both by the prospect of relief from what they take to be the oppressive content of Christian belief and dynamized by the need for decision, which in the later twentieth century is focused on the 'other' rather than on oneself.[65]

I begin with the apocalyptic or rather the messianic discourse of Benjamin, which separates him from Critical Theory, on which he had a constitutive influence. From Benjamin's point of view, apocalyptic is essentially in solution in all that he wrote. Arguably, however, it is most conspicuously to the fore in his famous 'Theses on the Philosophy of History' (*Geschichtphilosophischen Thesen*), in the theoretical section of the Arcade Project (*Passagenarbeit*), and in a quite different form in *Trauerspiel*,[66] Benjamin's extraordinarily influential discussion of the German 'play of mourning' of the late Baroque period. Quite self-consciously, Benjamin plots himself into the tradition of the Kabbalah, which in his view is the name for a mystical form of Judaism other than Torah Judaism. Since, as Gershom Scholem,[67] the close friend of Benjamin, showed, the Kabbalah is a discourse with highly sophisticated interpretive practices and a marked penchant for speculating on the divine, it is quite clear that Benjamin is a Kab-

balist only by courtesy. Benjamin neither leaves intact the interpretive steps of classical Kabbalah, nor acknowledges the sacredness of the texts submitted to speculative exegesis, nor rests easy with its speculative content, which involves claims to adequacy and truth. What remains after all this contraction of the Kabbalah is the 'lightning flash,'[68] the moment of seeing or the glimpse, that transcends the common standards of description and explanation.

The messianic is the 'now-time' (*Jetzzeit*) that interrupts history, and cuts against the grain of its perception and justification.[69] Most discourses, and especially high cultural discourses, are discourses of the status quo that immunize themselves from critique. They pretend to be discourses of remembering when in fact they are discourses of forgetting. Unlike Bloch, Benjamin's contemporary, 'now-time' is not so much an anticipation of the future outside the control of past and present,[70] as a memory or memorial (*Eingedenkens*) of the victims in history to whom time left no recourse.[71] The time of messianism is the time of requital, a last judgment in excess of the judgment of history and its logic of power. The one who remembers – and in principle this is any of us – is figured as an angel who lacks the power and knowledge the angel typically has in both Jewish mysticism and Christian angelology. As the famous Ninth Thesis in 'Theses on History' has it,[72] the angel is the agonized on-

looker at the catastrophe of history which strews human debris everywhere. Even though the messianic is not totally without content, since it takes the side of the victims of history, it is the antithesis of utopia, which is the perennial temptation of the messianic. It functions critically, even anarchistically, with respect to history, which, whatever its social and political dominants, functions in a Moloch-like fashion.

So far, speaking only to Benjamin's two best-known texts, I have sketched the 'Jewish' backdrop of Benjamin's messianic reflection. Usually Benjamin is taken at his word, whether with or without acknowledgment of the very idiosyncratic nature of this Judaism. Although Benjamin's most famous work of literary criticism does not necessarily contradict the 'Jewish' view, it most certainly complicates it. *Trauerspiel* (*T*) excavates the forgotten drama of the German Baroque, which departs from classical theater in dismissing honor, the fulfillment of character, indeed anything that would smack of consolation in a world that submits everything to ruin (*T*, 176-78). In these plays, which offer absolutely no consolation, history proceeds without a trace of providence: it is absolutely fallen (*T*, 180), and death is the Lord of history. The redemption hoped for must come from outside of history; and this hope is indistinguishable from despair, since it has no basis. For an episodic thinker, Benjamin

displays massive consistency in his commitment to apocalyptic. He rescues apocalyptic forms from the amnesia of history. It matters little to him that the genre is literary rather than theological or philosophical, although in this case, 'plays of mourning' are both less and more than dramatic literature, and for the same reason: they are saturated by religion to the point that one cannot know where literature and religion begin or end. The indistinction between drama and religion, or literature and theology, is one of the ways in which, according to Benjamin, the German Baroque differs from the Spanish Baroque. The latter more nearly respects the relative autonomy of art, and is able to do so because of its commitment to the classical dramatic traditions. The second and crucially important way is pointed to more or less in passing when Benjamin observes that, whereas the high Spanish Baroque operates out of a Catholic ideological matrix (*T*, 97-98), by contrast the plays of mourning arise out of Lutheranism (*T*, 138-40). These dramas perform the Lutheran commitment to grace alone. If redemption is to come, it is *hors de texte* as it is also outside history.

While it would be risky to pull the rug out from under Benjamin's Judaism by insisting that in the end Benjamin offers another version of Protestant dialectic, still at the very least it suggests that there is a Christian religious as well as a Jewish element

informing Benjamin's eccentric construction of apocalyptic in the mode of *Augenblick*. Now this point is not purely academic, since when Benjamin's minimally eidetic form of apocalyptic is engaged negatively (Balthasar) or positively (Metz) by Christian theologians, the basic issue becomes that of the warrant for Christian adoption and adaptation of 'Jewish apocalyptic' and 'Jewish messianism.' What I have argued is that (a) Benjamin's messianism is antithetical to Torah Judaism, highly eccentric with respect to the Jewish mystical tradition, and departs from the Jewish messianic tradition in its objection to utopia, in that when there is talk of a Messiah, the Messiah either cannot come (Thesis 17) or is reduced to the status of an adjective (Thesis 6);[73] and (b) Benjamin's apocalyptic may already be Christianly and theologically primed. To recognize this would have the salutary consequence that when Benjamin's form of apocalyptic is rejected by a Christian proponent of a maximally eidetic apocalyptic (Balthasar), good relations between Judaism and Christianity are not at stake, and contrariwise, when Benjamin's form of apocalyptic is accepted as it is by Metz, the embrace of Benjamin's apocalyptic ought not be confused with the embrace of Judaism.

As a representative of apocalyptic in kenomatic space, Benjamin's messianism suggests an unequivocal correspondence between forms of apocalyptic

that refuse to thematize and the concern for justice in a world that provides no evidence for its real existence. Benjamin's 'religious' discourse – Benjamin is not afraid to call it 'theological' – has little interest in questions of religious identity or the integrity of religious practices. His discourse is a discourse of complaint indistinguishable from hope against hope as well as a discourse of mourning regarding the logic of sacrifice that governs the only reality to which we have access. Benjamin's memorial messianism sets the terms for Critical Theory, which in different ways and to different degrees bleaches Benjamin's discourse of its religious infusion. It is an interesting question whether this bleaching is sufficient to rid the discourses of Horkheimmer, Adorno, and Habermas of all traces of the messianic. And if the verdict is that somehow these discourses still remain messianically inflected, then the equally interesting question arises how we are to describe contemporary theological forms that have heavily invested in these discourses under the impression that these discourses are the discourses of a truly enlightened reason.

This brings me to my second exemplar, Jacques Derrida, whose status as a 'theologian' is similarly questionable, but whose messianic and/or apocalyptic discourse, which does not fail to allude to Benjamin, is taken up by Christian theologians, most notably by John Caputo in *The Prayers and*

Tears of Jacques Derrida.[74] The crucial essay of Derrida is his 'On a Newly Arisen Apocalyptic Tone in Philosophy' (*NAA*), which represents a critical appropriation of Kant's famous essay with a similar title, in which the great figure of the German Enlightenment lambasts those who dodge the hard labor of reason for the easy out of intuition of the absolute (*NAA*,122-33). Derrida sustains the 'critical' Kant in judging that visionary discourses, whether of the Romantic or the pre-Romantic sort, are illegitimate and irresponsible. However, he extends Kant's prohibition by suggesting that it also applies to the foundational apocalyptic texts of the Christian tradition, and especially the book of Revelation (*NAA*, 152-67). Indeed, perhaps the best way – maybe the only way – of reading this essay is to think of it as the immanent critique of the maximally eidetic apocalyptic of Revelation, in which the claim to vision, secrecy, initiation, and the view of the Messiah are all questioned at the most fundamental level. Revelation, Derrida is persuaded, is a book with the most brazen of claims to authority; it has many secrets to tell, and can tell them from a vantage point that is as timeless as it is panoptical. Not surprisingly, the charge Derrida makes against Revelation recalls his earlier critique of Hegel. The linkage between Hegel and Johannine material is of long standing in Derrida's *oeuvre*, and dominates Derrida's astonishing demolition of Hegel in *Glas*

(*NAA*, 161).[75] As the supreme instance of Christian apocalyptic (*NAA*, 157), Revelation is a totalizing discourse which, precisely as such, inclines to violence,[76] although this implicit violence is in turn reinforced by mechanisms of preference that exclude groups and individuals, and by a minatory rhetoric that demands compliance and that involves the sacrifice of intellect and compromise of ethical commitments that seem incontrovertible.

Derrida submits Revelation to a deconstruction in which the truth claims that revolve around the assertion of an irreplaceable Messiah who has come and who will come again are systematically weakened. Subtle as Derrida's analysis is, it has the fairly Enlightenment ring of suggesting that the assertions of the uniqueness of *adon Yeshoua* as Messiah, as well as of the fact that he has come and will come again, are so many overclaims. At the same time, Revelation remains valuable despite itself, in its suggestion of its excess of the economies of knowledge and power. Excess, however, is itself not subject to a thematization: it is ingredient in an anagogy, a participatory apophasis or non-knowledge. And Kafka once again is lucid in announcing that the Messiah has not come, will not come, nor truly can come. Read with just the right amount of impropriety, Revelation reveals any number of supplements, including the supplement that what apocalyptic is about, or at least can be about, is messianicity or

messianic function rather than messianic entities, whether Christian (known) or Jewish (unknown), or Zoroastrian, Manichaean, Gnostic, or Marxist, Nietzschian, or Heideggerian (*NAA*, 145-46). Typically ascetic, Derrida denies that he is being original in what amounts to a reading of Revelation that turns it inside-out, and at once undoes any apocalyptic form with a measure of content, and more specifically subverts the Christian theological tradition invested in the claims of Revelation as these are supported and reinforced by the Gospel of John. And if we insist on giving credit, then, he believes, the credit should go to Maurice Blanchot (*NAA*, 166-68),[77] who in a number of texts articulates a view of apocalypse as the 'event' to which no discourse could catch up, and showed how the pleromatic apocalypse of Revelation could be read to defeat the ambitions of its narrative and its symbolic matrix. Derrida is influenced by both sides of Blanchot's ineluctable contribution. With respect to the latter he endorses Blanchot's undoing of vision by focusing on the 'come' of Revelation 22.17. This end is also the beginning, the imperative that does not show up in the discourse on or of the Messiah. It is the true alpha and omega. The 'Come!' does not see anything, know anything, or even anticipate anything. 'Come!' or in French 'Viens' is *an-agogic* in the strict sense: it leads nowhere

(*NAA*, 166). Here is the absolute degree zero of apocalypse, an 'apocalypse without apocalypse.'[78]

For Derrida, after Blanchot, Revelation is exemplary rather than singular. The most obvious connection is with the kind of pleromatic apocalypse instantiated by the Hegelian concept, which claims to sum up the entire history of philosophy and the entire history of theological and specifically trinitarian reflection – a position which interestingly Derrida never fundamentally disputes. Derrida is more forthright in his judgment than Blanchot that Heidegger exceeds the tradition of knowing, which is also that of the secret, only to a very limited extent. Essentially, he remains convinced that Heidegger puts into play a form of apocalypse that has a pagan rather than a Christian content. Whatever the emphasis on 'event' (*Ereignis*) and unknowing, Heideggerian apocalypse, which develops in and through his elucidations of Hölderlin (*NAA*, 145-46), is eidetic: it says much about 'dwelling,' 'the holy,' 'gods,' the 'mortal,' and about 'Spirit' and about 'fire.'[79] Although Heidegger's apocalypse does not belong strictly speaking to the pleromatic space of apocalyptic, neither does it belong to the kenomatic, which is the one that Derrida recommends. In Derrida's terms, one of the ways of framing the problem with Heidegger is that his form of apocalyptic is not Jewish, certainly not Jewish enough. Needless to say, Derrida neither provides

a definition of Judaism in general, nor of Jewish apocalyptic in particular. If Benjamin's version is a trope, Derrida's is a trope of a trope. It stands proxy for a discourse that reveals nothing to everyone.

This is not to say, however, that the double trope is thereby useless: it does intimate, as Benjamin's messianism does, a concern with the other towards whom one demonstrates the infinite hospitality that is the contrary of the enjoining of the book of Revelation, which in Derrida's view is the 'book' of violence. It is here that Derrida essentially grafts his own discourse to the ethical discourse of Levinas (*NAA*, 162), whose entire thought rises against the ocularity of the philosophical and the theological traditions, especially those that take their cue from the Johannine material. As Derrida does this, he draws conclusions that are only implicit in the commitments of *Otherwise than Being* to the concepts of revelation and prophecy.[80] As revelation has no content that can be exposited, the prophetic is the obligation to the destitute other before me. The obligation is self-validating and does not require a reference to a divine whence. And the obligation is also concrete; it has to do with this singularity, rather than the application of a rule, for example the first or even the third form of the categorical imperative. In any event, Derrida uncouples what some theologians in the pleromatic space of apocalyptic tie tightly together, the apocalyptic and prophetic.

Here the prophetic is the contrary to the apocalyptic as such. More, justice is not only valued over and beyond any ecclesial or non-ecclesial identity, but every form of group identity is condemnable on grounds that it supports itself by violent exclusion. Derrida's 'apocalypse sans apocalypse' represents the antipode of many of the theological expressions in the pleromatic space of apocalyptic, and harbors a particular suspicion of the doxological (*NAA*, 163) as perhaps the ultimate in mystification.

METAXIC SPACE OF APOCALYPTIC: METZ, KELLER, ALTIZER

The adjective 'metaxic' is generated from the Greek word *metaxu*, which in the texts of Plato names realities between the really real and absolute non-reality. As I deploy the term here, I have to remind myself that the term 'space' is dynamic, and perhaps inclines more towards the status of a verb than a noun. Certainly, it is not simply a container; its reality is predicated on the very discourses that organize and structure it. This is, perhaps, even more true of this 'between' space than it is for the other two. In order to be a space, logically speaking this space has to have at least two instances. Indeed, many more than two could be cited. Let me speak briefly to a theological form that belongs in this particular apocalyptic space, and then expostulate more at length about two others.

One could, for example, consider the entire *oeuvre* of Thomas Altizer to be an experiment in the recovery of an apocalyptic discourse obscured almost from the beginning of the Christian tradition, and subject to repeated repression in and by the churches and marginalization through their various theologies. The plausibility of this interpretation is not fundamentally challenged by the fact that self-conscious ascription of apocalyptic is highlighted only in such late works as *Genesis and Apocalypse* and *The Genesis of God*.[81] The first thing to be noted is that Altizer's theology grants privileges to the Idealist and Romantic traditions,[82] and especially Hegel and Blake, which would not be granted by any representative of theology in the pleromatic space of apocalyptic. Indeed, this privilege would be vehemently resisted by most. Contrariwise, Altizer has little time for the common theological tradition, and assumes that commitment to the Trinity is a good indicator that a theology is not apocalyptic. While these are important differences, arguably, they are hardly sufficient for placing him in a different space – one between the pleromatic and the kenomatic. What constitutes his apocalyptic discourse as 'between' is that while he recognizes the importance of vision, he opts for a trimmed- down version of its content, which crystallizes around the self-kenosis of the divine into the world and in particular into human being. While his apocalyptic is

eidetic and, arguably, keeps much of the content one finds in the pleromatic expressions of apocalyptic intact, much of this content is now backgrounded. Although the ethical issue of recognizing appropriately the value of human being is operative throughout his work, the epistemic issue of the possibility of human grasp of what exceeds it seems to be more to the fore. Altizer wishes to underscore the reality of a primordial Christian vision that gets deformed when dogmatized.

To grant Altizer's self-consciously apocalyptic theology the status of 'between,' however, does not mean that he occupies a fixed middle equidistant from the exemplars of kenomatic and pleromatic space. His apocalyptic theology is itself a tensional space. In keeping the outline of a Hegelian and Blakean metanarrative intact, as already indicated, his apocalyptic theology seems to approach the pleromatic space of apocalyptic. At the same time, it is no accident that Mark. C. Taylor, whose thought is linked to that of Derrida, shows how Altizer's eidetic – but not maximally eidetic – apocalyptic discourse has the negative capability for a reduction into a non-eidetic form of apocalyptic of a deconstructionist type. In this context one might think of Taylor's most recent foray into the construction of a postmodern religion as a return to his Altizer roots. *After God* is a book of apocalyptic in Altizer's key.[83] If not as obviously humanist as Altizer's version, Taylor's apocalypse has a determinate content, the crisis that effects the complex interlacing of cosmos, human psyches, and communication in a world spun out of control, and the figuration of a wholeness that is the functional equivalent of a new heaven and earth.

Since I have written about Altizer elsewhere, it might contribute more to understanding of contemporary theology if I were to discuss in more detail other theological exemplars of the metaxic space of apocalyptic. For the purposes of this cartography the first apocalyptic theologian who comes in for consideration is Johann Baptist Metz, who, arguably, is the theologian in contemporary Catholic thought best known for his apocalyptic disposition. Metz's apocalyptic inclination is both explicitly avowed,[84] and aptly demonstrated in the collage that has come to be regarded as his *magnum opus*, that is, *Faith, History, and Society* (*FHS*), chapters 7 and 10 especially.[85] As a critical discourse, apocalyptic theology, in Metz's view, is under obligation neither to say too much, nor to consider what it has to say as self-justifying. It tends, therefore, towards a radical apophasis that is other than the institutional forms of theology,[86] and which in turn supports other kinds of practices and other forms of life. Whereas institutional forms of theology tend to promote sacramental and doxological practices, Metz's apocalyptic theology promotes social justice,

and whereas institutional forms of theology promote contemplative forms of life, which find either an immediate or distant model in Christ, Metz's particular brand of apocalyptic theology promotes prophetic forms of life characterized by critique and the lifting up of the marginalized.[87] At the same time, as a specifically Christian form of apocalypse, apocalyptic has a vision of the kingdom that is carried in the symbols and narratives of Christianity. Of course, crucially what focuses the main symbols and narrative accounts is the story of the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (*memoria passionis, mortis, et resurrectionis Christi* (*FHS*, 109-15). [88]

Epistemically, then, Metz's apocalyptic theology is either the synthesis or the tension between an eidetic and a non-eidetic apocalyptic. Metz will refer to biblical apocalyptic and its overcoming in and by the theological tradition, but it is probably safe to say that the 'between' nature of his apocalyptic thought is a function of the two extra-theological apocalyptic discourses on which he most relies, that is, the eidetic apocalyptic discourse of Bloch, on the one hand, and the non-eidetic apocalyptic discourse of Benjamin, on the other.[89] With Bloch, Metz validates the apocalyptic nature of Christianity, and essentially reproduces Bloch's line of exception to the loss of apocalyptic in Western Christianity. This line centrally includes Joachim and the

Left-Wing of the Reformation. With Benjamin, whom Metz interprets as the representative of 'Jewish' apocalyptic, apocalyptic tends to be identified with interruption, with non-identity, and is disallowed much by way of positive content.

Now betwixt and between these two poles Metz criticizes not only a non-apocalyptic Christianity, but forms of theology he considers inadequately apocalyptic or apocalyptic in the wrong way. Metz assumes that the non-apocalyptic dimensions of Christianity are of long standing, and in line with Bloch he picks out Augustine for specific criticism.[90] But Metz's main objects of critique are the way in which modern and contemporary forms of theology collude with the modern ethos, whose tedium and apathy reflect a commitment to 'homogenous time,' and forms of apocalyptic unfaithful to the biblical tradition. With respect to the latter, Metz specifically targets apocalyptic theological forms that devolve from Hegel, who supplies the *ne plus ultra* of a speculative discourse that takes up all discourses, especially the discourse of Christianity, and all phenomena, especially the phenomena of the dead and the victims of history.[91] That Hegel gives a central place to the doctrine of the Trinity is, in Metz's view, as much an argument against the centrality of the symbol of the Trinity to Christian faith as it is against Hegel. And that Hegel explains, or rather explains away, the phenomena of the dead

and victims, which leaves them without recourse, makes Hegelian recollection (*Erinnerung*) one of the prime sites of forgetting in modernity, a forgetting made all the worse because of its logical and metaphysical validation. Of course, to speak of a form of forgetting that reflectively validates itself is to speak of a particular kind of misremembering.[92] Metz also pronounces himself unhappy with Marx's activist translation of Hegel, and in contemporary theology singles out Moltmann for particular criticism without necessarily putting an exclamation point to his Hegelian credentials. The reasons he provides, however, for such criticism, which include theology daring to talk about the Trinity *in se*, in principle apply to all theologians in the pleromatic space of apocalyptic. Neither Balthasar nor Bulgakov can in principle be excluded from the criticism leveled against Moltmann.[93] Although it is possible to supply Rahnerian warrants for Metz's reserve with respect to naming God, in fact his Kantianism cuts considerably deeper than Rahner's, which after all is balanced by a metaphysics of the human subject that allows the theologian to speak of the ground of reality being one of self-communication. In fact, it is in his express articulation of epistemic principles that Metz is most Benjamin-like.

An important aspect of Metz's dissociation from forms of theology in the pleromatic space of apocalyptic is his reservation concerning the Johannine

corpus. Generically, he prefers the more functional soteriological discourse of the Synoptics over the discourse of the Gospel of John, which he deems to be ontological *stricto sensu*.[94] More specifically he is troubled by Revelation on ethical as well as epistemic grounds, and tends to consider it as a discourse of victims in which the subjective and objective genitive are entitled to equal play. This concern about the violence of apocalyptic is not necessarily a defining characteristic of this space. Theologians in both pleromatic (e.g., Moltmann) and kenomatic (e.g., Derrida-Caputo) abjure Revelation, while Altizer, who belongs to metaxic space, embraces it and, in line with Blake, thinks that properly understood Revelation represents the overcoming of violence as it represents the overcoming of death. Metz does not seek an alternative to Revelation within apocalyptic literature after the manner, for instance, of the early Heidegger, who privileges First and Second Thessalonians. Rather his strategy is to consider apocalyptic to be polymorphous, and to be present in any number of specific genres in the biblical text. This involves in the first instance the literature of prophecy, but will not exclude examples of Wisdom literature such as the book of Job,[95] which has been a preferred text in modernity as critique takes aim against discourses in the pleromatic space of apocalyptic for their exemplification of the principle of *tout comprendre est tout pardonner*, and

their tendency towards rigid identity and exclusion. The latter is a significant fear in Metz, and while he does not dismiss issues of Christian identity altogether, his practical fundamental theology is more concerned with the identity of the subject than the specifically Christian identity of the subject.

The swerve from Revelation, as well as Metz's debts to Bloch and Benjamin, suggest that while the epistemic issue is important, the underlying concern is that of a justice that cannot be guaranteed by *Realpolitik*. This after all is a common concern of Bloch and Benjamin, even if it is only the latter rather than the former who sees fit to denounce utopias. On this point, Metz follows Benjamin, and argues that apocalyptic cuts against the determinacy of utopia and its strategies of self-justification. Apocalyptic is the hope against hope that history is not the history of victors, and more than a history in which the survivors inherit the earth built on the suffering and death of the many throughout history. Along the lines of Kant's postulates of practical reason,[96] there should be a form of redress for those ploughed under. Christianity provides a version – a privileged version but not the only one – of this impossible hope.

Another form of theology that articulates the metaxic space of apocalyptic is that of the feminist Catherine Keller. In her *Apocalypse Now and Then* (*ANT*) and in her more recent *God and Power*

(*GP*),[97] Keller, wishing to take a measure of critical distance from the sedimented apocalyptic tradition, styles her discourse as 'counter-apocalyptic' rather than simply 'apocalyptic' or 'anti-apocalyptic.' Keller's work goes beyond the bounds of what conventionally would be regarded as theology, and includes literary, social, political, and historical analysis. Poets, current political and religio-political uses of apocalyptic, social movements with apocalyptic edge, and a history of the discourses of apocalyptic in terms of both what they reflect and what they generate, all come in for discussion. Nevertheless, her self-identification as a theologian is not disingenuous. In her critical appropriation of the discourses of apocalyptic, she makes clear that she does not believe that theology either can or should escape the 'unveiling' that is part and parcel of the Western apocalyptic tradition (*ANT*, 19-20), while at the same time recommending that theology not be relieved from the responsibility of vetting apocalyptic discourse, with a particular eye on its propensity towards totalization and its predilection towards revenge and exclusion. Keller is lucid about the pitch of her own construction as between 'vision' and 'non-vision,' and thus as occupying a space between the pleromatic and the kenomatic. Specifically, while in her view the lavish depictions of catastrophe and bloodletting in the mainline Western apocalyptic tradition are to

be submitted to continual critique, she takes exception to Caputo's particular translation of Derrida's 'apocalypse without apocalypse' (*GP*, 87-91), which she takes to inscribe apocalypse in the very denial. Accordingly, she advocates a 'counter-apocalypse' rather than an 'anti-apocalypse.' Thinking of Derrida as somewhat less over-determined on this point than Caputo, and of her own work as essentially belonging to his (mani)fold (*GP*, 88), nonetheless, she admits that her validation of 'Come!' is not pure deconstruction (*GP*, 90), since she does hold out for a vision that fosters liberative strategies (*ANT*, 17; *GP*, 84-85). She understands herself to be in a straightforward sense a political theologian, who endorses some visions while rejecting others. Moreover, she understands herself to be a feminist theologian who, embracing the contributions of her predecessors, does not wish to foreclose various conversations, for example, the conversation with metaphysics, with postmodern philosophy, Derrida, of course, but also French feminists, especially Luce Irigaray (*GP*, 63-64, 92) and Julia Kristeva (*ANT*, 8, 23), and with the Western tradition of apocalyptic, its foundational texts and the history of their reception. She encourages the latter conversation in teeth of the recognition that the apocalyptic tradition seems to be misogynist to the second power (*GP*, 84; *ANT*, 46, 67).

As Keller engages tradition or traditions of apocalyptic discourse, to a significant extent she constructs a sacred line. This line is not appreciably different from what we find in Metz and Moltmann. The common link seems to be Bloch (*ANT*, 122-23), who writes the history of the marginalized apocalyptic voices, which centrally include Joachim de Fiore and the left wing of the Reformation. Keller, who shows real familiarity with both the canonic and non-canonic lines of apocalyptic, supplements by pluralizing the tradition and extending the range of voices, especially women's voices. While the influence of Derrida encourages Keller to wish for a moderation of the apodictic tone in all forms of apocalyptic, nonetheless, she makes much of Bloch's minority report on the relative value of Joachim and Augustine (*ANT*, 106-11). Like Bloch, she is comfortable in styling Augustine's eschatology as 'anti-apocalyptic' (*GP*, 60-61; *ANT*, 96-105), an assumption that also runs through Metz and Moltmann, but which is vigorously contested by Balthasar and, arguably, in a more subdued way by Benedict XVI subsequent to him. Trinitarian considerations do not play a crucial role in Keller's preference for Joachim over Augustine. Rather, in the final chapter of *Apocalypse Now and Then*, in which she sums up the basic theological brief of 'counter-apocalyptic,' Keller recommends a more intense and spacious pneumatology as an untram-

meled theological good. And it is the Joachimite predilection in his work, as this is filled out and refigured by the ecological consciousness of his later work, that supplies the basis of her approval of Moltmann's apocalyptic theology (*ANT*, 17,125).

Keller departs from Bloch, and consequently also from Moltmann and Metz in her willingness to engage the Ur-text of the Christian apocalyptic tradition, that is, the book of Revelation. In fact, although this engagement is more critical than that found in Balthasar, they agree that a theology which is to count as apocalyptic hinges on the interpretation of the text. Conscious of her lack of support in feminist circles, in *Apocalypse Now and Then* (36-83) Keller attempts a critical retrieval of what she regards as an astonishingly ambiguous text towards which the only response can be 'ambivalent fidelity' (*ANT*, 20). Keller has no doubt that on a fundamental level Revelation is as totalizing, authoritarian, and implicitly prone to violence as Derrida suggests it is. In some ways, Keller goes further than Derrida simply by offering an extended analysis of the text in which the violence of the language mimics the violence of the content: catastrophe, death, exclusion, and revenge are everywhere. A potentially, or maybe actually, toxic text, Revelation makes demands on every Christian imagination and not only those inclined to violence. Read without subtlety, it wounds Christianity; left unread, however, it equally wounds Christianity, since Christianity cannot survive without its particular symbols and figures that haunt the imagination. The main interpretive line Keller follows in both of her main texts is to refuse to allow Revelation to provide its own authoritative interpretation, to permit it to 'seal off' interpretation by its injunction not to change dot or tittle. Against this she sets the injunction of Revelation 22.10 not to seal off the book (*GP*, 91). She supports this meta-level consideration with a reading of the text which stresses its disjunctive, metonymic quality, which determines that the text does not congeal into the metanarrative that its detractors are certain it is.

Keller's interpretation of Revelation makes clear what is apparent in her work as a whole, that is, that she is more concerned with justice than with epistemic issues of the range and limits of vision, or better that she is concerned with epistemic issues only to the extent to which they assist the ethical agenda which, as with our other major figure in the metaxic space of apocalyptic, Johann Baptist Metz, is socially and politically indexed. An apocalyptic theology for Keller is necessarily a theo-politic. Keller is concerned with the social reality of inclusion and exclusion, and with figuration, which necessarily encourages or discourages particular behaviors, practices, and forms of life. Apocalyptic gives the theologian the chance to diagnose, to pro-

test, and to set free, while obviously also bringing it into the danger zone of toxic figuration, encouraging harmful behaviors, practices, and forms of life. An authentic apocalyptic theology will always be counter-apocalyptic, that is, as one of its main tasks it scrutinizes and critiques the nefarious tendency of apocalyptic discourse towards apotheosis.

OVERLAPS AND TENSIONS BETWEEN AND WITHIN SPACES OF APOCALYPTIC

With the discussion of examples of theology in the metaxic space of apocalyptic, we bring to a close our treatment of the organization of the space or spaces of apocalyptic. While in no case was our analysis of exemplary figures in the three spaces of apocalyptic really adequate, nonetheless, they put us in a position to assess the degree of overlap and tension *between* the spaces of apocalyptic as well as *within* each space. Reminding that, in keeping with the literal meaning of the Greek word *apokalypsis* as 'unveiling,' we are giving functional priority to the epistemic axis and the content of vision, I wish to propose for consideration the following hypotheses. (i) The overlap is least and the tension greatest between exemplars from pleromatic and kenomatic space, which defines the two limits of the space of apocalyptic spaces. Correspondingly, the overlap is greater and the tension least between representatives within any of the three spaces, even if the

particular form of apocalyptic in question bears a close relation to forms of apocalyptic that belong to another space. (ii) The overlap is less and the tension more between representatives of the spaces of the extreme than between a theological representative of one of the extremes and a representative from the middle or 'between' space. It is necessary to point out, however, that any conclusions reached should be regarded as provisional, since when forms of apocalyptic are examined along the ethical axis, different proximities and distances may emerge.

What evidence can be produced on behalf of the first hypothesis? To take a first example, based on our presentation of apocalyptic schemes in section 1 it seems safe – although not tautologous – to conclude that the overlap between Moltmann's and Balthasar's maximally eidetic apocalyptic is greater and the difference correspondingly less than that between Moltmann's maximally eidetic apocalyptic and the minimally eidetic messianism of Benjamin, which adopts a rigorous Kantian epistemology. Balthasar may justifiably critique Moltmann for his Joachimism and his Hegelianism, but it is clear from an epistemological point of view that both transgress Kant's restriction of 'knowing' merely to appearances, even as they produce very different theological and philosophical warrants. In the final analysis, more Hegelian than Kantian with respect to epistemology, it is hardly an acci-

dent that both forms of apocalyptic are trinitarianly inflected and admit of an ontological discourse with respect to God. Moreover, the divine is a real as well as grammatical subject in their apocalyptic discourses, which is not the case in Benjamin, for whom the divine is only the limit of our cognitive competence. *Mutatis mutandis* when Bulgakov is substituted for Balthasar. And the same is true if we link Moltmann and Milbank, or Moltmann and Hart. Milbank and Hart offer even more vehement critiques of Moltmann than Balthasar, but once again both underscore with Moltmann that revelation is the real self-communication God as triune. The argument against Moltmann is different from the argument against postmoderns or postmodern surrogates: Moltmann heads in the right direction, but fatally falls back into the dialectical logic of Hegel.[98] Bracketing Moltmann, let us consider another example, this time the relation of two very different Eastern Orthodox thinkers, Bulgakov and Hart, to Derrida, whose apocalyptic belongs to the kenomatic space, and their relation to each other. Based simply on the general descriptions of their theologies provided above, it is hardly a stretch to suggest that the maximally eidetic apocalyptic of Bulgakov, with its trinitarian scoping and affinity for the book of Revelation, and the degree-zero apocalyptic of Derrida essentially function as antitheses. Now even if in his own elaboration of a

trinitarian theology, which is inclusive of all the main theological loci, Hart's more pro-patristic stance encourages him to worry about sophiologically inclined species of theology, neither Bulgakov (*BI*, 29) nor his tradition is dismissed. Perhaps the doctrine of creation from nothing might be more to the fore (*BI*, 249-68), and perhaps Bulgakov's kataphasis should be qualified by a more Cappadocian emphasis on apophasis.[99] All of this functions, however, more as correction than rejection. By contrast, Hart has no problem rejecting what he takes to be Derridian sophistications, which he takes to be entirely corrosive of Christian belief and Christian identity. Part 1 of *The Beauty of the Infinite* represents a sustained attack on Derrida, his coterie,[100] and thinkers such as Levinas and Blanchot who are generative for him (*BI*, 35-152).

What differences in terms of overlap and proximity can we expect between a pleromatic apocalyptic discourse and apocalyptic representatives of the two other spaces, that is, the kenomatic and the metaxic? Keeping our pair of Moltmann and Benjamin in play as representatives of the pleromatic and kenomatic space, respectively, we can then ask whether the overlap between Moltmann and a representative of the metaxic space of apocalyptic is greater and the distance less than between Moltmann and Benjamin? If we take Metz as our example of a theology in the metaxic space of apoc-

alyptic, here again an affirmative answer seems to be in order. Despite Metz's criticism of Moltmann's form of apocalyptic theology, and his self-conscious embrace of Benjamin's apophatic messianism, the fact is that Metz's apocalyptic has as its content the narrative of the passion, death, and resurrection of Christ. Materially as well as formally, Metz's fundamental theology allies itself with Moltmann, as it does with the other forms of theology in the pleromatic space of apocalyptic. Even if we suspend for the moment the issue of ratio between a maximal and minimal eidetic tendency in his apocalyptic theology, just by dint of an overlap in terms of narrative content, Metz's metaxic form of apocalyptic theology is closer than the kenomatic form of Benjamin to Moltmann's form of apocalyptic. The same result is, of course, procured if we substitute Benjamin for Moltmann as the base: Benjamin's minimally eidetic apocalyptic is closer to the apocalyptic theology of Metz, which has eidetic and non-eidetic elements, than it is to the maximally eidetic apocalyptic of Moltmann.

To approach the same issue by means of an entirely different set of apocalyptic thinkers, although again proceeding from the kenomatic space of apocalyptic, it seems entirely safe to conclude that the level of overlap between Derrida's 'apocalypse without apocalypse' and Benjamin's messianism, which Derrida actually recalls, is greater than and,

correspondingly, the measure of difference is less than, that between Derrida's form of apocalypse and the apocalyptic trinitarianism of Balthasar, which essentially rejects Benjamin's 'lightning flashes' both as the basis of a successful overcoming of Hegel and as an adequate theological construction. This is not to dismiss the case for difference between Benjamin and Derrida, nor to deny that Derrida has developed Benjamin in a variety of ways with the cumulative effect of lowering even further the eidetic level of apocalyptic.[101] This brings us again to the question of whether this proximity holds up when the comparison in question is with a form of apocalyptic from the 'between.' We can test this fairly easily, by choosing Keller as our representative. At the very least, it seems reasonable to conclude that in the final analysis the overlap between Derrida and Benjamin is greater than the overlap between Derrida's degree-zero apocalyptic and that of Keller, which has a definite eidetic component. Of course, Keller helps us enormously here by correcting Derrida in the process of engaging him, and by insisting on the requirement of apocalyptic content, albeit with the caveat that no content is final or absolute (*GP*, 90-91).

A more difficult, and arguably more interesting, question is whether the metaxic forms of apocalyptic are equidistant from pleromatic and kenomatic forms of apocalyptic. Here the geometric language

of 'space' and the language of 'between' show their limits. 'Between' is more a variable than a constant, and more a dynamic field of attraction and repulsion than a location that can be easily pinpointed, and the 'spaces' of which I have been talking are irregular and do not amount to equal divisions of a common space. A good place to begin adjudicating the question is with the triad of Moltmann, Metz, and Benjamin, which we have already deployed. Although 'equidistant' might say too much, it is true that the narrative elements in Metz's metaxic apocalyptic push him towards Moltmann and the pleromatic space of apocalyptic, while the equally serious commitment to interruption pushes him towards Benjamin and the kenomatic space of apocalyptic. If we substitute Altizer for Metz, however, it is evident that while in Altizer's form of apocalyptic the moment of vision is crucial, as it is in Benjamin, there is also a level of content that is considerably in excess of what one finds in Metz, who in the order of intention at least tends to favor less rather than more content. One can say with respect to both representatives of the metaxic space of apocalyptic that they persist in a dynamic and tensional relationship with the representatives of both pleromatic and kenomatic spaces, but that the tension may indicate a pull towards one or other pole, for example, in the case of Altizer a pull towards the pleromatic pole of apocalyptic, and in the case of

Metz a pull towards the kenomatic pole of apocalyptic.

One final example. Adducing Keller as our exemplar of theology in the space of apocalyptic 'between' the pleromatic apocalyptic form of Bulgakov and the kenomatic form of Derrida further illuminates how these forms are defined by non-identity and tension between poles. An inescapable element of the grammar of Keller's apocalyptic is its negotiation with Derrida's 'apocalypse without apocalypse,' even if Keller is more comfortable with this form of apocalyptic as it is gendered, and in a metaphorical, as well as literal, sense 'fleshed out' by the post-structuralist feminism of Kristeva and Irigaray (*NAA*, 8, 128-29; *GP*, 63-63, 92). As I have remarked already, Keller gently disavows the more rigorous forms of Derrida's epistemic prohibitions, and suggests greater comfort in the anti-absolute principle of knowledge functioning critically with respect to discourses of disclosure than with its reification. In itself, this might leave her form of apocalyptic or (counter)-apocalyptic closer to the kenomatic pole than the pleromatic, but this judgment becomes difficult to sustain once we note Keller's actual position, in which the activity of the Spirit and the elevation of the cosmos figure prominently. At this juncture, albeit in a feminist rhetoric, Keller seems to echo key features of the apocalyptic theology of Bulgakov, and thus in a way similar to

Altizer indicates the strong pull of the pleromatic pole of apocalyptic. One can conclude, therefore, that none of the 'between' forms of apocalyptic are a mathematical or geometrical between, that all are non-identical in that they indicate tension between the pleromatic and kenomatic poles of apocalyptic, and finally that a bias towards either of the two poles may be exhibited.

If we assume, as we have, the priority of the epistemic axis, then the results are clear. All forms of apocalyptic theology within a particular space are closer to each other than they are to representatives in or of either of the two other spaces, and representatives of each of the extremes are closer to representatives in or of the middle than they are to each other. An important question, however, is whether the same continues to apply if we consider the second axis, what I have referred to as the ethical axis. The short answer to this question is a qualified yes. Here I supply evidentiary indications, which will be supplemented when I turn to the final issue of this section, that is, the issue of differences within a particular space. I hazard a few broad generalizations. First, a decent correlation is observable between epistemic and ethical commitment. More specifically, a lower eidetic ratio correlates with a higher ethical ratio and vice versa. Second, there are enough exceptions to this rule, especially in the pleromatic space of apocalyptic, to prevent this correlation becoming a law of inverse proportion that would preserve the firm boundaries between the different spaces of apocalyptic.

There is more than enough evidence to sustain the first generalization. Whatever the differences in their provenance, the two representatives of the kenomatic space of apocalyptic (Benjamin and Derrida) illustrate that a low eidetic ratio is matched by an extraordinarily high ethical quotient, where despite (or because of) religious context (Jewish), the ethical element is taken to be universal in some significant way. The same can be said of Caputo, with the only difference being that the religious context of his ethical vetoing of issues of religious identity is Catholicism. The exemplars that constitute the kenomatic space of apocalyptic offer the strongest possible correlation, indeed, to the point of approaching something like a law of inverse proportion. What about the examples within metaxic space? Here one could argue two points. On the one hand, the degree of correlation is not so exact and, on the other, the lack of correlation is not such as to fundamentally alter the way in which we have organized our three spaces of apocalyptic. As self-consciously a student of Benjamin's commitment to the victims of history, Metz's ethical exigence is at the same level as his, and no less than secular successors such as Adorno and Horkheimmer. Yet, as we pointed out, the eidetic ratio of his complex

form of apocalyptic is vastly in excess of that of Benjamin. A similar phenomenon is observable in the case of Keller in whom the ethical commitment seems to be as fundamental as it is to Derrida, and at a similar level to what one finds in Metz. This is true even if her ethical commitment is less formal than that of Derrida, and cashes out more easily in determinate positions taken on gender, politics, and the environment. And, if I am correct in my reading of her, the ethical commitment goes hand in hand with an apocalyptic or counter-apocalyptic which has a significant eidetic content, one less obviously mainline Christian than that of Metz, but in terms of epistemic commitment at least his equal and, arguably, in excess of him. With these two examples, it is obvious that anything like a law of inverse proportion between ethical commitment and eidetic ratio has to be dismissed. Altizer, who in his own way is a boundary case, confirms the breakdown. Altizer's ethical interest is significant and more nearly recalls Keller than Metz in that the focus is not on suffering in history so much as on how culture and religion – Christianity in particular – prove invidious to the full development of individual and communal human potential. If there is a difference between Altizer and Keller, it is that Altizer is more interested in the mechanisms by which non-religious and religious ideology encourage human beings to give up the freedom and the

responsibility they bear for their moral, intellectual, and spiritual development. Yet, although Altizer is emphatic about the shock of the moment of vision, which indicates nothing less than a fundamental conversion or *metanoia*, his thought is quite eidetic, indeed, looks very like a highly trimmed-down version of the Idealism and Romanticism that Metz, as well as well as our representatives in the kenomatic space of apocalyptic, insist says much too much.

Finally, I will say a word about how the correlation works with the exemplars in the pleromatic space of apocalyptic, with the proviso that in this case I will return to the issue of the relation between the epistemic and the ethical axis, which bears importantly on issues of specifically Christian identity and a view of others and our obligations to them that avoids partiality. The correlation seems to go in different directions. On the one hand, the maximally eidetic apocalyptic forms of Balthasar and Bulgakov, one of whose main functions is to secure religious identity, provide strong evidence for the correlation in that the thought of neither can be said to be ethically saturated or ethically developed. On the other, neither the maximally eidetic apocalyptic of Moltmann, nor the very different maximalist apocalyptic strain of Milbank and Hart are ethically underdetermined. Unlike what we found in our three cases in the metaxic space of apocalyptic, here we seem to be dealing with real exceptions.

If such is the case, it is not only the strong claim for a law of inverse proportion between eidetic and ethical level that has to be rejected, but also the weaker claim of a correlation. The latter would necessarily be the case if all the exceptions I pointed to proved to be counterfactuals in the strict sense. Even if I allow the possibility that this is true in the case of Moltmann, it is not true in the case of Milbank, who makes the argument that one can only get to ethical issues on the basis of the establishment of Christian identity in and through what a Christian believes, hopes for, and loves, and through the practices and forms of life it fosters and sustains. To sum up, then: the net result of making the ethical axis central is not so much to compromise the integrity of the particular spaces of apocalyptic, but to show that the integrity is not absolute and that boundaries get blurred.

Much more could be said about the overlaps and tensions between theological representatives of the three spaces of apocalyptic than this programmatic essay allows. It is time to say something, however, about the more subtle but real differences between theological representatives within each of these three spaces of apocalyptic. While ideally I would examine differences between particular theological representatives within all three spaces, I will confine myself to an examination of differences in the forms of apocalyptic theology in pleromatic space.

My rationale has both a prudential and an evaluative side. Prudential considerations include length restrictions, the intuition that the pleromatic site of apocalyptic currently shows the greatest signs of life, and finally that a mechanical survey *seriatim* of differences between representatives within each of the apocalyptic spaces would come across as jejune. The implied evaluative consideration comes to the fore in my summary, in which I argue that the pleromatic space of apocalyptic provides the best site for a truly adequate apocalyptic theology, even if the representatives of the other two spaces inspire necessary modifications. I begin my discussion by making the more or less procedural point that if differences obtrude themselves between theological representatives in the pleromatic space of apocalyptic, they will necessarily be relative to those features that tie the representatives together. It is apposite to recall some of the more obvious features of unification. (i) In all theological representatives of the pleromatic space of apocalyptic, there is either actual apocalyptic self-ascription (Moltmann, Balthasar, Bulgakov) or the capacity to make such an ascription (Milbank, Hart). (ii) At the same time, nearly all theological representatives both appeal to a particular history of apocalyptic thought and resist another, even if they do so at different levels of intensity and comprehensiveness. (iii) As Kantian restrictions both with respect to what is knowable

in principle and what is knowable in and through Christian faith are discounted, some form of German Idealism looms large for all as both suggesting a way forward and making it impossible at one and the same time. Admittedly all of this is clearer in the three figures we discussed in some detail, but had we the time the case could be made also for Milbank and Hart.[102] To develop this third point further, one can say that crucial to this tying together of all of these theological representatives of pleromatic apocalyptic space is the commitment to Christian vision that has an absolutely comprehensive content, where this commitment can be further parsed into a conviction that Christianity is characterized by a trinitarian metanarrative, a clear perception that the axis upon which history swings is cross and resurrection, and a sense that human participation in the divine life is incompatible only with a binary construction of transcendence which crucially misunderstands Christianity.

Nonetheless, there are differences, indeed differences between theological representatives in the pleromatic space of apocalyptic that tend to get played up as if they are more rather than less crucial than the difference between theological representatives of the pleromatic space of apocalyptic and representatives of the other two spaces. While at some basic level this cannot be so, I will supply in my evaluative conclusion scenarios in which this may

be rhetorically and/or strategically justified. In any event, let me start by attending to some differences between representatives in apocalyptic space that can be read off our discussion of our three main exemplars, Moltmann, Balthasar, and Bulgakov.

A set of important issues tend to open up a gap between Moltmann and the other theological representatives of pleromatic apocalyptic space. The first issue is broadly speaking epistemological, but it has serious philosophical as well as theological consequences. Although the kind of comprehensive conspectus advocated by all the representatives is in excess both of what theology in a more apologetic vein as well as the theological forms of apocalyptic in the other two spaces allow, it makes a significant difference as to whether and how claims to knowledge – explicit or implicit – are hedged with caveats. The second issue concerns the apocalyptic heritage to which a theological representative intends to be faithful. And the third, and related issue, concerns the apocalyptic tradition that a theological representative of this group opposes. Let us examine each in turn, with an eye especially to what is theologically at stake.

No less than the other theologians, who provide examples of pleromatic modes of apocalyptic theology, Moltmann is anxious that his engagement with Hegel's thought not be understood as an endorsement of Hegel's speculative assumptions.[103] There

is, however, significant agreement among three out of the four other theological representatives of the pleromatic space of apocalyptic that Moltmann has not successfully avoided either Hegelian certitude about the unfolding of reality that gets disclosed or totally transcended Hegelian logic, which is a logic of explanation and justification. Throughout his great triptych, Balthasar spends a considerable time arguing that Moltmann does not have sufficiently in place the kind of apophatic qualification which, in his view, apocalyptic theology not only allows, but really demands. In this respect, Balthasar is followed both by Milbank and especially Hart, whose own Orthodox tradition is characterized by the commitment to apophasis. Obviously, Bulgakov, who precedes Moltmann, is innocent of any contrariety here. Nonetheless, it is evident that his insistence that the discourse of apocalyptic remains underdetermined in terms of its truth claims, precisely because of its symbolic overdetermination, sets the basic terms for Balthasar's objection and that of his followers, whether proximate (Hart) or at a distance (Milbank).

When it comes to inscribing one's apocalyptic theology of a pleromatic kind in a tradition of apocalyptic, again Moltmann seems to be the odd man out. Using Bloch's rehearsal of the history of utopia as a basis to which he adds his own list of exemplars, Moltmann's construction of his apocalyptic tradition appears to be almost entirely heterodox.[104] When it comes to determining the definition of Christian apocalyptic, which necessarily involves for Moltmann as an evangelical theologian an appeal to the Bible, Moltmann in fact eschews the book of Revelation. Instead, he adopts a more eclectic and broad-based biblical approach which includes the Synoptic figuration of the kingdom and the prophetic materials, and in an *ad hoc* the Wisdom material, and especially Job, which has been the biblical text of choice to adjudicate for and against theodicy as well as fundamentally refigure it. Moreover, for Moltmann, influenced by Bloch, the pivotal figure is Joachim, largely because of the 'effective history' of the trinitarian apocalyptic thinker in German thought from Luther through German Romanticism and Idealism and beyond. Moltmann's support for the speculative apocalypses of Boehme, Berdyaev, and even the Kabbalah plays a crucially supporting role in that it enables Moltmann to move beyond tracing patterns of divine effect in history to talking about the dramatic and developmental history of the triune God.

Balthasar offers an opposing view. As is argued in both *The Glory of the Lord* and *Theo-Drama*, the apocalyptic dimensions of theology are given in particular biblical texts. To the forefront is Revelation as this text is linked to the rest of the Johannine corpus, on the one hand, and to Daniel, on

the other. Importantly, for Balthasar, Revelation represents the continuation of the prophetic tradition rather than its overcoming. For Balthasar, if apocalyptic is a legitimate Christian discourse, then it is taken up within the Christian theological tradition, which re-expresses it within the ambit of interpretation. Balthasar thinks that Irenaeus is a powerful apocalyptic theologian of the mainline Christian tradition, and that other important representatives include Augustine, Hamann, and latterly Bulgakov. Once again, Milbank and Hart tend much more nearly towards Balthasar's side. Although not as focused on Revelation as either Balthasar or Bulgakov, Milbank would resist its exclusion, especially given its deployment in figures such as Augustine and Hamann, who are for him central. Famously, Milbank has styled himself as a 'postmodern Augustinian,' and he has done as much as any religious thinker since Kierkegaard to rescue Hamann from oblivion.[105] Hart, whose overall position is fairly close to that of Milbank, would be inclined to think with Balthasar that apocalyptic theology is at least as much a Greek as a Latin affair. And finally, Moltmann's position challenges all the other theological representatives in the pleromatic space of apocalyptic by resolutely refusing to privilege the canonic apocalyptic tradition and by taking aim against the fact and even the possibility of the generation of apocalyptic forms of theology within

the mainline theological traditions. Balthasar, who again plays the role of the main respondent, tends to think that Moltmann has decided beforehand on the functional priority of the 'not yet,' and like Bloch trawls the Bible for warrant. And taking Joachim and the Joachim-Augustine contrast as seriously as Moltmann does,[106] Balthasar's evaluation of the contrast lines up neatly with that of Aquinas and Bonaventure, but also with that of his mentor Henri de Lubac. Needless to say, the 'postmodern Augustinian' Milbank makes a similar judgment. And Hart, who worries about the invidious influence of Hegel in contemporary theology, is as suspicious of unilateral emphasis on the Spirit as he is of unilateral emphasis on Christ.

Now the way in which Moltmann, who one might have reasonably thought was the representative of the pleromatic space of apocalyptic, is in fact somewhat isolated, introduces an anamorphosis into this space. There is a clumping around the theological figure of Balthasar and then something of a Moltmannian protuberance. Still, it is very important to remember that an apocalyptic theology is a theology, and that important theological consequences follow from choices with respect to the status of vision, and the apocalyptic forms embraced or excluded. The central issue between the Balthasarian center and the surprising Moltmannian periphery appears to be how to present

a visionary modality of Christianity that does not relapse back into an uncritical orthodoxy, while not breaking with the mainline theological tradition or traditions in an Idealist or more specifically Hegelian manner. Neither Moltmann, nor Balthasar, nor for that matter any other theological representative in pleromatic apocalyptic space, is inclined to accept a propositional theology, void of power to inspire practices and forms of life. Nor are any of these forms of apocalyptic theology inclined to accept at face value various popular construals of the Triune God, of creation, and of incarnation, etc. The critical issue between them is how to construe the transcendence of the triune God in a creation that is non-contingently expressive of the divine, and that achieves unsurpassable expression in the incarnation, cross and resurrection of Christ.

Now, while all the exemplars of this apocalyptic space agree in part that some theological traditions tended too much to reflect on the triune God outside the context of salvation history, and that the popular imagination exacerbated an inadequate notion of divine transcendence as 'beyond' in a unilateral way, none of them, with the possible exception of Bulgakov, is comfortable, as Moltmann is, with challenging the theistic axiom, which insists on an asymmetry between the triune God and the world and human being. The form of trinitarian panentheism advocated by Moltmann,[107] in which Christ

presents us with a fundamental example of response to the divine, and in which we are elevated in such a way as to erase the boundary that divides the divine from the human, is not a viable Christian option for Balthasar and the other forms of apocalyptic trinitarianism. Moreover, while Balthasar and the other theological representatives in the pleromatic space of apocalyptic would welcome Moltmann's emphasis on doxology,[108] what such a doxology would amount to in the absence of requisite emphasis on divine transcendence, and without reference to the practice of prayer and contemplative as well as active forms of life, would be major objects of concern. To this would be added another. Although Moltmann may have managed to displace Hegel's 'great individual' by the prophet, is there any role for the saint?

Needless to say, this configuration of the pleromatic space of apocalyptic is not itself absolute: one can imagine, but not imagine in univocal fashion, pleromatic space as a Balthasarian clumping and a Moltmannian protuberance. This becomes perfectly apparent when the concern switches from the content of Christian faith, and the practices and forms of life they support, to the issue of justice. New associations tend to form, with new mediations, which cut across and modify the organization of pleromatic space. As a praxis-oriented apocalyptic theologian in the tradition of Bloch, from the

very beginning Moltmann is concerned with the lack of match between justice and the state of affairs in history, a lack that Hegel managed to explain away by offering a revisionist definition of actuality (*Wirklichkeit*). To this Blochian substrate Moltmann adds the theological axioms that the triune God identifies with the suffering of human beings in history, and that in and through this identification the triune God assists in the coming into being of ever greater freedom and an ever more comprehensive reason. Moltmann puts a speculative exclamation point on this line of thought, however, by suggesting that it is in and through dealing with history, marked by catastrophe, that God becomes God.[109] Balthasar, and after him Milbank and Hart, respond by judging that despite his intentions, Moltmann has hardly done enough to escape the gravitational pull of a Hegelian-style theodicy. And functioning as an independent, Bulgakov is not inclined to countenance a position that, on the one hand, smacks of a theological form of historical materialism and, on the other, of a form of hubris that pretends to have elevated itself to a divine point of view, while at the same time all too casually talking about the triune God as subject to the processes of natural and historical becoming. It is not that the often static way of viewing the triune God in the tradition is satisfactory, but rather that any modification of the more standard picture has to take

sufficient account of the ontological difference between God and creation. Granted that Moltmann's formulation is suspect from the point of view of the other theological representatives in pleromatic apocalyptic space, nonetheless, Moltmann brings to the forefront an issue that tends to be backgrounded by some of the other theological representatives. In my brief renditions of the apocalyptic theologies of Balthasar and Bulgakov respectively, I suggested that the issue of justice, especially as this is framed in terms of a response to suffering in history, does not play a major role. In the case of both theologians, sometimes it seems as if one must chose either sin or suffering as the constitutive provocation. Moltmann seems to embrace this either-or logic also, and just as decisively – if not more so – opts for suffering over sin. Arguably, one of the contributions of Milbank and Hart, while staying very much within Balthasar's and Bulgakov's coordinates, is to suggest a balance that is lacking in the other three. In the case of Milbank it is Augustine who shows the way, for Augustine demonstrates much more clearly than Balthasar and Bulgakov that peace is the aim of all salvation history and that 'peace' is an essential attribute of the triune God. Without elevating Augustine in the way that Milbank does, Hart follows Milbank closely in this respect.[110] The Greek patristic tradition provides a general warrant

for thinking that the overcoming of violence is central to any Christian view of salvation.[111]

Evaluative Conclusion: (In)Conclusive Evaluation

I am mindful that by neglecting to treat differences between representatives within the kenomatic and metaxic spaces I fail to give a full picture of these spaces. This is most to be regretted in the case of metaxic space which, understandably as the space of the 'between,' shows the greatest tendency towards variation. As I indicated above, a number of practical considerations were working against a more detailed treatment. But prioritizing the pleromatic space of apocalyptic also declared an evaluation, and more specifically the judgment that whatever the shortfalls of any particular theological representative of the pleromatic space of apocalyptic, or even of them all, it is from this space that apocalyptic theology, and thus theology, goes forward. Here I can at best give the bare bones of an argument that requires massive fleshing out. The argument has negative and positive sides. The negative side of the argument reflects on the theological weaknesses of the forms of theology that belong to the kenomatic and metaxic spaces of apocalyptic. The positive side has to do with the overall strength of forms of apocalyptic theology that belong to pleromatic space, although the absence of theological

weaknesses, which mar the others, is also a consideration.

As the kenomatic and metaxic spaces of apocalyptic get illuminated when critical light is shone on their representatives, it is evident that there is a differential, from a theological point of view, in the relative adequacy of apocalyptic forms between the two different spaces. The forms of apocalyptic in kenomatic space are 'theological' only by courtesy. The 'apocalypse without apocalypse' of Derrida and the messianism of Benjamin are at best paradoxical forms of apocalypse, at worst ironic forms. Although it is worth mentioning that neither of these figures is Christian, even more important is the fact that neither is in the strict sense advancing these positions as believing Jews. I spent some time shedding the 'Jewish' shibboleth shared both by those Christian theologians who advance the claims of these forms of apocalyptic and those who resist them. As positions, neither Benjamin nor Derrida are adequate for Christian theology, since as *theology*, there is presumptively a reality whose very nature it seems is to self-disclose, and since as theo*logy* there is a Word spoken that articulates itself in words and in and as a determinate content that is binding in a quite obtrusive fashion. Of course, it is possible to argue that neither apocalyptic form truly represents a position, but more nearly elaborates a tactic or set of such tactics to humble all

over-claims, especially those of a speculative kind, to loosen up traditions that tend towards sclerosis, and to open up a space for new practices and new forms of life. In this case, while there continues to be the prospect for tension between these particular apocalyptic forms and especially the forms of apocalyptic theology in pleromatic space, there is no outright contradiction. Indeed, there is the possibility of apocalyptic forms in this space enlisting and benefitting from these forms.

In his assimilation of Derrida, especially as prosecuted in *The Prayers and Tears of Jacques Derrida*, Caputo suggests this very reading, while apparently advancing 'apocalypse without apocalypse' as a defeater of the apocalyptic tradition that centers around and devolves from the book of Revelation. Logically, this would mean that Derrida's apocalypse is more adequate than either Balthasar's or Bulgakov's, and is so on Christian terms because it is so on general terms. My point is not so much that Caputo is at odds with himself – although I am convinced he is – but that apocalypses of the Derridian sort are not competitors to apocalypses within pleromatic space, since they should not be regarded as positions. Rather, 'apocalypse without apocalypse' is a tactic or set of tactics, and as such it is defined by its capacity to disturb all discourses, not excluding apocalyptic discourses, that are or have become too determinate. In his all-out pro-

motion of Derrida, Caputo fails to exemplify this. Shortly, I will provides examples of relatively eidetic forms of apocalyptic theology taking up and putting non-eidetic forms of apocalyptic to good use. The distinction I am making between position and tactic has, I believe, some radical consequences. If Derrida's form of apocalyptic, and by extension that of Benjamin (although there may be marginally more content), are not truly positions, then in an important respect the kenomatic space of apocalyptic is a *pseudo-space* or at best a *virtual space*.[112] The space of discourses about nothing has some 'nothing' features. One might think of this space after Derrida's *khora* as that space which shakes and trembles all apocalyptic discourse,[113] but which itself is not articulated by apocalyptic discourses or rather by apocalyptic as a discourse. As one makes this point, however, one should take note of the ethical exigence of these forms of apocalyptic in kenomatic space. While it is often said that apocalyptic discourse represents the suspension of the ethical, this is true only of those kinds of ethics which are reducible to social convention. Looking even at, or especially at, the book of Revelation, it is possible to say that apocalyptic demands a hyperbolic ethic, one specific to the circumstances which also happen to reveal what is essential. *A fortiori* this is the case with the representatives of the kenomatic space of apocalyptic: here the ethical exigence is at

such a pitch that one might even be inclined to say that representatives of this space articulate not simply an apocalyptic ethic, but apocalyptic as ethics and ethics as apocalyptic. Given the huge influence of Levinas on Derrida's later work, this is, perhaps, clearer in Derrida's 'apocalypse without apocalypse' than it is in the case of Benjamin. Yet it bears noting that in both cases there is a deep engagement with Kant, which essentially involves emending Kant in such a way that the force of seeing beyond understanding is felt without necessarily either scheme falling into intuitionism.

The claims to theological adequacy of the forms of apocalyptic in metaxic space are considerably greater. Each of the apocalyptic forms of this space articulates a theological position in the strict sense. Metz's position is a good candidate with respect to theological adequacy, and especially so if ecclesial location and relevance function as criteria of adequacy. As we have seen, Metz's apocalyptic theology is biblical, does not eschew commitment to core Christian content, and encourages particular practices, especially those of a prophetic kind. On grounds which are both biblical and non-biblical, Metz is concerned with the suffering victims of history who call out to be remembered. It is our Christian as well as human task to perform this service,[114] even if we cannot fully accomplish it, and whose accomplishment in any event is ambiguous, since

our memory would not amount to the resurrection of the dead. Metz's theology also shows us how in assimilation, non-eidetic apocalypses can be put to constructive theological use in other, arguably more complex apocalyptic environments. A totally legitimate way of looking at Metz's apocalyptic theology is to see it as a tension between Christian eidetic commitments (largely given in the narrative of the passion, death, and resurrection of Christ) and a commitment to the non-eidetic apocalyptic of Benjamin. This is in general the way in which I have read it throughout this essay. But another, equally legitimate, way of reading Metz's apocalyptic is to see it as a more or less successful assimilation of a non-eidetic form of apocalyptic put critically to use in order to offset the ever present dangers of dogmatism and the violence encouraged when one is assured that one's community is the bearer of the truth. However one adjudicates the probity of the details of Metz's apocalyptic position, undoubtedly the theological value of an epistemic chastening of our grandiose claims, especially those that buttress our identity and make us feel superior, is ineluctable.

Keller's much more eclectic and, it is fair to say, much less ecclesial metaxic form of apocalyptic theology also has much to recommend it. Different aspects to her mix will appeal to different constituencies. But she is to be applauded in her 'counter-

apocalyptic' for taking the Bible seriously, and especially for not taking the convenient way out with regard to the book of Revelation – although she rightly understands that it is a highly ambiguous text both intrinsically and in terms of its history of effects. Similar to what we said about Metz, there are two equally legitimate ways of reading her 'between' form of apocalyptic theology. The first way is to read it as a complex form of apocalyptic theology in which there is a relation-tension between a much more eidetic figuration of apocalyptic to which Revelation is allowed to make a contribution and the non-eidetic apocalypse of Derrida. The second, complementary way of reading her apocalyptic theology is to see how a complex form of apocalyptic theology assimilates a non-theological 'apocalypse without apocalypse,' so as to thoroughly functionalize it and thereby remove the slightest tendency of 'apocalypse without apocalypse' to suggest an actual position thus subject to the vulnerabilities of all positions. In and through assimilation, Keller's apocalyptic theology also introduces a scouring apophatic element into the construction of theology in general and the construction of apocalyptic theology in particular. This is essentially the same theological ineluctable of an epistemic kind we broached in the case of Metz.

As indicated in my previous analysis, in both of these 'between' forms of apocalyptic the ethical impulse is strong. While this to a significant extent reflects the assimilation of the non-eidetic apocalypses of Derrida and Benjamin, there exist multiple other sources for both. These include biblical sources, and in the case of Keller do not exclude Revelation, which depending on how one reads it, is a text that promotes violence or is a text of countermimesis, a text that dispenses with ethics or provides its very condition by heightening responsiveness. In consequence, with respect to any form of apocalyptic theology that would be adequate, we can add to the epistemic ineluctable an ethical nonnegotiable. This point is crucial, in that whatever preference might be given to the pleromatic space of apocalyptic as the plenary site from which an adequate apocalyptic theology might come, the contributions from the metaxic space of apocalyptic continue to be in play to remind us of what cannot simply be let go.

I have just reiterated my preference for a pleromatic space for the generation of apocalyptic theological forms. This will hardly come as a surprise, given that modern and contemporary theological representatives of this space of apocalyptic came in for more detailed discussion than any other. While I did not privilege any particular form of apocalyptic theology in the pleromatic space of apocalyptic, I lodged more complaint against Moltmann than any other representative, largely on the grounds

that it is not evident that in the final analysis Moltmann's apocalyptic theology escapes the gravitational pull of Hegel, and the heterodox traditions of apocalyptic to which Hegel was heir, including the tradition of Joachim. It should be noted that Hegel is a common object of alarm also for representatives of the other two spaces of apocalyptic. In the metaxic space of apocalyptic Metz voices serious reservations about Hegel's code of absolute memory, which serves as justification of anything that befalls any individual, group, or community in history. His critique more than offsets Altizer's qualified support of Hegelian speculation, which essentially speeds up the Christian narrative along an axis in which the divine becomes human and the human divine. It hardly needs mentioning that Benjamin is no lover of Hegelian speculation, and that one of Derrida's many accomplishments is that of being one of the more accomplished critics of Hegel in the twentieth century. Balthasar, as I see it, represents the deepest contrast to Moltmann and the Hegelian apocalyptic paradigm of which Karl Löwith famously spoke.

Leaving aside Hegelian speculation as a potential occupant and articulator of the pleromatic space of apocalyptic, we can say with respect to the theologies of Moltmann and Balthasar that while both have their ground in scripture and both agree that the 'seeing,' which they take to be constitutive of

apocalyptic, demands that the cross be regarded the fulcrum of the meaning and truth of history and the Trinity the horizon, they differ with respect to with what is adduced by way of biblical support, and also with respect to the line of apocalyptic theology they appeal to in order to support their own option and with respect to the line of apocalyptic they reject. If a criterion of a viable theology is that the theology is ecclesial in the strong sense that it is grounded in church tradition, then Balthasar has the advantage. He neither excludes Revelation, nor fails to distinguish biblical apocalyptic from both apocryphal apocalypses of a speculative kind and from messianic discourse. None of these distinctions are made by Moltmann. And Balthasar's apocalyptic choice is generous with respect to the mainline theological tradition in the way that Moltmann is not, who, anti-Augustinian as he pretends to be, somewhat ironically condemns the entire theological tradition as if it were a *massa damnata*. While Balthasar does not think that the theological tradition is all the way through and down sufficiently theodramatic and thus sufficiently apocalyptic, he does think that major figures such as Irenaeus and Augustine, Anselm and Bonaventure, Hamann and Bulgakov, and maybe even Pascal are genuinely apocalyptic thinkers. And here I leave aside the poets, Hölderlin, Péguy, and Hopkins in particular, who if we read Balthasar's reading of them in *The*

Glory of the Lord from the perspective of *Theo-Drama*, might all be read as apocalyptic thinkers as well as exempla of theological aesthetics in the poetic realm. Moreover, Balthasar's apocalyptic theology shows an openness to particular religious practices (contemplative) and forms of life (religious as well as lay) that are hardly embraced in Moltmann's more Hegelian-oriented scheme, in which holiness is found only in the world and in no way involves a retreat from it. This is not to say, of course, that as an apocalyptic theologian, or even a theologian who elaborates a theological aesthetics, Balthasar has to be equally in favor of any and all contemplative forms of life. Rather he thinks – and in this respect he bears comparison with Thomas Merton – that all contemplative programs should be vetted in terms of a Christian quotient which is finally exoteric, since it is based on discipleship and obedience to mission, and a degree of participation in the mystery of the triune God, which only God knows, not the individual believer. Balthasar and Moltmann especially contest the meaning and value of Joachim. Joachim, who is the pivotal apocalyptic figure for Moltmann, and who is also a major hero in the genealogy of apocalyptic by Bloch, is one of Balthasar's declared enemies. Balthasar endorses totally de Lubac's genealogy in which Joachim is at the origin of the Reformation, its speculative translation, a presence in Romanticism and Idealism, which deepens the derailment of Christianity given in the Enlightenment in and by a Christian repackaging in which only what is marginal to the Christian theological tradition is allowed to speak

Balthasar provides a template, in that much of what he says about Christian apocalyptic, which is sharpened in opposition to Moltmann, is supported by the other representatives of the pleromatic space of apocalyptic. But it is not as if they do not make a number of important contributions to apocalyptic thought that can be regarded both as independent and as emendations of the Balthasarian template. One area is that of pneumatology, which touches on a number of lines of reflection that bear on the issue of identity. These lines of reflection crucially include the notion of the church, and especially the complicated issue of the relation between the theological uses of the categories of 'freedom' and 'obedience,' the understanding of salvation history, and even the understanding of the triune God as the real as well as grammatical subject of creation, redemption, and salvation. In his polemic against Joachim and the modern history of effects, Balthasar could be gently chided by others to be involved in something of a reaction formation in which the Spirit is not allowed the fullest possible scope consistent with the mainline theological traditions, West as well as East. In addition, theological representatives from very different sides of

the pleromatic apocalyptic spectrum, Moltmann, on the one hand, and Milbank and Hart, on the other, also help to compensate for Balthasar's (and Bulgakov's) relative lack of attention to the ethical and so might balance the legitimate concern with the identity of the Christian subject.

Still, it would be a stretch to claim that corrections internal to the pleromatic space of apocalyptic are sufficient to make a form of apocalyptic theology from this particular space truly adequate. This form of correction must be supplemented by the correction supplied from the other two spaces. As has been indicated, there are essentially two supplements. The first and most obvious one is a relative exacerbation of the concern for justice. We have seen that this imperative is most urgent in apocalyptic forms in kenomatic space. To the extent to which theology in pleromatic space understands that these forms of apocalyptic articulate strategies more than positions, dialogue is possible and borrowing probable. A second, and related, supplement is an exacerbation of the apophatic index of apocalyptic in the pleromatic space of apocalpyptic. As indicated, apocalyptic theologies in this space indicate in numerous ways the non-totalizing nature of apocalyptic thought, for example, its essentially symbolic nature, its dramatic and unclosed character, its knowing as the knowing of faith rather than absolute knowledge, etc. Nonetheless, the theologies that express this form of apocalyptic, as well as knowing much more, are less diffident about what they know than forms of theology in the other two spaces. Any form of apocalyptic theology in pleromatic space requires both to be reminded of the need for epistemic humility and to be made aware of graphic instances of it. The requirement is theological in the strict sense, rather than reflecting a conciliation that may or may not result in reconciliation. The God of the Bible is a God of unparalleled justice, and the God of theology is a God of unsurpassed Goodness; the same God of the Bible is God of unencompassable glory, and the God of the theological tradition, which is not other than the God of the Bible, is comprehended only as uncomprehended, to cite a favorite Augustinian formula that marks the theology of Hans Urs von Balthasar.

Representatives from the kenomatic and metaxic spaces of apocalyptic can perform this function for forms of apocalyptic theology, whose origin and allegiance belong in pleromatic space. Representatives from the kenomatic space of apocalyptic provide these kinds of supplements in their purest forms. And this is why not only apocalyptic theologies in metaxic space, but those also in pleromatic space, can converse as well as argue with these theologically underdetermined species of apocalyptic. Obviously, however, the supplemental quotient of representatives from metaxic apocalyptic space is

higher. A condition of the possibility rests on the fact that these forms of apocalyptic theology tend to be directly or indirectly biblical, do not take a unified stand on Revelation, advocate some version of the Christian narrative, and thus assure a fair measure of content overlap with theological representatives from the pleromatic space of apocalyptic. Just as important, these forms of apocalyptic show how a more eidetically oriented form of apocalyptic can enlist the apophatic and ethical exacerbations and remain true to themselves as visions of God's kingdom and our place in it. Theological adequacy with respect to forms of apocalyptic theology is possible only when two conditions hold: (i) There is conversation as well as argument between representatives from different spaces of apocalyptic. (ii) There is conversation as well as argument between representatives within the pleromatic space of apocalyptic. Nonetheless, conversation and argument do not function as transcendentals. Rather they function as the practical means by which Christian vision is sharpened with respect to action and fundamental orientation in life. For I take it that both biblically and theologically a vision with a significant degree of content is what defines Christian apocalyptic, and that this vision provides for Christian identity and specifically Christian paths of action and forms of life that may very well exceed what is demanded by secular culture. In a modern world in which ethics is almost always on stage, and identities attacked as particularistic, it may be all the more necessary to reassert Christian vision in its full extent and breadth. This necessity does not have to be simply defensive, however. To speak the truth boldly (*parrhesia*) is a Christian imperative. And the conditions suggest that this is both the worst and the best of times; the worst of times in its over-exposure to images and alternative ways of life – the contemporary world has hardly time for one more image or set of images; the best of times in that there is no conviction that there is a master discourse that regulates all the options, and a deep suspicion that an Enlightenment narrative, which over the last two centuries has provided the dominant metanarrative, cannot any longer serve this function. There is a truth to the suggestion that Christianity is called on to out-narrate the other narrative and visionary options,[115] even if at the same time it needs to be aware of its own tendencies towards triumphalism. This is an essential task of theology, and one that an apocalyptic theology – although not only it – performs. On the basis of what I have said, it would seem that apocalyptic is becoming more rather than less imperative as a form of theology. This by no means implies the dispensability of retrievalist or argumentative modes of theology, but it does suggest that the visionary has become indispensable. For better or for worse, Christians figure a way in

which we make our way through a no-man's land in which everything is permitted except conviction. But apocalyptic theology is not another form of nostalgia, even as it looks to the past for guidance. It is a rhetorical form of theology in a number of different respects. First, it is a form of theology that attempts to persuade by the power and beauty of its vision, and in this respect there is in principle and not simply in fact an elective affinity between apocalyptic and aesthetic forms of theology. Second, and for a similar reason, apocalyptic forms of theology will not exclude edification as a feature of theological discourse. Third, an apocalyptic theology that would be adequate has a polemical and argumentative side. It is prepared to say no to the secular culture that says no to Christianity. Fourth, and relatedly, it is also inherently a diagnostic of deficient and insufficient forms of Christianity and Christian simulacra. Fifth, to be adequate, apocalyptic forms of theology need both to recommend and comment on practices in which vision is made flesh in witness and forms of life that are exemplary. Sixth, genuine apocalyptic theology moves towards a condition of ecstasy and anagogy, because its discourse is redolent of the future of this God, who declares himself as triune mystery. This triune God is honored and praised, and Christians become the doxological subjects they are meant to be not by meticulously inspecting God's design, or plumbing

history for its distinctions of how and when, but in practices and forms of life that have Christ as their measure and the Spirit as their power. Seventh, and finally, apocalyptic theology provides in a sense a pedagogy in which Christians are encouraged to see oppression and persecution just as much as to see what is wrong in what passes as a theological proposal; it is vision of God that suggests that there is much more to do than do enough, that witness even to the point of martyrdom is called for; and it is a vision in which it becomes obvious that God is the living imperative of praise that we cannot hold back, and that God is the victor over death as well as sin.

NOTES

1. Lexically, there is more incentive to inquire in the case of the 'Gnostic' texts of Nag Hammadi than in the case of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which were almost contemporaneous discoveries at the end of the Second World War. See Bentley Layton, *The Gnostic Scriptures* (New York: Doubleday, 1987); Florentino García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English* (Leiden: Brill, 1994). The texts of the former have in their title 'apocalypse,' for example, *The Apocalypse of Peter*, *The Apocalypse of Adam*. Needless to say, this does not decide the question as to whether 'apocalyptic' is a useful description of either of these texts, of the Nag Hammadi corpus as a whole, or of Gnosticism as broader than Nag

Hammadi, for 'apocalypse' is underdetermined insofar as it simply means 'seeing.' The verdicts are varied, with scholars such as George McRae and Walter Schmithals thinking there is a positive connection and Henri Charles Peuch arguing strongly against a connection. See McRae, 'Apocalyptic Eschatology in Gnosticism,' in *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East*, ed. David Hellholm (Tübingen: Mohr, 1983, pp. 317-29; Schmithals, *The Apocalyptic Movement: Introduction and Interpretation*, trans. John E. Steely (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975), pp. 89-110; Peuch, 'La gnose et le temps,' in *Eranos Jahrbuch* 20 (1951), pp. 57-113. Studies of the Qumran material are complicated in a different way. Apocalyptic or apocalypse does not appear as a description in any of the scrolls, but it is evident that apocalyptic books such as Daniel and Jubilees are important for the community. There is a debate about whether all or even some of the scrolls, for example the War Scroll, are helpfully defined as apocalyptic. The best known scholar of ancient Judaism speaking in favor is John. J. Collins; speaking against are scholars such as Carol A. Newsom and P. R. Davis. See Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination in Ancient Judaism* (New York: 1984) and *Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London: 1997); Newsom, 'Apocalyptic and the Discourse of the Qumran,' in *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 49:2 (1990), pp. 135-44; Davis, 'Qumran and Apocalyptic or *Obscurum per Obscurius*,' in ibid., pp. 127-34.

2. The work of John Collins is illustrative of this. See his influential *Apocalypse: Morphology of a Genre. Semeia* 14 (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1979). A different view of priority is suggested by Greg Carey. See his *Ultimate Things: An Introduction to Jewish and Christian Apocalyptic Literature* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2005). Carey has a different sense as to the status of what is prior chronologically, the degree of improvisation that apocalyptic permits, and a more traditional sense of the status a text acquires in living communities of faith. For him topics are important but just as important are the ways in which communities are addressed. In this book Carey brings this out in analyses of all the ancient apocalyptic material, just as he had done in his earlier work on Revelation. See *Elusive Apocalypse: Reading Authority in the Revelation to John* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1999).
3. D.H. Lawrence, *Apocalyptic and the Writings on Revelation*, ed. Mara Kalnis (Cambridge: CUP, 1980).
4. The apocalyptic of Joachim, which is exegetical rather than speculative, has as its field of anagogic reading the entire Bible, albeit with a special emphasis on Revelation. The most reliable scholars writing in English would have to include Marjorie Reeves and Bernard McGinn. See Reeves, *Joachim de Fiore and the Prophetic Future* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977); *The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages: A Study in Joachimism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969); McGinn, *The Calabrian Abbot: Joachim de Fiore in the History of Western Thought* (New York: Macmillan, 1985). Because of the exegetical and interpretive nature of Joachim's thought, Reeves prefers to think of meta-apocalyptic rather than apocalyptic in the first-order

sense that characterizes biblical apocalypses. Correct as a description, this may prove misleading to the extent to which it implies that in consequence Joachim's work is described as 'apocalyptic' only by courtesy.

5. For the fullest treatment of the relation between Aquinas and Joachim, see Winfrid M. J. Schachten, *Ordo Salutis: Das Gesetz als Weise der Heilsvermittlung: Zur Kritik des H. L. Thomas von Aquin an Joachim von Fiore* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1980).
6. For a brief but illuminating account of Bonaventure's relation, see McGinn, *The Calabrian Abbot*, pp.213-24. Bonaventure's resistance to Joachim is an important feature of one of the first books by Pope Benedict XVI, *The Theology of History of St. Bonaventure* (San Francisco: Herald Press, 1971).
7. For a comprehensive account of the speculative and exegetical dimensions of Boehme's form of apocalypse, see Cyril O'Regan, *Gnostic Apocalypse: Jacob Boehme's Haunted Narrative* (New York: SUNY Press, 2002). Bengel (1687-1752) was very much in the Joachimite tradition in that his apocalyptic thought was in significant part derived from an interpretation of Revelation. Although Boehme is much influenced by Joachim, neither Joachim's theology of history nor his exegetical practices are absolutely constitutive. His thought has a deep speculative dimension, even if it remains in contact in general with the biblical text and exhibits a number of Joachimite elements. Oetinger (1702-82) is more in line with Boehme in that his form of apocalypse is largely speculative.

8. In fact Kant's writings against various sorts of enthusiasts (*schwärmerei*) form something like bookends in his work. In 1764 he published a kind of debunking of the reigning mystics of the day, Lavater and Swendenborg. In 1796 he made another intervention. Kant thought that philosophy, under the influence of Romanticism, was headed in a direction which betrayed its true vocation as describing things in the phenomenal world. This essay, *Von einem neuerdings erhobenen vorvehmen Ton in der Philosophie* has been recently translated by Peter Fenves as 'On a Newly Arisen Superior Tone in Philosophy,' in *Raising the Tone of Philosophy: Late Essays by Immanuel Kant, Transformative Critique by Jacques Derrida*, ed. Peter Fenves (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).
9. For Milton and Apocalyptic, see the collection of essays edited by C. A. Patrides and Joseph Wittreich, *The Apocalypse in English Renaissance Thought and Literature: Patterns, Antecedents, and Repercussions* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984). See also Leland Ryken, *The Apocalyptic Vision in Paradise Lost* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970).
10. The eighteenth-century Swedish religious thinker Emmanuel Swedenborg (1685-1771) was a visionary in the straightforward sense that he claimed to directly perceive heaven and its organization. His main work was the twelve-volume *Arcana Coelestina*. At the same time, he was an interpreter of the book of Revelation, which is central to his mystical take on Christianity. See *The Apocalypse Revealed*, 2 vols., trans. J. Whitehead (New York: Swedenborg Foundation, 1978); also

The Apocalypse Explained, trans. J. Whitehead (New York: Swedenborg Foundation, 1982). Bengel was a German Pietist thinker who in his great five-volume text *Gnomon* applied the book of Revelation to contemporary history. He also was a chiliast in some essential respects, since he computed the end of the world to be 1836. By contrast, Oetinger, who was also a Pietist, was more a speculative visionary than a thinker trying to unlock the secrets of history and especially its outcomes. For a good account of Oetinger's thought, see Sigfrid Groosmann, *Friedrich Christoph Oetingers Gottesvorstellung: Versuch einer Analyse seiner Theologie* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979).

11. While it would probably be misleading to suggest that all German and English Romantic poets exhibit a determinate apocalyptic impulse, the case can be made that some of them most certainly do. Arguably, Schiller and especially Hölderlin, whose work is deeply indebted to the Johannine corpus, come to mind on the German side. To the extent to which Schiller shows an apocalyptic dimension, it seems to have a Joachimite pedigree. A good case could be made that a number of English Romantics such as the early Coleridge and Shelley belong to the apocalyptic tradition, in that they see a crisis that demands a revolution in language, thought, action, and relation. The great Yale literary critics A. J. Abrams and Harold Bloom tend to share this view. See the former's *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature* (New York, 1971) and the latter's *The Visionary Company: A Reading of English Romantic Poetry*, rev. ed. (Ithaca:

Cornell University Press, 1971). There is considerable support for putting Blake in the apocalyptic tradition. Not only does Blake, like Swedenborg, have visions of a new world that awaits the destruction of the old one, but his poetry is saturated with the book of Revelation; indeed, his longest poem has the same title. None of this is to suggest that he is in the slightest way orthodox. His ancestry includes Boehme, Swedenborg, and the entire cornucopia of the Hermetic tradition. Influential readers of Blake who think of Blake's work as 'apocalyptic' include Thomas Altizer, Harold Bloom, David V. Erdman, and Joseph Anthony Wittreich, Jr. See Altizer, *The New Apocalyptic: The Radical Christian Vision of William Blake* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1967); Bloom, *Blake's Apocalypse: A Study in Poetic Argument* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970); Erdman, *Blake, Prophet against Empire: A Poet's Interpretation of the History of his Own Times*, rev. ed. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969); Wittreich, *Angel of Apocalypse: Blake's Idea of Milton* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975).

12. The apocalyptic dimensions of the thought of Hegel and to a lesser extent Schelling have been spelled out by both Karl Löwith and Hans Urs von Balthasar. See Löwith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche: The Revolution in Nineteenth Century Thought*, trans. D.E. Green (New York: Doubleday, 1967); Balthasar, *Apokalypse der deutschen Seele*, 3 vols. (Salzburg: Pustet, 1937-39). See especially volume 1. Bruno Bauer (1809-1882), one of the more famous left-wing Hegelians, self-consciously

adopting the style of the book of Revelation, places Hegel in the apocalyptic tradition, while insisting that Hegel fully secularizes and humanizes it. See *The Trumpet of the Last Judgment Against Hegel the Atheist and Antichrist: An Ultimatum* (1841), trans. Lawrence Stepelevich (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1989). And F. C. Baur, one of Hegel's more famous theological carriers, articulated in Hegel's wake a speculative form of apocalypse that linked Hegel to the visionary thought of Boehme and the speculative apocalypses of the ancient Hellenistic environment. He did not exclude Valentinian Gnosticism. See F. C. Baur, *Die christliche Gnosis: Oder die christliche Religionsphilosophie in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung* (Tübingen: Osiander, 1835).

13. For a comprehensive account of both the general phenomenon of apocalyptic in Russian thought and its major thinkers, see Paul Valliere, *Modern Russian Theology: Bukharev, Soloviev, Bulgakov: Orthodox Theology in a New Key* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000).
14. Berdyaev is a very different kind of apocalyptic thinker from the others, who self-consciously are interested in staying within bounds of the Eastern Orthodox tradition, and who have a special affinity for the book of Revelation. The voluminous work of Berdyaev, whose career overlaps with that of Bulgakov in the first half of the twentieth century, evinces a different set of affinities, allying itself to the traditions of Jacob Boehme, Gnosticism, and the Enochian apocalyptic tradition.

15. Henri de Lubac, *La postérité spirituelle de Joachim de Flore*, vol. 1: *De Joachim à Schelling* (Paris: Lethielleux, 1979).
16. *Die Apokalypse der deutschen Seele* offers an extraordinarily comprehensive account of the apocalyptic and/or eschatological turn in modern European thought. Most of the authors covered are German, but some are French and Russian. Volume 1 covers Romanticism and Idealism and their fall-out. The other two volumes are concerned with discourses that might be regarded as reactions. In Balthasar's view, these discourses are apocalyptic in a different way from Romanticism and Idealism, but are joined in their dismissal of and substitution for biblical apocalyptic.
17. When Balthasar enlists Irenaeus in the cause of theodramatics in the second part of the triptych, there is the implication at least that Irenaeus is best interpreted as an apocalyptic thinker, given the close connection between theodramatics and apocalyptic. Granted there is little notice of this when Balthasar writes his important essay on Ireneaus in the second volume of *The Glory of the Lord* in which he brings out the theological aesthetic credentials of the writer of *Against Heresies*. A commentator on Balthasar who comes close to making this point is Kevin Mongrain. See his *The Systematic Thought of Hans Urs von Balthasar: An Irenaean Retrieval* (New York: Crossroad, 2002). Outside of any particular Balthasarian influence, Scott Moringielo makes this point with some force in his recent dissertation, 'Irenaeus Rhetor' (Notre Dame, 2008).

18. For a brief presentation of the apocalyptic thought of Lactantius, see Bernard McGinn, *Apocalyptic Spirituality* (New York: Paulist, 1979), pp. 55-80.
19. Arguably, the most influential modern statement of this view is provided by R. A. Marcus, in *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of Saint Augustine* (Cambridge: CUP, 1970). Two scholars who challenge the conventional reading are Kevin Hughes and Paula Fredrickson. See Hughes, *Constructing Anti-Christ: Paul, Biblical Commentary, and the Development of Doctrine in the Middle Ages* (Washington: CUA Press, 2005), pp. 94-105; Fredrickson, 'Tyconius and Augustine on the Apocalypse,' in *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, ed. Richard K. Emmerson and Bernard McGinn (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), pp. 20-37.
20. See Joseph Ratzinger, *The Theology of History of St. Bonaventure* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1971).
21. For interesting reflections on the apocalyptic dimensions of the *Commedia*, see especially James C. Nohrnberg, 'The First-Fruit of the Last Judgment: The *Commedia* as a Thirteenth Century Apocalypse,' in *Last Things: Apocalypse, Judgment and Millennium in the Middle Ages* (Sewanee, TN: University of the South Press, 2002), pp. 111-159; also Ronald B. Herzma, 'Dante and the Apocalypse,' in *Irenic Apocalypse: Some Uses of Apocalyptic in Dante, Petrarch, and Rabelais*, ed. Dennis Costa (Saratoga, CA: Anma Libri, 1981), pp. 398-413.

22. Hamann, an original, was highly valued in his own day by Kant and by such German Romantic luminaries as Herder and Jacobi, and was equally valued after his death by such different thinkers as Hegel and Kierkegaard. A fierce opponent of the Enlightenment, he was a different kind of apocalyptic thinker than Bengel and Oetinger. He was both considerably more orthodox in his theology, and deliberately obscure or sibylline in his mode of expression, which he took to be 'prophetic.' Moreover, he avowed a mystical reading of the Bible and felt a special attraction to the book of Revelation. A thoroughly persuasive reading of Hamann as an apocalyptic thinker has recently been made by John Betz. See his forthcoming, *After Enlightenment: The Post-Secular Vision of J. G. Hamann* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008).
23. For two texts by this prolific writer who, after an appreciative early phase, became one of Hegel's severest nineteenth-century theological critics, see *Darstellung und Kritik des Hegelschen Systems. Aus dem Standpunkte der christlichen Philosophie* (Mainz: Kupferberg, 1844); reprint (Frankfurt am Main: Minerva, 1966); *Zum Religiösen Frieden der Zukunft. Mit Rücksicht die religiöse-politische Aufgabe der Gegenwart*, 3 vols. (Friburg, 1846-47); reprint (Frankfurt am Main: Minerva, 1967).
24. Here I will provide information only for the work of Vattimo, whom I judge to be an apocalyptic thinker in the Catholic tradition, but who is not discussed in this programmatic essay. Whether forms of liberation theology admit of apocalyptic ascription is open to ques-

tion, given the differences between the modalities, although the notion of the kingdom of God, which is not entirely otherworldly, is to the fore. Vattimo represents a Catholic appropriation of Heidegger's own apocalyptic, which was constructed to transcend Nietzsche's particular rendition of the 'death of God' and in general his *Götterdämmerung*. The representative texts in English include: *After Christianity*, trans. Luca D'Isanto (New York: Columbia, 2002); *Beyond Interpretation*, trans. David Webb (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997); *Belief*, trans. David Webb (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999). For an important critical reading, which examines Vattimo's theological credentials in and through a comparison with the thought of Hans Urs von Balthasar, see Anthony C. Sciglitano, Jr., 'Contesting the World and the Divine: Balthasar's Trinitarian "Response" to Gianni Vattimo's Secular Christianity,' in *Modern Theology* 23:4 (2007), pp. 525-59. Sciglitano's article is important in a number of respects, but one of these is how he shows the extent to which Vattimo repeats the 'death of God' theology of Altizer. One of the more interesting overlaps between thinkers, who take their start from Hegel and Heidegger respectively, is the highly positive understanding of Joachim.

25. By using this word, which has come to be associated with Edmund Husserl, I do not mean to suggest that phenomenology is playing any role in my analysis of apocalyptic discourses. I borrow the term in fact from Balthasar, who uses it to describe the book of Revelation. See his *Theo-Drama: Theological Dramatic Theory* IV: *The Action*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1994), pp. 15-67; esp. p. 15.
26. For a good account of the use of the term in both Gnostic texts and the New Testament, see Violet McDermot, 'The Concept of "Pleroma" in Gnosticism,' in *Gnosis and Gnosticism. Papers Read at the Seventh International Conference in Patristic Studies*, ed. Martin Krause (Leiden: Brill, 1977), pp. 78-86.
27. See David Bentley Hart, *The Beauty of the Infinite: The Aesthetics of Christian Truth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003); John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990); also a 'A Postmodern Critical Augustinianism: A Short Summa in Forty Two Responses to Unasked Questions,' in *Modern Theology* 7:3 (1991), pp. 225-378.
28. The full title is *Theology of Hope: On the Ground and Implications of a Christian Eschatology*, trans. J. W. Leitch (London: SCM Press, 1967).
29. Ernst Bloch, *The Principle of Hope*, 3 volumes, trans. Neville Plaice, Stephen Plaice, and Paul Knight (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995). The date of the original text, *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, is 1959. For a direct avowal of his dependence on Bloch, see Moltmann, *Im Gespräch mit Ernst Bloch* (Munich: Christian Kaiser Verlag, 1976); see also *History and the Triune God* (New York: Crossroad, 1992) (German, 1991), pp. 143-58.
30. *The Trinity and the Kingdom* (London: SCM Press, 1981), trans. Margaret Kohl from *Trinität und Reich*

Gottes (Munich: Christian Kaiser Verlag, 1980); *The Crucified God* (London: SCM Press, 1974).

31. *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996).
32. Bloch is an avowed atheist. From Moltmann's point of view, however, his atheism is of the non-doctrinaire variety with which theology not only can but should negotiate in order to cure itself of its own dogmatism and illusions.
33. See among the numerous texts of Gilson where this point is made, *Philosophie de la chrétienté* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1949); *Introduction à l'études de Saint Augustin*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Vrin, 1982).
34. Moltmann is dependent on Kant's own anti-theodicy reflections in making Job the figure of a protest that suggests the openness of history. Kant's famous 1791 essay on theodicy has been recently retranslated. See 'On the Miscarriage of all Philosophical Trials in Theodicy,' trans. George di Giovanni in *Immanuel Kant: Religion and Rational Theology*, trans. and ed. Allen Wood and George di Giovanni (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), pp, 19-37.
35. In the former text, Origen and Gregory Thaumaturgos, but especially the Patripassians (Noetus and Praxeas) were objects of praise. Of course, the Patripassians were attacked by Tertullian among others and came to be regarded as heterodox for asserting that God as such suffered. A crucial problem with the Patripassians is the underdevelopment of trinitarian thought and the lack of distinction between the Son and the Father.

36. For Moltmann's appropriation of Joachim, see *History and the Triune God*, pp. 99-103.
37. The note of glory is sounded loudly in *The Trinity and the Kingdom*. The 1980s represent a shift from an exclusive focus on redemption in and of history to the cosmos as an object of divine intention and solicitude. See *God in Creation: An Ecological Doctrine of Creation*, trans. Margaret Kohl (London: SCM Press, 1985)
38. In *The Coming of God* Augustine fares poorly in comparison with Joachim, his thought judged to be either individualistic (xv) or to offer a realized eschatology (180-82).
39. Although it is obvious in *The Coming of God* that Moltmann has read his Jewish messianic sources, he seems to be very influenced by S. Mosès, *L'ange de l'histoire* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1992).
40. With respect to the relative lack of development in Christian eschatology, Moltmann would make something of an exception for German biblical scholarship, which he indicates does a superb job in excavating the eschatological and apocalyptic consciousness of the biblical writers. Unfortunately this literature has not had the influence it ought to have had in Protestant theology, which in the twentieth century all too frequently interpreted faith in too individualistic and too atemporal a fashion. Neither Barth nor Bultmann are exempt from this criticism.
41. *Apokalypse der deutschen Seele: Studien zu einer Lehre von letzen Haltungen*, 3 vols. (Salzburg: Verlag Anton Pustet, 1937-39). Volume 1 has at its subtitle *Der*

deutschen Idealismus; volume 2 has as its subtitle *Im Zeichen Nietzsches*.

42. See *Idol and Distance: Five Studies*, trans. with introd. Thomas Carlson (New York: Fordham, 2001). Although it is often assumed that this text, like its more famous sibling, *God without Being*, represents simply a critique of both the propositionalist strain in theology and Heidegger's overcoming of it, Marion's essay on Hölderlin, which recalls the work of Przywara on apocalyptic, suggests that the overcoming of Heidegger is not produced by recurring to *apophasis* but also to *apocalypsis*. For Marion's reflection on Hölderlin, see *Idol and Distance*, pp. 81-136.
43. Obviously I am referring here to *The Glory of the Lord*, *Theo-Drama*, and *Theo-Logic*. Each of these three parts has multiple volumes. *Glory of the Lord* has seven; *Theo-Drama* has five; *Theo-Logic* has three.
44. *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics* 6: *The Old Covenant*, ed. John Riches, trans. Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis and Brian McNeil, C.R.V (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1991).
45. *Theo-Drama: Theological Dramatic Theory* 4: *The Action*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1994); *Theo-Drama: Theological Dramatic Theory* 5: *The Last Act*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1998).
46. *The Glory of the Lord* 7: *Theology. The New Covenant*, ed. John Riches, tr. Brian McNeil, C.R.V (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1989).
47. See also *TD* 5, 144, 181-82; *TD* 4, 446, 458-59. Even more direct statements about the relation between Joachim and Hegel are to be found in *Theo-Drama. Theological Dramatic Theory* 3: *The Dramatis Personae: The Person in Christ*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1992), pp. 45, 400, 512-13. Outside the triptych, see 'Improvisation on Spirit and Fire,' in *Explorations in Theology* 3: *Creator Spirit*, trans. Brian McNeil (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1993), p. 144, in which Joachim is considered to have departed from the Christological center of Revelation. Here Balthasar is essentially repeating an objection made by Bonaventure. Balthasar implies a connection between Joachim and Jewish messianism in the same essay (pp.159-60). See also 'The Claim to Catholicity,' in *Explorations in Theology* 4: *Spirit and Institution*, trans. Edward T. Oakes (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1995), pp. 65-121, pp. 105-06. In the same essay, Marx is linked to the messianic and thus by implication to Joachim (pp. 96-97).

48. For other expressions of the thesis of provocation that leads to counterfeit forms of Christianity, see also *TD* 4, 437, 446, 468; *TD* 5, 50, 207, 271.
49. Although the argument with Hegel's developmental trinitarianism is an issue throughout *Theo-Drama* in its entirety, perhaps the most compact refutation of Hegel occurs in the second and third volumes of *Theo-Logic*. See *Theo-Logic* 2: *Truth of God*, trans. Adrian J. Walker (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2004); *Theo-Logic* 3: *The Spirit of Truth*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2005). See especially *TL* 2, 22-3, 44-5, 67; *TL* 3, 226-27.

50. Kevin Mongrain brings this out well in his study *The Systematic Thought of Hans Urs von Balthasar: An Irenaean Retrieval* (New York: Crossroad, 2002). This point is also clearer in Balthasar's introduction to his anthology of Irenaeus's writings. See *The Scandal of the Incarnation: Irenaeus against the Heresies*, trans. John Saward (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1990).
51. See *Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics* 3: *Studies in Theological Styles: Lay Styles*, ed. John Riches; trans. Andrew Louth, John Saward, Martin Simon, and Rowan Williams (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1986), pp. 239-78.
52. This is apparent, for example, in Balthasar's great book on Maximus, *Kosmische Liturgie: Höhe und Krise des grieschen Weltbildes bei Maximus Confessor* (Freiburg, 1941). See the English translation by Brian E. Daley, S. J., *Cosmic Liturgy: The Universe according to Maximus the Confessor* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2003), p. 190.
53. Berdyaev is judged as a speculative apocalyptic thinker who compromises the transcendence and gratuity of the Christian God. See *Apokalypse der deutschen Seele* 3, p. 428. For worries about the heterodoxy of his sophiology, and more specifically about its connection to Gnosticism, see *Apokalypse der deutschen Seele* 2, p. 344.
54. It is worth pointing out that in *Apokalypse der deutschen Seele* Balthasar makes a complicated judgment about the apocalyptic dimensions of Dostoyevski's thought. He praises 'The Grand Inquisitor' section of *The Brothers Karamazov* (2, p. 235), and sides resolutely with Dostoyevski against the political revolutionaries described in *The Possessed*, but worries about the Slavophilism of Dostoyevski's otherwise sound apocalyptic vision (2, 248-50). In his essay on Soloviev in *GL* 3 (pp. 279-352), Balthasar once again recurs to Dostoyevski's use of the Antichrist image as the image of the fanatical social reformer (pp. 294-96).
55. Balthasar translated both *Cinq Grand Odes* (*Five Great Odes*) and *Le Soulier de Satin* (*The Satin Slipper*) of Claudel from French into German in 1939 and expresses a high opinion of him in *Apokalypse der deutschen Seele*. It is not always the case that the ascription of 'apocalyptic' to a thinker is negative. This is true in the case of Hamann; it is also true in the case of Claudel. Claudel's *L'Interroge L'Apocalypse* (Paris: Gallimard, 1952) comes much later. It is referred to positively by Balthasar in *TD* 4, pp. 415-16. Especially relevant sections of *L'Interroge L'Apocalypse* include Claudel's questioning of the inner historical realization of the kingdom (p. 169) and the French Revolution as a particular example of this (pp. 301-2), as well as his reflection on the Antichrist as persecutor (pp. 304, 360) and tempter (p. 321). Balthasar very much keeps faith with Claudel with respect to the former. In a Claudelian vein – although also a Lubacian vein – Balthasar criticizes both Marx and liberation theology on this count. See *TD* 4, pp. 440-02. For a good discussion of Balthasar's critique of Marx and liberation theology, see Mongrain, *The Systematic Thought of Hans Urs von Balthasar*, pp. 144-49, 166-74. With respect to emphases regarding the disposition and be-

havior of the Antichrist, Balthasar tends to emphasize the latter rather than the former.

56. These texts appeared in Russian over a ten year period between the late 1930s and early 1940s; *The Lamb* in 1933, *The Comforter* in 1936, *The Bride of the Lamb* in 1945. The latter two have been recently translated. See Sergius Bulgakov, *The Comforter*, trans. Boris Jakim (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004); *The Bride of the Lamb*, trans. Boris Jakim (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002). *The Lamb* is available in a French translation, and through this translation became known to a theologian like Balthasar. See *Verbe Incarné*, trans. Constantin Andronikof (Paris: Aubier, 1943).
57. See *Sophia: Wisdom of God: An Outline of Sophiology* (New York: Lindisfarne Press, 1993), pp. 9-10. This is a translation of a 1937 text by Bulgakov. See Valliere, *Modern Russian Theology*, pp. 160-62, 292.
58. For a good survey of Slavophile forms of apocalyptic thought in the early modern period, see David M. Bethea, *The Shape of Apocalypse in Modern Russian Fiction* (Princeton: PUP, 1989). Unlike Balthasar, Bulgakov does not seem to have any reservations about Dostoyevski's own brand of apocalyptic.
59. If this is already clear in *The Bride of the Lamb*, it receives an exclamation point in *The Comforter*.
60. See *The Comforter*, pp. 75-151.
61. Bulgakov shows extraordinary scruple in adjudicating the merits of the Eastern and Western positions in *The Comforter*.
62. This is a major theme in Bulgakov's writings. Unlike Balthasar, Bulgakov associates beauty definitively with the Holy Spirit. See *Sophia: The Wisdom of God*, pp. 49, 98.

63. For the record, however, Benjamin seems to deny this, and to avail himself of the word 'theological' to describe his work. See his famous aphorism taken from the epistemological reflections that preface the Arcade project: "My thinking relates to theology as a blotter does to ink. It is soaked through with it. If one were to go by the blotter, though, nothing of what has been written would remain.' For this fragmentary text, see *Benjamin: Philosophy, Aesthetics, History*, ed. Gary Smith (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), pp.42-83. For the above passage, see p. 61.
64. Jacques Derrida, 'Faith and Knowledge: The Two Sources of "Religion" at the Limits of Reason Alone,' in *Acts of Religion: Jacques Derrida*, ed. Gil Anidjar (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 42-101.
65. The thought of Emmanuel Levinas has exercised enormous influence in effecting this shift.
66. 'Theses on the Philosophy of History' can be found in *Illuminations*, tr. Harry Zohn (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968). *Trauerspiel* has been translated as *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne (London: New Left Books, 1977).
67. Scholem's misgivings about Benjamin's own characterization of his work are aired in *Walter Benjamin: Story of a Friendship*, trans. Harry Zohn (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1981).
68. The epistemological preface to the Arcade Project makes much use of the language of 'lightning flash.' See *Benjamin*, ed. Smith, pp. 43, 64.

69. For this point, see *Benjamin*, p. 80. See also Richard Wolin, *Walter Benjamin: An Aesthetic of Redemption* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), p. 48.
70. Thus not part of 'homogenous time' or 'ever the same time' (*Immergleiche Zeit*). See *Benjamin*, p. 59, for a good expression of the form of time that Benjamin thinks his messianism overcomes.
71. See *Benjamin*, p. 61. See also p. 63 where the concept of 'rescue' (*Rettung*) is articulated.
72. Benjamin has before him Klee's painting of *Angelus Novus*. See *Illuminations*, pp. 257-58. For a good discussion of this point and Benjamin's 'Theses on the Philosophy of History,' see Rolf Tiedemann, 'Historical Materialism or Political Messianism? An Interpretation of the Theses on the Concept of History,' in *Benjamin*, ed. Smith, pp. 175-209, esp. 177-83.
73. I am speaking here of the 'Theses on the Philosophy of History.' In different ways, the commentators on Benjamin we have mentioned ignore these distinctions.
74. John D. Caputo, *The Prayers and Tears of Jacques Derrida: Religion without Religion* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1997), pp. 69-122.
75. Jacques Derrida, *Glas*, trans. John Leavey, Jr., and Richard Rand (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986).
76. Caputo comments on Derrida's reading of the book of Revelation as a violent text at a number of points throughout *The Prayers and Tears of Jacques Derrida*; see pp. 69-70, 97-98.

77. Caputo's reflections on the relation between Blanchot and Derrida on apocalyptic discourse are especially helpful. See *The Prayers and Tears of Jacques Derrida*, pp. 79-80, 86-87.
78. For a reflection on the phrase 'apocalypse without apocalypse' or the equivalent 'apocalypse without vision,' see Caputo, *The Prayers and Tears of Jacques Derrida*, pp. 98-99.
79. Derrida has much more to say on this topic in *Of Spirit*, trans. G. Bennington and R. Bowlby (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1989). Caputo sustains and develops this reading in *Demythologizing Heidegger* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993).
80. E. Levinas, *Otherwise than Being*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981)
81. Thomas Altizer, *Genesis and Apocalypse: A Theological Voyage toward Authentic Christianity* (Louisville, KY: Westminister/John Knox, 1990); *The Genesis of God: A Theological Genealogy* (Louisville, KY: Westminister/John Knox, 1993).
82. The basic insights of the 'death of God' theology remain in his later self-conscious articulation of an apocalyptic theology. It should be noted, however, that Altizer's important book on Blake in 1968 did have 'apocalypse' in the title.
83. Mark C. Taylor, *After God* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007). See especially pp. 199-205.
84. The clearest statement of Metz's avowal of the apocalyptic nature of his thought is to be found in *Hope Against Hope: Johann Baptist Metz and Elie Wiesel Speak Out on the Holocaust*, by Ekkehard Schuster and

Reinhold Boschert-Kimmig, trans. J. Matthew Ashley (New York: Paulist Press, 1999), p. 29. See also pp. 40-41. The necessity for an 'apocalyptic' theology is also a concern in the essays that make up *A Passion for God: The Mystical-Political Dimension of Christianity*, trans. J. Matthew Ashley (New York: Paulist Press, 1998). This concern is exhibited both directly and indirectly. It is exhibited directly in reflection on the distinction between authentic apocalyptic, which is not chiliastic, and the chiliastic counterfeit (pp. 39-40, 47-49, 52-53); it is exhibited indirectly as the counter to Idealist theology (pp. 23, 54-55), as a counter to Marx (pp. 33, 36-37), and a counter to the rage for theodicy. Interestingly, Metz draws a contrast between the kind of apocalyptic he supports and more speculative apocalypses, which he thinks can be linked by the figure of Prometheus. This is a very Balthasarian conjugation and recalls Balthasar's figuration in volume 1 of *Apokalypse der deutschen Seele*.

85. See *Faith in History and Society: Toward a Practical Fundamental Theology* (New York: Seabury, 1980). For an excellent treatment of Metz's theology in general and the apocalyptic dimension of his theology in particular, see J. Matthew Ashley, *Interruptions: Mysticism, Politics, and Theology in the Work of Johann Baptist Metz* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998). 'Interruptions' translates *Unterbrechungen*, a group of essays by Metz from the 1980s, which deliberately recall not only Benjamin's vocabulary, but also his meaning.

86. For apocalyptic as a form of negative theology, see *Hope against Hope*, pp. 42-43; also *A Passion for God*, pp. 28-29, 69.

87. Still it should be pointed out that in Metz, the contrast between the contemplative and the practical is not binary. Metz has written much about prayer, and obviously thinks that the form of apocalyptic to which he ascribes – by contrast with speculative apocalypses – go hand in hand with prayer. See *Hope against Hope*, pp. 42-43.

88. For other references to 'remembrance" (*Eingedenken*), see *A Passion for God*, pp. 26, 62-64; *Hope against Hope*, pp. 33-34.

89. Ashley does a superb job of bringing out Metz's dependence on these two constitutive apocalyptic sources. See *Interruptions*, pp. 103-108 for Bloch and pp. 116-22 for Benjamin.

90. For criticism of Augustine's theology of history as non-apocalyptic (or at least insufficiently apocalyptic), see *A Passion for God*, pp. 32, 39, 47-52. Metz's critique of Augustine's two-tiered system, however, is not for him of merely historical interest. He is also distinguishing his eschatology from that of Ratzinger (now Pope Benedict XVI). See also *Hope against Hope*, p. 59. Although anti-Augustinianism is a generic feature of much of much of Political Theology, Liberation Theology not excepted, and thus need not be ascribed to any particular source or influence, nonetheless, it clearly harmonizes with Bloch's assessment in *Principle of Hope*. See *PH* 2, pp. 853-56. Bloch does acknowl-

edge that *The City of God* is apocalyptic to some extent, only conservatively so (*PH* 2, pp. 502-509).

91. Following Adorno, Metz sets himself against Hegelian Idealism and its theological fallout, which is committed to a total explanation of reality. With such a commitment it enacts a violation of the victims of history and illustrates a massive denial of death. For a very Adorno-like expression of Metz's antipathy to explanation, see *Hope against Hope*, p. 12.
92. The following passage in *A Passion for God* captures the remembering that is a form of forgetting: 'Two forms of forgetfulness correspond to this form of remembrancing, namely that which wipes away every trace, so that finally nothing more can be recalled, but also that soul of forgetfulness that we think of as successfully remembering through historicism ...' (p. 64).
93. For reservations about Trinitarian thought, especially as this involves a view of a 'suffering God,' see Ashley, *Interruptions*, p. 194; also *Hope against Hope*, p. 47. Although Moltmann is the obvious target, since it is his work that Metz most nearly engages, Metz gives some indication that Balthasar is not excluded. In *Hope against Hope* (p. 20), having mentioned Balthasar and von Speyr, Metz pointedly goes to say: 'When it comes to specific content, for example, arguments over the Trinity, I always stood decisively in Rahner's camp.'
94. For the problem with the ontological statement of John, see *A Passion for God*, pp. 69-71. In a very interesting discussion, Metz links the ontological discourse of John with Hegel, and Hegel with Gnosticism. To favor the ontological language of John is among other

things to adopt a Hegelian paradigm that vitiates a genuinely Christian, that is, a genuinely apocalyptic theology. Of course, the accusation could apply also to the magisterial tradition. This, however, is not a move that Metz makes, and there are, for example, no criticisms of Augustine and Aquinas on these grounds. That Moltmann is the immediate object of theological criticism is apparent from the example of the Johannine corpus subject to critique, that is, the famous statement in 1 John 4.6, 'God is Love.' This is the lynchpin proposition in *The Trinity and the Kingdom* in which Moltmann essentially uses Hegel's speculative dialectic to parse the famous Johannine statement. Again, Metz probably does not exclude Balthasar, although Balthasar tries strenuously to avoid giving the proposition a Hegelian interpretation, and in general wishes to separate Hegel and John. Interestingly, Metz attempts to save the appearances by suggesting a way in which this biblical text might be theologically redeemed. He stipulates that one must hear the Johannine statement not as ontological, but rather as having the character of a promise: 'God will prove Godself to us as love.' Leaving aside what Metz means by 'prove,' it is clear that Metz desires to reduce all apophatic discourse to prophetic-eschatological discourse in the context of resolutely sticking to salvation history and never daring to speak of God *in se*. Metz here is very much the student of Rahner.

95. Ashley touches on this issue in *Interruptions*, pp. 126-28.

96. For Metz's invoking of Kant, see *A Passion for God*, p. 33
97. Catherine Keller, *Apocalypse Now and Then: A Feminist Guide to the End of the World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996); *God and Power: Counter-Apocalyptic Journey* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004).
98. For Milbank, see 'The Second Difference,' in *The Word Made Strange: Theology, Language, and Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), pp. 171-93, esp. 180-83. Despite his intentions, Moltmann does not escape Hegel's speculative net. This net is described in some detail in *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), pp. 147-76. One could consider David Bentley Hart's critique of the trinitarian thought of Robert Jenson as representing an attempt to applying the charge of Hegelianism to less obvious cases of trinitarian thought. Hart is fully aware that Moltmann is the most egregious case, but supposes that the more obvious cases of regression by trinitarian theologians to Hegel has been proved. See *The Beauty of the Infinite: The Aesthetics of Christian Truth*, pp. 160-66.
99. The Cappadocian Fathers Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory of Nazianzen are central to Hart's enterprise. Their contribution is not limited, however, to reflection on the limits of our language with respect to God, but extends over the entire breadth and depth of theology, from considerations of who God is *in se* to creation, salvation, and sanctification. Hart takes from the Cappadocians that we can underestimate as well as overestimate our language with respect to God, especially if we only think of language as apophatic.

100. In *The Beauty of the Infinite*, Hart singles out Caputo for particular opprobrium.
101. As 'Apocalyptic Tone' makes clear, Benjamin is a starting point for an argument against any eidetic element in apocalyptic. At the very least there is a trace of content in Benjamin's messianism, despite the caveats, suggested in the language of 'lightning flash' and 'glimpse.' Moreover, there is some scope to Benjamin's vision, even if the content is ruin. From a Derridian perspective, Benjamin is caught in Hegel's net to the degree to which he is engaged in a reversal of Hegelian panoptics.
102. One need only look to the index of *The Beauty of the Infinite* to grasp just how important an interlocutor Hegel is. Of major philosophers who get resisted Hegel ranks second to Nietzsche and ahead of Heidegger.
103. As I indicated earlier, *Theology of Hope* and *The Coming of God*, which might be regarded as he bookends of Moltmann's theology are determinately anti-Hegelian. The most Hegelian text of all is *The Crucified God* largely because Hegel provides the template for a 'suffering God' within a trinitarian horizon. *The Trinity and the Kingdom* represents an attempt to step back from the Hegelian over-emphasis.
104. *The Coming of the Kingdom* differs from some of the earlier texts only in its greater insistence on the contribution of Jewish messianic thinking. Moltmann

adds Benjamin, Scholem, and Rosenzweig to Bloch. Surprisingly, he also includes Karl Löwith.

105. Hamann is with Vico a crucial figure in Milbank's essay 'Pleonasm, Speech and Writing,' in *The Word Made Strange: Theology, Language, Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), pp. 55-83.

106. The Joachim-Augustine contrast is a leitmotif of *The Coming of God*. To the extent to which Augustine is regarded as an apocalyptic thinker, his apocalyptic disposition is conservative (*CG*, 180-82). Interestingly, Moltmann highlights Augustine's references to Revelation.

107. This self-ascription, which is prominent in *The Trinity and the Kingdom*, is not repented of in later works such as *God in Creation: An Ecological Doctrine of Creation*. It is maintained in *The Coming of the Kingdom*, especially in part 4, which has cosmic eschatology as its theme. It is not a little interesting that there is no mention of Bulgakov.

108. This is a prominent topic in *The Trinity and the Kingdom* and its importance is underscored by the fact that a discussion of glory concludes *The Coming of God*, which essentially concludes Moltmann's unsystematic 'systematic theology.'

109. This speculative developmental onto-theology depends on the identification of the history of human being with the history of God as God unfolds Godself in relation to an other. This logic, which finds its summary in *The Trinity and the Kingdom*, is entirely Hegelian.

110. The topic of 'peace' is folded into the body of *The Beauty of the Infinite*, which wants to argue, after Milbank, that eschatological (and archeological) peace derive from participation in God as peace. See especially the characterization of God as peace (207-10) and eschatological peace (373-94).

111. This is one of the most salient points of *Theology and Social Theory* that is developed in *The Beauty of the Infinite*. The book begins and ends with the problematic of violence and its relation to discourse, and how an appropriately aesthetic rendering of the Christian narrative is the only answer.

112. This view is probative and might have to be adjusted to account for the kind of apocalyptic specimen represented by Giorgio Agamben's *The Time that Remains*, which conceives of Paul as providing the template for a Benjamin kind of non-eidetic apocalyptic to which he finds himself attracted. See Agamben, *The Time that Remains: A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans*, trans. Patricia Dailey (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005). Benjamin is a presence throughout Agamben's 'strong reading' of Paul as a messianic thinker, in which a main concern is lessening the distance between 'unrealized' Jewish eschatology and 'realized' Christian eschatology. See especially, *The Time that Remains*, pp. 138-45.

113. See Derrida's essay on 'Khora' in *On the Name*, ed. Thomas Dutoit, tr. David Wood, John P. Leavey and Ian McLeod (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), pp. 89-127.

114. Metz is on sound theological grounds in that in the end it is God who remembers the dead. An eloquent expression of this is to be found in *Hope against Hope* (p. 22) where he considers or reconsiders his relation to Bloch's *Principle of Hope*: 'When it came to "God" I never gave up any ground, but constantly asked whether Utopia would not fall prey to the imperious evolution, if there were no God before whom even the past is not fixed.'
115. This is Milbank's memorial imperative in *Theology and Social Theory*.

THE PÈRE MARQUETTE LECTURES IN THEOLOGY

1969 *The Authority for Authority*
Quentin Quesnell

1970 *Mystery and Truth*
John Macquarrie

1971 *Doctrinal Pluralism*
Bernard Lonergan, S.J.

1972 *Infallibility*
George A. Lindbeck

1973 *Ambiguity in Moral Choice*
Richard A. McCormick, S.J.

1974 *Church Membership as a Catholic and Ecumenical Problem*
Avery Dulles, S.J.

1975 *The Contributions of Theology to Medical Ethics*
James Gustafson

1976 *Religious Values in an Age of Violence*
Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum

1977 *Truth Beyond Relativism: Karl Mannheim's Sociology of Knowledge*
Gregory Baum

1978 *A Theology of 'Uncreated Energies'*
George A. Maloney, S.J.

1980 *Method in Theology: An Organon for Our Time*
Frederick E. Crowe, S.J.

1981 *Catholics in the Promised Land of the Saints*
James Hennesey, S.J.

1982 *Whose Experience Counts in Theological Reflection?*
Monika Hellwig

1983 *The Theology and Setting of Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark*
John R. Donahue, S.J.

1984 *Should War Be Eliminated? Philosophical and Theological Investigations*
Stanley Hauerwas

1985 *From Vision to Legislation: From the Council to a Code of Laws*
Ladislas M. Orsy, S.J.

1986 *Revelation and Violence: A Study in Contextualization*
Walter Brueggemann

1987 *Nova et Vetera: The Theology of Tradition in American Catholicism*
Gerald Fogarty

1988 *The Christian Understanding of Freedom and the History of Freedom in the Modern Era: The Meeting and Confrontation between Christianity and the Modern Era in a Postmodern Situation*
Walter Kasper

1989 *Moral Absolutes: Catholic Tradition, Current Trends, and the Truth*
William F. May

1990 *Is Mark's Gospel a Life of Jesus? The Question of Genre*
Adela Yarbro Collins

1991 *Faith, History and Cultures: Stability and Change in Church Teachings*
Walter H. Principe, C.S.B.

1992 *Universe and Creed*
Stanley L. Jaki

1993 *The Resurrection of Jesus Christ: Some Contemporary Issues*
Gerald G. O'Collins, S.J.

1994 *Seeking God in Contemporary Culture*
Most Reverend Rembert G. Weakland, O.S.B.

1995 *The Book of Proverbs and Our Search for Wisdom*
Richard J. Clifford, S.J.

1996 *Orthodox and Catholic Sister Churches: East Is West and West Is East*
Michael A. Fahey, S.J.

1997 *'Faith Adoring the Mystery': Reading the Bible with St. Ephræm the Syrian*
Sidney H. Griffith

1998 *Is There Life after Death?*
Jürgen Moltmann

1999 *Moral Theology at the End of the Century*
Charles E. Curran

2000 *Is the Reformation over?*
Geoffrey Wainwright

2001 *In Procession before the World: Martyrdom as Public Liturgy in Early Christianity*
Robin Darling Young

2002 *Septuagintal Midrash in the Speeches of Acts*
Luke Timothy Johnson

2003 *The Reception of Vatican II Liturgical Reforms in the Life of the Church*
Pierre-Marie Gy, O.P.

2004 *Bioethics and the Common Good*
Lisa Sowle Cahill

2005 *"Did You Receive the Holy Spirit When You Believed?" Some Basic Questions for Pneumatology*
David Coffey

2006 *The Ecumenical Potential of the Second Vatican Council*
Otto Hermann Pesch

2007 *"Wheels within Wheels": William Blake and the Ezekiel's Merkabah in Text and Image*
Christopher Rowland

2008 *Who Are the Church?*
Joseph A. Komonchak

2009 *Theology and the Spaces of Apocalyptic*
Cyril O'Regan

ABOUT THE PÈRE MARQUETTE LECTURE SERIES

The Annual Père Marquette Lecture Series began at Marquette University in the Spring of 1969. Ideal for classroom use, library additions, or private collections, the Père Marquette Lecture Series has received international acceptance by scholars, universities, and libraries. Hardbound in blue cloth with gold stamped covers. Uniform style and price ($15 each). Some reprints with soft covers. Regular reprinting keeps all volumes available. Ordering information (purchase orders, checks, and major credit cards accepted):

Marquette University Press
Order Toll-Free (800) 247-6553
fax: (419) 281 6883

Order directly online: www.marquette.edu/mupress/

Editorial Address:
Dr. Andrew Tallon, Director
Marquette University Press
Box 3141
Milwaukee WI 53201-3141

phone: (414) 288-1564
fax: (414) 288-7813
email: andrew.tallon@marquette.edu
web: www.marquette.edu/mupress/

ISBN-13: 978-087462589-9
ISBN-10: 087462589-0