

OVERVIEW

The notion of Apocalypse is charged with manifold meaning, and has gained currency over the last two decades with the approach and passing of the millennium. It is a genre that spans cultures, time and place, and one that resists easy categorical definition. In *Through a Glass Darkly*, six speakers will deliver presentations at the Heller Center for Arts & Humanities. Each of these scholars will also join *HUM 3990: Visions of Darkness: Apocalypse and Dystopia in Literature, Art & Film*, taught by Michaela Steen and Colin McAllister, for an informal roundtable discussion.

Through a Glass Darkly is generously underwritten by the UCCS Humanities Program, the Heller Center for Arts & Humanities, the UCCS Department of Visual and Performing Arts, the UCCS Department of History and the UCCS Center for Religious Diversity and Public Life

Colin McAllister

Regnum Caelorum Terrestre: The Apocalyptic Vision of Lactantius

The writings of the early fourth century Christian apologist L. Caecilius Firmianus Lactantius have been extensively studied by historians, classicists, philosophers and theologians. But his unique apocalyptic eschatology presented in book VII of the *Divinae Institutiones*, his largest work, has been relatively neglected. This lecture will distill Lactantius's complex narrative and analyze his sources. In particular, I investigate his chiliasm, ideas about resurrection, and the nature of the intermediate state, as well as his portrayal of the Antichrist. I argue that his apocalypticism is not an indiscriminate synthesis of varying sources - as it often stated - but is essentially based on the Book of Revelation and other Patristic sources.

Colin McAllister pursues a creative life as a guitarist, conductor and historian. He engages deeply with cross-disciplinary ideas in the humanities, particularly the intersection between music and history, classics and religion. As an historian, his research interests are centered on Patristic eschatology, particularly third and fourth century apocalypticism, Tyconian studies and the early medieval commentary tradition on the Revelation of John. Current projects include a translation of the Cambridge D.d XI6 commentary and a reconstruction of the Hiberno-Latin gloss that underpins it (both with Dr. Francis X. Gumerlock). He currently serves as Music Program Coordinator and Lecturer in Music and Humanities at UCCS.

David Cook

Paul Alexander and the Syrian Muslim Apocalyptic Tradition: What is history and where are the boundaries?"

With the renewed interest in the Syrian focus of early Muslim apocalyptic literature as a result of the rise of the Islamic State in the region, the collection of Nu`aym b. Hammad (d. 844), the earliest full apocalyptic collection to have survived, is quite relevant to scholarship. In the 1980s the Byzantine scholar Paul Alexander, when reviewing apocalyptic literature from late antiquity, asked the research question: what is historically valuable in apocalyptic literature, and how can we know where the boundaries are? This question needs to be asked once again with regard to Nu`aym, to place the Syrian apocalyptic heritage within the context of frustration and wish fulfillment, but also valuable historical reference. My paper will discuss the problems of working with Nu`aym, propose a methodology for utilizing the text as a source, and note how he is continuing to be interpreted in the present context of IS.

David Cook is Associate professor of religious studies at Rice University specializing in Islam. He did his undergraduate degrees at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 2001. His areas of specialization include early Islamic history and development, Muslim apocalyptic literature and movements (classical and contemporary), radical Islam, historical astronomy and Judeo-Arabic literature. His first book, *Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic*, was published by Darwin Press in the series *Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam*. Two further books, *Understanding Jihad* (Berkeley: University of California Press) and *Contemporary Muslim Apocalyptic Literature* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press) were published during 2005, and *Martyrdom in Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2007) as well as *Understanding and Addressing Suicide Attacks* (with Olivia Allison, Westport, Conn.: Praeger Security Press, 2007), and other books. Cook is continuing to work on classical Muslim apocalyptic literature, translating the sources, as well as having recently become the co-editor for Edinburgh University Press' series on Islamic Apocalyptic and Eschatology (with Christian Lange of the University of Utrecht).

SCHEDULE

Monday, 4 April 2016

4:30-6:00 pm Opening Reception - Heller Center

Tuesday, 5 April 2016

9:30-10:00 am Coffee and Pastries, Meet and Greet

10:00-10:45 am Colin McAllister

Regnum Caelorum Terrestre: The

Apocalyptic Vision of Lactantius

10:45-11:30 am Dr. David Cook

Paul Alexander and the Syrian Muslim

Apocalyptic Tradition: "What is history and

where are the boundaries?"

11:30am-12:15 pm Dr. Brian Duwick

The End of the Western Roman Empire and

the Apocalypticism of Quodvultdeus and

Salvian of Marseilles

12:15-1:30 pm Lunch at the Heller Center

1:30-2:00 pm Omar Rojas Camarena

Apocalypse in Visual Art

2:00-2:45 pm Dr. Jeffrey Scholes

Fix a Park Bench or Sit on One?:

Apocalypticism and the World

2:45-3:30 pm Dr. E. Ann Matter

The Song of the Apocalypse

4:45-7:00 pm HUM 3990 Class Session, roundtable

discussion with all five presenters – in

University Hall 109

Brian Duwick

The End of the Western Roman Empire and the Apocalypticism of Quodvultdeus and Salvian of Marseilles

Given the political and military upheaval characteristic of the late 4th and early 5th century in the western Roman empire, it is perhaps not surprising that, after a dormancy dating back to Constantine the Great, apocalyptic literature re-emerges as a significant genre of Patristic literature. And since North Africa had long been embroiled in theological controversy, followed by the Vandalic invasions, it is important to read the apocalyptic tradition of Tyconius, Augustine and Quodvultdeus, at least in part, as a commentary on contemporary regional crises. What is more intriguing, however, is to compare and contrast the North African tradition with apocalyptic thought from other parts of the empire. While Augustine and Quodvultdeus continue to make the case of orthodoxy for the salvation of the empire, Salvian of Marseilles, who is living in a world already dominated by the Visigoths and under threat of Hunnic conquest, sees the barbarians as the last hope of the empire. Between Quodvultdeus and Salvian there lies the more utopian vision of Macrobius, which promotes the reconciliation of Christian and Hellenic culture for the rebirth of traditional Roman culture.

Professor **Brian Duwick** received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago (1992) and taught at the University of Notre Dame, Concordia College, and L'Institut Universitaire de St. Melaine before arriving at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, where he has taught since 2001. Duwick specializes in later Greek and Roman cultural history, and his many publications include Proclus on Plato's Cratylus (Duckworth) and Ciceronian Controversies (Harvard). He is currently working on a 3-volume edition of Proclus' Commentary on the Republic (Notre Dame) and a 2-volume edition of the Trinitarian Works and Christological Works of Gregory of Nyssa (St. Vladimir).

Omar Rojas Camarena

Apocalypse in Visual Art

This talk will explain the connection between Intervention, my body of artistic works for the last three years, and the Apocalypse of John. Saint John was the first witness of the apocalypse. Subjected by a disqualified vision, he was taken –in spirit- to the highest and the lowest levels of the mind and human possibilities; a man, punished by the eschatological visions of the end of days and his own species. My newest work, commissioned for this symposium, is a graphic exegesis of the apocalypse, and connects the prophecy of John with our universal present: a state of alarming contamination that was announced 20 centuries ago, and in the eyes of the environmentalists, is actually happening today.

Provincial and metropolitan at the same time, **Omar Rojas Camarena** alternated during childhood between the countryside in the south of Sinaloa breeding cattle, and Mexico City, growing as an urban person. From this dual identity, the pre-hispanic remains such as burials, agricultural tools, jewelry and other delicacies of the common lifestyle of the past emerged as an enwrapping bewitchment. Omar is a publicist from the Universidad de la Comunicación in Mexico City and is currently completing an M.A. in Education and Environmental Communication. He leads tours and workshops about Teotihuacán, Mesoamérica and the history of México; offers drawing and painting lessons at his atelier, and is an advanced scuba diver and a devoted motorcyclist.

Jeffery Scholes

Fix a Park Bench or Sit on One?: Apocalypticism and the World

It's common sense that the belief that the world is going to end tends to instill a lack of motivation to change the world for the better—a wasted effort if it is all going away soon and in a manner that has little to do with human effort. In a Christian context, talk about the apocalypse is often dictated by one's interpretation of the second coming of Christ and the millennium found in the Book of Revelation, which in turn can affect whether there are merits to changing this world. In this presentation, I will survey the primary Christian views of the end times. Then using Matthew Sutton's argument in his *American Apocalypse*, I will critically examine how apocalyptic thinking has influenced more recent Christian evangelical approaches to the world.

Jeffrey Scholes is Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy and the Director of the Center for Religious Diversity and Public Life at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs. He has written books and articles on American political theology and on the relationship between religion and sports. He is the author of *Vocation and the Politics of Work: Popular Theology in a Consumer Culture* (Lexington Books 2013) and *Religion and Sports in American Culture* with Raphael Sassower (Routledge 2014).

E. Ann Matter

The Song of the Apocalypse

The final book of the Christian Bible, the Apocalypse or Revelation to John, is a famous source for Christian eschatology, teachings about what will happen at the end of time. But in Christian exegesis until the central Middle Ages, the book was read more often as a historical than a prophetic text, that is, looking backwards rather than ahead. One of the most interesting consequences of this reading is the stress on Revelation as a romance about the Church on earth, the Mystical Bride of Christ. Equally interesting from a twenty-first century perspective is the fact that early Christian commentators often read this book in tandem with the Song of Songs, a book of the Hebrew Bible that does not seem in any sense apocalyptic. This paper will trace the exegetical connections between the Apocalypse and the Song of Songs, and suggest reasons for the perceived connections between these two biblical books in the early medieval imagination. I will end with some suggestions about the ongoing theological (social, even political) consequences of this non-apocalyptic reading of Revelation.

E. Ann Matter is the William R. Kenan, Jr Professor Emerita at the University of Pennsylvania. At Penn, she is a member of the Departments of Religious Studies and Italian Studies, and on the Graduate Group faculty in English and History. She has worked extensively in medieval and early modern Christianity, especially in the areas of biblical interpretation, spirituality, and mysticism. Her publications include *The Song of Songs in Western Medieval Christianity* (U Pennsylvania Press), edited volumes on medieval liturgy and spirituality, critical editions of Latin and Italian sources, and over 60 articles; she is also co-editor of the medieval volume of *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*. Professor Matter has received grants from the ACLS, the NEH, and the Guggenheim Foundation. In 2004, she was elected a Fellow of the Medieval Academy of America.

About the Course

HUM 3990: Visions of Darkness: Apocalypse and Dystopia in Literature, Art & Film is a course in the **UCCS Humanities program**. Taught by **Colin McAllister & Michaela Steen**, the course addresses a wide range of topics under the general rubric of **Apocalypse and Dystopia** as manifested in various ways and through a variety of media, including written texts in various genres (prophecy, poems, short-stories, novels), visual art (painting, woodcuts, tapestry, digital imagery), music and film. The chronological and cultural scope is vast: from the cultures of ancient Mesopotamia, Greece, Israel and Egypt, through Islamic/Jewish and Christian perspectives in the Medieval and Renaissance to the modern day. Throughout the course, students are asked to relate notions of apocalypse and dystopia that have arisen throughout history to current events and perspectives.

For more information:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1571499186425848>

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University of Colorado
Colorado Springs

THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY: SECOND ANNUAL UCCS SYMPOSIUM ON APOCALYPTIC

Opening Reception:

Monday, 4 April 2016

4:30-6:00 pm

Heller Center for Arts & Humanities

Symposium:

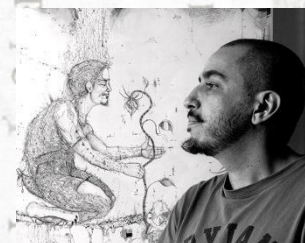
Tuesday, 5 April 2016

10:00am-7:00 pm

Dr. Brian Duwick,
University of Colorado,
Colorado Springs



Omar Rojas Camarena
Mexico City



San Juan by Omar Rojas Camarena, 2016



Dr. Colin McAllister
University of Colorado,
Colorado Springs



Dr. David Cook
Rice University



Dr. Jeffrey Scholes
University of Colorado,
Colorado Springs



Dr. E. Ann Matter
University of
Pennsylvania