The Tyranny of the Horizon

Giant Myths and the Tenacity of the Apocalyptic Imagination

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Abstract

This paper examines some characteristically mythic tropes informing Judaic and Christian apocalyptic thought, sources of imagery that pervades discourse in recent expressions of religiously justified violence. For some adherents of monotheistic religions, the *demonization* of adversaries and the notion of divinely led *cosmic warfare* are elements of a narrative paradigm that frames present-day conflicts in eschatological terms. Antecedents for these tropes are visible in the career of a biblical myth about giants: the Nephilim from Genesis 6:1-4, who are redeployed in quasi-historical 'conquest' accounts and later, influentially, in *1 Enoch*. This persistence of myth in monotheistic eschatology as response to perceived crises is viewed from Hans Blumenberg's perspective that myth expresses the ongoing mitigation of what he calls the "absolutism of reality"—exposure to a lifeworld beyond the individual's control. The paradigmatic and polysemous qualities of myth help the 'monotheistic' imagination grapple with the often-terrifying contingencies of historical experience.

Keywords: religious violence, apocalyptic eschatology, myth, discourse, giants

1. Introduction

In his recent investigation into the sociology of contemporary religious terrorism, Mark Juergensmeyer identifies a set of images that inform common features of discourse among religiously inspired militants. *Cosmic war* is one operative trope, a root metaphor which frames such discourse and emboldens violent action. It suggests a dualistic conception of the world in which those identifying themselves and their religious compatriots as God's children struggle against others whom they demonize—Juergensmeyer speaks of '*satanization*'[1]—as the earthly agents of cosmic evil. In this vision, present day conflict is understood to be the manifestation of a larger contest that takes place at the cosmic level. That contest, steeped in images of religiously justified violence, culminates in an eschatological victory of God's people over the wicked, who shall be punished in a final judgment. Contemporary events are 'read' in

terms of this privileged narrative frame, a "script…linked to notions of conquest and failure" in which violence can be "empowering on both personal and social levels."[2] Precedent and sanction for this empowering worldview are grounded in authorized texts of sacred tradition, and in the interpretations of select theological authorities.

Demonization of the other, cosmic warfare, dualistic eschatology: these images and tropes that animate the otherwise distinct visions of religious militants' in the monotheistic world have their traditional sources in the mythic imagery redolent in biblical and non-canonical Judaic and Christian apocalypse literature. Myth's presence and function in the roots of biblical monotheism—for it is hardly confined to the apocalypse genre—is an old problem that receives a more nuanced and sympathetic treatment in recent discussion.[3] As for apocalyptic, one of the genre's distinctive characteristics is that it represents what has been called "crisis" literature, even a "literature of the oppressed."[4] As blanket designations for the entire range of texts comprising the genre these terms are problematic; still, it appears that apocalyptic literature shares the characteristic of having frequently been "written out of actual distress and for the strengthening of the community,"[5] responding in different ways to some context of vexing historical circumstances.

Juergensmeyer sketches a comparable profile of human concerns that underlie some contemporary manifestations of religiously motivated, or rationalized, violence. A common feature is the perception of threat from 'agencies' which appear oppressive, intractable, hegemonic: they may be located either internally or external to the society, and comprise anything from domestic cultural trends to foreign military presence, to the influence of pervasive foreign cultural values and symbols—an increasingly ubiquitous phenomenon in the context of economic globalization.[6] One perceives a world that is increasingly beyond control, in which one feels overwhelmed, a victim of outside forces, not in command of one's own destiny: such a perception might be characterized as a salient, and widening, *imagination of crisis*. As cultural traditions and familiar social and economic relations strain under the pressure of modernization, conflict and violence, including religious violence, seem almost to be inevitable consequences.

In this context it may be useful to consider the tenacious survival of mythic tropes, such as those informing apocalyptic thought, as a reflection of how well they have always served to mitigate life's recurrent, anxiety-inducing travails. This paper traces the career of one manifestly mythic text of the Hebrew Bible, the obscure tale of giants in the Primeval History of Genesis 6:1-4, as it is borrowed in later contexts of historical crisis: those reflected in exilic treatments of the preludes to the Canaanite Conquest in Numbers and Deuteronomy, and in the Second Temple period *1 Enoch* text, the Book of Watchers. The latter text's resonance within early Christian tradition makes it one of the Christian West's important sources for images informing the three apocalyptic tropes mentioned at the outset: cosmic warfare, demonization of the other, and cosmological dualism. Gen. 6:1-4 evidences a reception

history that displays the resilient value of the tale of giants, an intertextuality closely bound to times of perceived threat to a religious community and to distinct contexts of constructing a vilified alterity. A sketch of this exemplary history shall then be contextualized in relation to a perspective in the philosophical anthropology of Hans Blumenberg that offers a useful lens with which to examine how myth is implicated in responses, by adherents of both polytheistic and monotheistic religions, to vexing life experience. For, however else one defines it, myth works to generate meaning. And because of this, it has the potential to motivate action.[7]

Passages in the Hebrew Bible evoking primordial divine battle with the chaotic sea make evident the frequent recourse to fundamental, recurrent, *mythic* motifs with origins outside of the Scriptures. Polytheistic allusions function here not merely negatively, as a foil for assertions of the monotheistic God's transcendence of paganism. Instead, they often serve as "paradigms of primordial or hoped-for acts of power" by this God, and it is by virtue of this paradigmatic valency, connotative richness, and "realism," or exegetical versatility in speaking to concrete human circumstances, that they recur in diverse historical contexts of scriptural composition.[8] Michael Fishbane is the latest to argue that the great obstacle to the recognition of myth's felicitous service in the monotheistic worldview of the Hebrew Bible, and across Jewish traditions, has been a largely prejudicial one. It is rooted in anachronistic theoretical postures and in faith-based philological reflexes that insist on rendering Scripture over against "pagan" myth.[9] The career of the biblical giants to be examined in this paper represents a peculiar intersection of discourses figuring God's involvement in His people's wars, of ancient exegeses recycling a myth that will catalyze early apocalyptic literature, and of exegetical animus waxing deadly over the question of figurative versus literal meaning in scripture.

2. Myth as Discourse in Polytheism and Monotheism

Besides acknowledging the paradigmatic quality of mythopoetic verisimilitude, one must also note that the representations of the world it proffers are discursive articulations of individuals or groups within a wider community. Received myths, for all their fecund polysemy, enunciate discrete viewpoints or authorial 'interests'—often no longer identifiable—that are not necessarily identical with the stories' intended audiences, but whose reinterpretation may intend specific audiences. Such finite discursive intention also characterizes mythopoetic figurations in the texts of monotheistic religions, as well as their later reception.[10]

Discourse is not simply "ideological" in the sense that it aims rhetorically at persuasion, legitimation, or even mystification. Discourse is also, as Lincoln argues, more fundamentally a means of evoking and generating the basic sentiments on which a society—its sense of identity, its inside and outside, and its cohesion—is established.[11] Diverse cultural and geographic factors contribute to distinctions and divisions between human groups, yet a most fundamental one, Lincoln maintains, is rooted in basic sentiments of affinity and

estrangement. 'Affinity' connotes feelings of likeness, common belonging, mutual attachment, and solidarity, in whatever degree of intensity, affective tone, or consciousness they are present. On the side of 'estrangement' are the corresponding feelings of distance, separation, otherness, and alienation. Summarizing the relationship between ideology and sentiment, Lincoln says that, in the end, "that which either holds society together or takes it apart is sentiment, and the chief instrument with which such sentiment may be aroused, manipulated, and rendered dormant is discourse."[12]

Myth and history are extremely powerful modes of discourse with which to evoke sentiment. Indeed, it is in the repeated evocation of sentiments through "the *invocation* of select moments of the past that social identities are continually (re-)established and social formations (re-)constructed."[13] Lincoln defines his terms concisely: history is a story making a truth claim which is persuasive enough to attain general acceptance as a credible account for members of its primary audience. Myth, on the other hand, represents a smaller group of stories (distinct from fables and legends), which possess credibility and authority. This concept of authority Lincoln understands in the sense of a notion of "*paradigmatic* truth" akin to Malinowski's socio-functionalist definition of myth as social charter, or Geertz's idea of religion as both "model of" and "model for" reality.[14] Myth is a kind of narrative that possesses and is able to make truth claims on the basis of such paradigmatic or template-like authority, and is thus able to motivate and "mobilize" a social grouping. The distinctiveness of this definition with respect to discourse is clear when he says that "myth is not just a coding device in which important information is conveyed, on the basis of which actors *can then* construct society. It is also a discursive act through which actors evoke the sentiments out of which society is actively constructed."[15]

One last point bears mentioning in this respect. The manner of a sacred or mythic text's exegesis is itself a matter of sentiment, especially where the text is as reality-mapping or world-creating,[16] as paradigmatically authoritative, as scripture. And just as composition inevitably entails symbolization and figuration, so reading, too, may involve more than locating and appreciating such figures in a text, but also an assertive imputation of the presence of a particular figuration to a text: its true, deeper, or proper meaning.[17] Borrowing from Hans Blumenberg's nomenclature, one might say that the "work on myth," as the history of the reception *of myth* (including its reception in scripture), is also the history of the modes of interpretation—allegory, euhemerism, etymology, typology/*figura*, literalism, and so forth— brought *to myth* as compromises with a troublesome world. The parallels between historically distant gestures of *recourse* to myth in the case of Gen. 6:1-4 become clear in light of the ongoing 'work' at the mitigation of what Blumenberg calls the "absolutism of reality." As he says: "It will be as a means of maintaining a position in the face of an overpowering reality, through millenniums, that stories, which could not be contradicted by reality, were successful."[18]

3. Reuse of Giants and War Imagery through Biblical Tradition

3.1. Evocations of Primeval Events

Recently, Michael Fishbane, Mark S. Smith and others have discussed biblical texts which allude, briefly, and more or less openly, to primordial battles in which Yahweh defeats personified forces of watery chaos. The images closely parallel similar conflicts involving El or Baal in ancient West Semitic myth. Yet, their incidence in the Bible is by no means a mere borrowing of neighboring cultures' myths: these allusions echo the religious milieu out of which Israelite monolatry and monotheism emerged.[19] Compositional contexts suggest biblical authors writing with a sense of urgency or crisis, for these evocations typically represent reminders to God (and to readers) of His past actions, summoning Him to new acts on behalf of His people in times of distress.[20] Indeed, the emergence of a strident monotheistic rhetoric and numerous invocations of primordial battle myths correlate with, and are responses to, ancient Israel's historical troubles with neighbors. As Jeffrey Tigay has said in the context of the Book of Deuteronomy: "The need to emphasize the monotheistic idea in this period [7th and 6th centuries BCE] was probably due to the increased exposure of Israel to the triumphant Assyrian and Babylonian empires, which attributed their victories, including victories over Israel, to their own gods."[21]

The most famous and perhaps best-documented case of originally "foreign," but culturally contiguous, mythic material in the Bible is the Flood tale. Like it, the story in Genesis recounting divine beings uniting with mortals to produce great-bodied warrior offspring has been examined in light of parallels to Babylonian and other Ancient Near Eastern texts.[22] Just prior to the Flood, at Gen. 6, "sons of God" mingle with women among the burgeoning human race: they "took wives for themselves of all that they chose" (6:2). About these "sons" nothing more is said in the story or in its immediate aftermath, and their obscure identity has always been a crux for the interpretation of this passage. Giants, "Nephilim," were "on the earth in those days—and also afterward," when these "sons of God" cohabited with the mortal women (6:4). It has long been suggested that the narrative sequence in Genesis 3-11 develops the theme of mounting human wickedness and testing of the boundary between immortal and mortal realms. Union between the "sons of God" and human women, it is argued, violates divinely dictated boundaries like those transgressed in Eden, where humans took a step too close to godlikeness. The product of these unions—whether the Nephilim themselves are thus considered or only the "heroes of old…warriors of renown" (6:4)—will presumably be semi-divine.[23] Yet, while this has been thought to demonstrate again *humanity's* rebellious overreach, the women's culpability cannot be adduced from the tale. Nevertheless, these events are immediately followed by God's expression of grief at having created humans. His decision at Gen. 6:7 to "blot out" humankind from the earth appears, as the text stands, finally to be provoked by the miscegenation that fosters giants.

While "blatantly" mythic, the tale of giants at Genesis 6:1-4 need not be regarded as "erratic" or "foreign" to its immediate context.[24] First, the notion of a divine host or council surrounding the high god is another West Semitic feature indigenous to the cultural background of Israelite religion, assimilated very early to the figure of Yahweh.[25] As divine beings, the "sons of God" become crucial in later appropriations and exegeses of the Genesis 6:1-4 segment, as discussed below. For their part, the giant Nephilim seem to signify the uncanny, 'unstable' quality of the primeval age; "great men" or heroes are typical inhabitants of the 'mythical' age prior to historical time. Moreover, the Mesopotamian *Atrahasis*, a principal source for the biblical Flood narrative, also features antediluvian provocations to the divine order by noisome and apparently rebellious semi-divine humans; Greek parallel have also been noted.[26] The Gen. 6:1-4 pericope is generally held to represent a condensation by the "J" source of an originally non-Israelite myth that has been resituated in its present context just prior to the Flood narrative.[27]

On the question of setting, a pre-exilic period after the fall of Samaria in 722 BCE has gained traction as the context of the Yahwist ("J") source's writing activity.[28] This dating would lend support to that minority of interpreters who have argued that the Gen. 6:1-4 tale is deployed as a veiled polemic targeting contemporary circumstances. The interpretation responds to textual problems, including way that the manifest level of the text fails to provide a clear indication of human responsibility in the women's encounter with the "sons of God.[29] From this perspective, the "sons of God," "Nephilim," and "heroes…men of name" (in E. Fox's 1997 translation) are understood to signify referents in the historical milieu of the pericope's author. These referents, it is argued, might be despotic Israelite kings and princes who, like Lamech, transgressed law through polygamous marriage and unrighteous rule (Gen. 6:19, 23-24); or foreign overlords, either Assyrian or Babylonian, who threatened Israel's territorial integrity with their armies.[30] The unnamed oppressors may have garnered a reputation for having indiscriminately raped Israelite women, or forced some into royal harems. Each case would involve abuse of "name" and power: a claim of divine legitimation or parentage ("sons of God") in which the 'elevated' are seen to arbitrarily victimize the 'lowly.'[31]

Whether the Genesis story of giant warrior-heroes was cast as a veiled polemic against a perceived threat inside or outside of an Israelite community between the destruction of the northern and southern monarchies can only be surmised. The tale's "discordant" quality does seem to allude to a context not explicit in the text, but which may have been recognized by its original audience, as Helge Kvanvig has argued.[32] Noteworthy here is that an inherent ambiguity in the manifest form of the Gen. 6:1-4 story is what will invite mythopoetic speculation, even a perception of analogy, for writers in subsequent times confronting difficult historical circumstances.

3.2. 'Conquest' History

The only other mention of Nephilim in the Scriptures[33] is found in the infamous episode of the "reconnaissance report" in Numbers (13:25-33, esp. 33). Here, a giant people called Anakim, "descendants" of the Nephilim, are said to inhabit the lands reconnoitered by the spies of the advancing Israelites, who are preparing for their God-ordained conquest of Canaan. The brief aside at Gen. 6:4, that Nephilim were in the land "also afterward," has been seen as a late etiological gloss that helps prepare this frightful reappearance in the book of Numbers. If the reference to Nephilim in both texts does not reflect a common Israelite tradition about the land's ancient inhabitants, a redactor or author may have appropriated the negative sign value of the figures from Genesis for his quasi-historical fabulation of a momentous conflict.[34] Here, an identified enemy—from the narrative's perspective, the idolatrous indigenes of Canaan—is marked with the signs of primeval wickedness and uncanniness.

The sinister eeriness of the Nephilim is evoked by the Genesis pericope's suggestion that these giants provoked the Lord's wrath while, from the Numbers text's later point of view, somehow managing to escape the Flood's destruction to produce "descendants." Moreover, references in Deuteronomy (2:10-11, 20; 3:11, 9:2) that echo in later books (Josh. 11:22 and 12:4, and 2 Sam. 21:18-22) associate Nephilim-Anakim with aboriginal Canaanite giants known as Rephaim, a people first mentioned in Genesis stories—considered by some to be later insertions—that involve Abraham in conflicts with indigenous peoples. *Rephaim* is a term whose early Ugaritic form refers to deceased royalty and heroes still influential from their abode in the netherworld.[35] It would seems that Rephaim, too, are emplotted into the Conquest narratives in a subtly polemical manner, adding marks of uncanniness and estrangement in the construction of Canaanite alterity.[36]

The function of the giants in these conquest stories, as Ronald Hendel has pointed out, is simple: "they exist in order to be wiped out."[37] These formidable opponents are hyperbolic figurations of that which the people can only defeat with their Lord in the vanguard of battle. Indeed, Yahweh is presented as guiding not only the preparation for this battle, but as engaged in it Himself (Deut. 9:1-5, 20:1-5; Josh. 23, etc). Conquest is God's design, He orchestrates slaughter to secure the Promised Land for His people. Their historical struggle for a homeland is elevated to a cosmic plane.

The book of Deuteronomy and the "historical," Deuteronomistic, composition grounded in its ideology date from distinct periods. The first responds to the Northern Kingdom's crisis and fall to Assyrian hegemony, while the latter reflects the situation of Babylonian Exile.[38] From the perspective of the Deuteronomistic editors of the bulk of the Conquest history, and these stories' presumable audiences in exile, the Conquest history holds out a dream of "*re*-conquest" or, at least, of restoration to the homeland. Even if these chapters contain traces of historical memory from the remote past, the blending of primeval myth with semi-historical discourse is aimed at bolstering a people in a present state crisis, and perhaps

also at chastising some for lingering or recrudescent ritual practices—those imputed to the Canaanite other.[39]

3.3. Apocalyptic Eschatology

The paradigmatic quality of myth is especially evident when the Genesis 6:1-4 pericope is examined in the context of its reception in early Judaic apocalypse literature. Manifestly rooted in Hebrew scriptural tradition and preoccupied with what its authors perceive to be a debased and violent social world, the whole *1 Enoch* corpus hinges on a text in its first book, the Book of Watchers (3rd century BCE), where the Gen. 6:1-4 myth is reframed in terms of apocalyptic expectation.[40] Here, the "sons of God" who mingle with mortal "daughters" are, for the first time, represented as *angelic* beings whose "fall" is their rebellious descent to earth.

The *1 Enoch* chapters 6-8 tell how a group of heavenly Watchers have conspired to descend because they desire the comely daughters of mortals. Two hundred Watchers assemble on Mount Hermon with their leader, Shemihazah, and swear a curse-bound oath before going down. They choose and "go in" to the women, thereby "defiling" themselves. The offspring produced by their unions, as at Gen. 6:1-4, are giants—but this time they are murderous and cannibalistic.[41]

The *1 Enoch* author is innovative in appropriating biblical tradition, recasting the matter-of-fact "J" presentation of divine beings partnering with earthly women so that the terrible giants are fathered by sinful, rebellious angels. As retold here, the story presents an explicit etiology for the origin of the world's evil. What had been left so troublingly ambiguous in the Genesis story—the implied relationship between miscegenation and subsequent destruction of "all flesh" in the Deluge—is made clear in *1 Enoch* 6-16: evil is sown in the Watcher's rebellion and in the birth of the giants. Human responsibility in fomenting evil is a byproduct of the encounter.[42]

The crucial passage for the etiology of life's ongoing evil comes at *1 Enoch* 15. In the segment 10:9-15, the archangels Gabriel and Michael are commissioned by God to destroy the giants and to bind the Watchers for seventy generations until final judgment. Then, in the midst of his dream vision, Enoch receives God's commission to inform the Watchers of His judgment upon them. Here one reads that after the destruction of the giants, both by the infighting fomented by Gabriel and by the Flood sent principally to eradicate them, their evil effects on the living will not end:

> And now the giants who were born from body and flesh will be called evil spirits upon the earth, and on the earth will be their dwelling. And evil spirits came out from their flesh because from above they were created; [. . .] And the spirits of the giants [. . .] do wrong and are corrupt, and attack and fight and break the earth, and cause sorrow; and they eat no food and do not thirst [unlike the voracious giants], and are not observed.

And these spirits will rise against the sons of men and against women because they came out from them.[43]

Some reconstructions of how the main strand of the *1 Enoch* 6-11 myth relates to the eschatological theme of the Book of Watchers see it as a response to its historical context. In this reading, the author-redactor of the narrative—the myth around which the entire 1 Enoch corpus builds—expands upon Gen. 6:1-4 as a veiled reference to contemporary events; in one case, the allusion would be to Alexandrian Greek militarism and, specifically, the Diadochi wars, in which Macedonian generals fought each other for control over Syria-Palestine and the vast Alexandrian Empire between 323 and 302 BCE.[44] Paraphrasing Genesis 6, the scriptural story is turned in order to parody the pretensions to divine lineage ("sons of gods") and heroic stature on which claims to power were based in Hellenistic royal ideology, as armies of "giant" warriors slaughter the people and lay waste to the land. The text would insist, instead, that the destructive warriors' paternity was a sinful brood of heavenly rebels.[45]

Other social critiques, not necessarily contradicting the previous one, have been teased out of the story of the Watchers descent. One strand of the *1 Enoch* 6-11 myth's intertexture finds expression in the Watchers' sinful teachings. The main angelic sinners—Shemihazah and, especially, Asael—instruct humans in arts previously unknown to them (7:1, 8:1-3). Given the text's general historical setting, this trope has been seen as allegorizing the corruptive influence of Hellenic cultural practices and values among Second Temple period Judeans.[46] In addition, it was noted earlier that the 'elevated' status of the "sons of God" at Gen. 6:1-4 may have been the vehicle for a veiled polemic targeting sexual abuses by tyrannical potentates. In a similar way, the *1 Enoch* author's recasting of the Genesis tale may have rendered this motif so that the actions of the giants' heavenly progenitors imply a critique of sexual impropriety in the social intercourse of Second Temple period Judea: the abuse of 'elevated' position and the theme of miscegenation are thought to refer to Temple priests transgressing marriage laws with gentile women.[47]

Apocalyptic symbolism turns the polyvalent language and imagery of scriptural myth to characteristic effect, allowing it to both encompass and escape real-world referents. Indeed, its function with respect to history is 'typological': it allows concrete circumstances to be understood within the sacred text's discursive frame of reference, showing present history to have been prefigured in ancient, divinely revealed knowledge. Whatever the finite events meant to be captured in such allusions, they express their authors' sense that the human world has been corrupted, that it is falling away from God, and that it cries out for a divine act of justice, retribution, and reordering power.

John J. Collins has stressed the functional value of apocalyptic typology. What he has called the "transposition of situations" from the historical to the mythical plane is an aspect of such texts' opaque response to their contemporary circumstances: "By concealing

the historical specificity of the immediate situation beneath the primeval archetype, the apocalyptic symbolism relieves anxiety. The resolution of the ancient conflict generated by the Watchers emerges with an inevitability which guarantees a similar resolution to the conflicts of the Hellenistic age."[48] In this way, the *1 Enoch* Book of Watchers, whatever the *Sitz im Leben* of its original myths and their allegorized real-world referents, maintains relevance to later audiences' historical circumstances because its mythic settings are paradigmatic, its symbolism and language polyvalent. Present crises may be 'read' in terms of primordial models promising divine resolution in the form of a final judgment.[49] These features of symbolism and connotation in apocalyptic myth help account for the later success of Judaic apocalypse literature: its cardinal importance for emergent Christianity, and for the transmission of the genre's myths into Christian contexts and writings.

3.4. Satan and Christian Apocalypse

The *1 Enoch* literature seems to attest that some Judeans opposed others' accommodation of foreign cultural influence as early as the late fourth century BCE. Yet, divisions over such questions predate the Babylonian Exile. During the Second Temple period, segments of the population came to perceive themselves or their group as following the path of law and righteousness laid down in the sacred Scriptures—often, Scriptures illuminated or even superceded by extra-scriptural prophecy like the Book of Watchers. To these persons the rest of society was perceived as living contrary to God and law. Such sectarian groups in diverse ways came to emphasize exclusionary interpretations of the law and of scriptural precedents for a "righteous remnant" in a spiritually corrupted Israel.[50] Other Judeans continued to adhere to Deuteronomic Law and prescribed rituals, while progressive circles could find precedent within scripture for a "universalism" that might legitimize openness to outsiders.[51] Thus, at the heart of the matter were ambiguities of identity, as well as the ambivalence surrounding corollary questions: "proper" relations with gentiles and with foreign cultural influence.

In this field of tensions, that infamous figure from the Scriptures, the *satan*, first takes on individual personality and the characteristics it will forever retain among Christians. Elaine Pagels has stressed how the social problems of Second Temple period Judea contributed to the rise of the figure of Satan as a malevolent opponent of God and His people. *Satan*— the "adversary," one who "opposes"—was first merely another 'angelic' role, not any kind of developed personality. Already somewhat individualized in the Book of Job, the *satan* still counted among the divine beings surrounding Yahweh, "roaming" the earth with a mandate to report back "accusation" against human failings. From a limited role among a plurality of other divine figures in God's retinue, an increasingly sinister personality emerges: opposed to God, inciting His people to division.[52] As Pagels shows, this transformation is bound up with the fateful reception of the Genesis "sons of God," who in *1 Enoch* become wicked, corruptive, "fallen" angelic Watchers.[53]

To point out the divisiveness internal to Second Temple Judea is to insist again that vilified "otherness" is often projected onto members of one's own society; it is not reserved exclusively for the "foreign" other. Ambivalence rooted in problems of identity—personal, cultural, historical, territorial—drives both fascination with and intolerance toward the other: often the "intimate" other most of all.[54] And just as, during the Second Temple period, Satan emerged as a sinister "intimate" figure, an aspersion cast upon fellow Judeans who, from the perspective of one group's notions about righteousness, were suspected of impiety and fomenting evil; so, within a similarly polarized, and eschatologically anxious, post-70 CE society, much of what would become the canonical Christian literature began to emerge, with its own polarizing figures.[55]

It is worth emphasizing again that the Genesis 6:1-4 pericope is a key source not only for mythical giants, their martial valences, and their associated evils, but also for the notion of *fallen angels*. In the wake of *1 Enoch*, many Jewish and Christian exegetes saw rebellious and corrupt angels as those who engender giants upon human women and seed the world with evil. Demons rise from the corpses of the giants, while the figure of Satan, transformed through this image of fallen angels, later becomes a paradigm for the Christian figure Lucifer.[56] Genesis is indeed a 'primeval' source for a plethora of evils that plague the Christian cosmos.

Christianity's birth in the fervor of eschatological prophecy represents another response of Judean sectarianism to the historical crisis represented by Roman hegemony. This longing for release from what is experienced as an oppressive, intolerable social world finds stark expression in the Book of Revelation, one of several Christian apocalypses of the first two centuries. The book appropriates themes, images, and symbols from the book of Daniel and other sources in the prophetic and apocalypse literature. For example, the Dragon of Rev. 12 and 13 re-evokes the ancient sea monster against which God had battled early in biblical tradition.[57] Satan, with Rome as his earthly proxy, is presented as God's archrival to be fought and defeated by Christ in a grandiose apocalypse that destroys evil and finally redeems the Christian cosmos from a radical dualism—one imposed upon it by the apocalyptic mythos.

But Christianity was also shaped in its early centuries by the internal problem of heresy. The failure of the Parousia was one reason for the proliferation of gnostic and other groups eventually identified as heretical, and the efforts by "mainstream" church officials to contain and isolate heresy represent an important historical context for the systematization of church dogma.[58] During these early centuries, the originally mythic tropes of false teachings and demonic influences introduced in the *1 Enoch* corpus became handy explanatory paradigms, wholly consonant with the eschatological expectations of the period. For inasmuch as the problem of heresy could be represented as a matter of demonic influence, the scripturally sanctioned if recontextualized figure of Satan was suitable to explain it. Satan, with his demonic agents, lured Christians to heresy.

The patristic reception of these diabolical agents mirrors the historical fate of the Church to a striking degree.[59] The problem of heresy demonstrates how the rise of Christian intra-community intolerance is closely tied to the fate of apocalyptic eschatology in the first and second centuries of the era. This 'introjected' intolerance arose in parallel with ambivalence toward both the Judaic and the pagan Roman cultural milieus in which it emerged,[60] and these 'projected' forms of intolerance shift, but are not transcended, with the ascension of Christianity to the status of an 'imperial' religion in the fourth century.[61] After apostolic succession was established as a means of guaranteeing orthodoxy, the revealed status of the Jewish pseudepigraphic traditions waned drastically. With this shift, the apocalyptic interpretation of the giants—which had been so fecund for *Jubilees* and the Qumran community, and for Athenagoras (late 2nd C.) and the Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies* (early 3rd C.)—gradually lost influence. Nevertheless, the Enochic cast of demonic spirits had, as it were, taken hold of the Christian (or at least, the patristic) imagination; they remained a useful expedient in the ongoing battle with paganism and heresy—and soon, the new cosmos of western heathendom. Demonization became an established trope for making meaning of troublesome others, and a primary expression of Christian intolerance.[62]

4. The Tyranny of the Horizon

This paper receives its peculiar title as an attempt to situate diverse bearings toward sacred texts under a common anthropological rubric. A world manifestly beyond control, in which one often feels overwhelmed, a victim of outside forces, not in command of one's own destiny: such a world informs the investigation *Arbeit am Mythos* (*Work on Myth*) by the German philosopher Hans Blumenberg. In this study, the history and ongoing reception of the West's mythic heritage reveals the tenacity of a constitutive human predicament—our exposure to a dilemma Blumenberg calls the "absolutism of reality." By this he intends, first, a limit concept, similar to that of the *status naturalis*, which assumes an initial situation in which "man came close to not having control of the conditions of his existence and, what is more important, believed that he simply lacked control of them."[63] Yet, inasmuch as this situation is never entirely displaced, the rubric offers a useful model for evaluating the homology between ancient and contemporary believers' interpretive turn to the "evidence" of sacred narrative under the pressure created by distressing lived experience.

As his basic posture, Blumenberg inverts the customary paradigm in which myth (*muthos*) is evaluated in terms of what it is replaced by (*logos*, reason, science)[64] for one which considers what myth is already the artful replacement of: primal terror in the encounter with a lifeworld characterized by the experience of real or imagined external potencies. "Anxiety is related to the unoccupied horizon of the possibilities of what may come at one."[65] This idea of primitive anxiety is modeled on an evolutionary supposition positing initial maladaptation

to the exposed steppe environment in which our human ancestors achieved bipedal, upright bearing. Diminished 'cover' and loss of recourse to 'flight' means that "anxiety must again and again be rationalized into fear, both in the history of mankind and in that of the individual." Blumenberg suggests that this occurs, in the first instance, "not through experience and knowledge, but rather through devices like that of the substitution of the familiar for the unfamiliar, of explanations for the inexplicable, of names for the unnameable."[66]

However one imagines its original achievement, this naming capacity imposes a basic level of organization on the 'chaos' of the flux of experience. Its enabling function and most characteristic feature is metaphor.

> Something is 'put forward,' so as to make what is not present into an object of averting, conjuring up, mollifying, or power-depleting action. By means of names, the identity of such factors is demonstrated and made approachable, and an equivalent of dealings with them is generated. What has become identifiable by means of a name is raised out of its unfamiliarity by means of metaphor and is made accessible, in terms of its significance, by telling stories.[67]

Initially, myth achieves the reduction of the absolutism of reality by dividing the world's "opaque powerfulness," spreading among a plurality of named potencies the "diffusely distributed quality of uncanniness and unmanageability" which stands over against the human realm. These can then be "played off against" each other in what Blumenberg calls an "archaic division of powers."[68] Once named, perceived superior powers become objects to which forms of propitiatory address and relationship (magic, ritual action, covenants) may be directed—and about which stories may be told in order to exert influence, or gain a semblance of control.

Blumenberg proposes that it was this ubiquitous quality of uncanniness and unmanageability, confined into "enclaves" circumscribed by taboo, where Rudolf Otto, in the language of the history of religion, had identified what he calls "the holy" in its original form. However:

> One grasps man's 'policy' in dealing with a reality that is not tractable for him at too late a point when one focuses, with the history of religion, on "the holy," and does not perceive in it the already institutionalized mode of reduction of the absolutism of reality, of that sheer inimicalness to life and unobligingness [*sic*] toward…man.[69]

This articulation of Blumenberg's religious-historical premise is rather too pointed. Still, it serves to focus attention on the ineluctable fact that life—and not only the life of pre-rational or of pagan humanity—continually presents individuals and communities with crises that evoke the kind of dread that motivates again and again our recourse to sacred

narratives. In them one may seek and find answers for seemingly inexplicable or undeserved woes, for the evils that befall us and our fellows; in them one may nurture hope for divine favor or protection—indeed, for divine restraint and mercy.[70]

In this sense, Blumenberg's model points to a basic etiological function shared equally by the sacred narratives of both polytheistic and monotheistic religions. At the same time, he stresses that this is a function which retains 'credibility' due to such narratives' paradigmatic manner of *eliminating arbitrariness*. This may once have constituted an operation, still visible in myths of heroes like Hercules, of clearing the world of "monsters."[71] But it perdures as one of mediating divine *unpredictability*. Blumenberg says of myth, in words that count also for sacred scripture, that it "is a way of expressing the fact that the world and the powers that hold sway in it are not abandoned to pure arbitrariness. However this may be signified, whether by the separation of powers or through a codification of competencies or through a 'legalization' of relationships, it is a system of the elimination of arbitrariness."[72] And yet, the open horizon remains tyrannical because, as a datum of human experience—proved again and again by apparently random, or consciously perpetrated, acts of destruction and evil—that horizon seems never entirely closed: not even by the promise of God's blessing.

Prophetic and apocalyptic symbolism receives much of its persuasive force from within this conundrum of meaning. Its significance is anchored in human frailty and limitation, inasmuch as the lifeworld often renders human scale diminutive, and forces both natural and human threaten cultural aspirations.[73] The rhetoric of apocalypse, especially, decries a world overwhelmed by 'cosmological' evils that manifest concretely, physically, in historical exigencies: in the hegemonic "giants" of empire, or in the divisive, socially more "intimate" threats from corruptive cultural influences or despotic rulers. All may elicit the analogy of confrontation with threatening superior force. Eschatologies related to this tradition of discourse counter such superabundant power by imagining a superlative counterforce, endowed with the divine strength to overcome and destroy evil, and to replace it with another cosmic and social space: a realm or kingdom of righteousness.

5. The Terrors of the Contemporary Horizon

Today, the three monotheistic religions of the "Book" are to different degrees the heirs to the tradition of apocalyptic eschatology. And as the recent studies of Juergensmeyer, Lincoln, and others reveal, this tradition, for all the distinct ways it can be expressed among adherents, stands behind many contemporary acts of religiously motivated violence.[74] Just as apocalypticism relies on the polysemous language of scripture and its paradigmatic references to warfare between forces on the side of God and others marked with uncanniness, demonic influence, and evil, so today the kind of religious extremism examined in Juergensmeyer's study is encouraged by the same qualities of scripture—when read with a certain desiring eye, in particular historical circumstances, and with a certain sense of anxiety and anticipation.[75]

Blumenberg's notion of the absolutism of reality suggests that a more basic, latent, possibly universal anxiety lies behind reactions to such discrete contexts of dread and crisis, and is basic to the cultural function of myth—polytheistic, or monotheistic. Since what I have called the "tyranny of the horizon" is never entirely mitigated, but is, as Blumenberg suggests, a pervasive quality of human existence, and since meaning must therefore, ever again, be *made* to account for crises and catastrophes, the religious imagination seeks recourse to paradigmatic, authoritative, long-recognized stories and songs. This recourse, manifestly as ancient as the prophetic literature of the Bible and probably far older, is a gesture common both to readers and writers of scripture. However it is that readers derive from such recourse a sanction for religious violence, this sanction lies less in the sacred text or its rhetoric than in local, concrete, ultimately social problems—the exigencies of vulnerable human communities facing what they often perceive to be gigantic challenges.

NOTES

1) *Terror in the Mind of God* (California, 2000), 185-89.

2) ibid, 151.

3) Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Myth and Rabbinic Mythmaking* (Oxford, 2003) 11-12, 16-23; Mark S. Smith, *Origins of Biblical Monotheism* (Oxford, 2001) 12-13, 21-24, and *passim*;] On Genesis 6:1-4 specifically, M. & R. Zimmermann, "'Heilige Hochzeit' der Göttersöhne und Menschentöchter? Spuren des Mythos in Gen. 6:1-4." (*ZAW* 111, 1999) 327; already sympathetically treated in Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11: A Commentary* (trans. J. Scullion; Augsburg, 1984) 381-82. On myth in apocalyptic literature, John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination* (2nd edn., Eerdmans, 1998) 18-19.

4) Collins, 9, 38, 41f.

5) Vielhauer, in Collins, ibid., 22; on problem of blanket designations, see 9-10; on final judgment, page 6.

6) Juergensmeyer, *Terror*, 183-185, 229-30; B. Lincoln, *Holy Terrors* (Chicago, 2003) 58-61, 64, 75-76.

7) On meaning: Blumenberg, *Work on Myth* (trans. Robert M. Wallace; MIT, 1985), 42-43, 67-70, and Section IV below; W. Doniger, *The Implied Spider* (Columbia, 1998) 2, 54-57, 60-62; Y. Lotman, *The Universe of the Mind* (Indiana, 1990) 12-18, 103-04, 111, 151-53; Fishbane, *Biblical Myth*, 16-25; As motivator of action: see next section, esp. Lincoln's ideas about discourse; see also his *Holy Terrors*, 1, 5-6, for a brief treatment of T. Asad's critique of 'interiority'-based definitions of religious meaning.

8) Fishbane, *Biblical Myth*, 16, 18, 20-21; on "realism," 41, 47, 49, and note 18 below; Similarly, Collins (*Apocalyptic*, 19) speaks of the way mythic allusions "transfer motifs from one context to another. By doing so they build associations and analogies…"

9) Fishbane, *Biblical Myth*, 4-7; Smith, *Origins*, 12-13; Collins, *Apocalyptic*, 17-21; Blumenberg, *Work*, 97-98.

10) Fishbane, *Biblical Myth*, 20, 23-24, 27; On Israelite monotheism as a form of "inner community discourse" reinforcing an exclusive relationship with its (one) God, see Smith, *Origins*, 9-10, 154-57; For Christian examples: D. Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural*

Revision in Ancient Alexandria (California, 1992) 1-11, 71-72, 184-98, 235-40; comparative contemporary cases in Lincoln *Holy Terrors*, 28-35; see also his example of the 'Karbala myth' as rallying point for Shiite identity against the Iranian Shah Pahlavi in *Discourse and the Construction of Society* (Oxford, 1989) 32-37; On problems with the antipathies of "monotheism" and "polytheism," see Smith, *Origins*, 10-14.

11) Lincoln, *Discourse*, 4-5, 8-9.

12) ibid. 8-11, 20.

13) ibid. 23.

14) ibid. 24; J. D. Levenson has said that history and myth "reinforce each other: history concretizes cosmology, and cosmology lifts history above the level of the mundane." Quoted in Smith, *Origins*, 13.

15) Lincoln, *Discourse*, 25.

16) Fishbane, *Biblical Myth*, 25; Smith, *Origins*, 13.

17) On figuration, Fishbane, *Biblical Myth*, 21-22, 24-25; Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse* (Johns Hopkins, 1978) 4-6, 104-07; on imputation in exegesis, D. Dawson, *Allegorical Readers*, 4-9; E. Schüssler-Fiorenza, *Revelation: Vision of a Just World* (Fortress, 1991) 5-10, 23-24.

18) *Work on Myth*, 7.

19) Smith, *Origins*, 13-18, 23, 135-78. Fishbane, *Biblical Myth*, 37-57; some principal texts for this imagery divine battle are Ps. 74:12-17, 89:6-13, and 104:6-9; Isa. 27:1; 51:9-11; Habakkuk 3:8-15; Job 7:12, 26:11-12, and 41:1-11. For methodological cautions and a review of the testimony of religious images from the Levant across a millennium, see O. Keel and C. Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God in Ancient Israel* (Augsburg Fortress, 1998), 395-96, 402-09.

20) Fishbane, *Biblical Myth*, 16; also 41, 46-49.

21) Jeffrey H. Tigay, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Deuteronomy* (JPS, 1996) 435; Smith, *Origins*, 164-166, 173-178.

22) Bernard F. Batto, *Slaying the Dragon* (Westminster/John Knox, 1992) 51-52, 64-68; H. Kvanvig, "Genesis 6: 1-4 as Antediluvian Event" (*Scandinavian Jnl of Old Testament* 1.16.1, 2002) *passim*, and her footnotes for principal bibliography of recent and older studies.

23) On ambiguity of syntax and text, Marc Vervenne gives overview and bibliography: "All They Need is Love: Once More Genesis 6:1-4," in Davies, Harvey, and Watson, eds., *Words Remembered, Texts Renewed* (JSOT Supplement Series 195, 1995), 21-30 and *passim.*

24) For these epithets, see David J. A. Clines, "The Significance of the 'Sons of God' Episode (Genesis 6:1-4) in the Context of the 'Primeval History' (Genesis 1-11)," in *On the Way to the Postmodern* (v. 1, *JSOT Supplement Series* 292, 1998) 337; and R. Hendel, "Of Demigods and the Deluge: Toward an Interpretation of Genesis 6:1-4" (*JBL* 106/1, 1987) p. 14.

25) Smith, *Origins*, 47-50.

26) Batto, 44-47, 63-70; Kvanvig, "Event," 92ff.; Hendel, "Demigods," 16-17, 18-20, 21-25; see also M.L. West, *The East Face of Helicon* (Oxford, 1997) 116-117, 377-80.

27) Westermann, *Genesis 1-11,* 382; D. Carr, *Reading the Fractures of Genesis* (Westminster John Knox, 1996) 248; J. Blenkinsopp, *The Pentateuch* (Anchor/Doubleday 1992) 74-75; Hendel, "Demigods," 16-17, 23, 25-26.

28) Carr, *Fractures*, 246-48; Blenkinsopp, *Pentateuch*, 64-66; B. Levine, *Numbers 1-20*, (Anchor/

Doubleday, 1993) 48-49.

29) Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 370-74, 380-82; Clines, "Significance," 338-48; more recently Kvanvig, "Event," 80, 84.

30) On this view Clines, "Significance," 339-41, summarizes the views of M. G. Kline, Westermann, F. Dexinger, and others. Nimrod of Cush in Babylon is explicitly a *gibbor*, a "mighty hunter" (emperor) at Gen. 10:8-12; anti-Babylonian polemic is suspected of the Tower of Babel account at Gen. 11:1-9. For this nexus, J. Blenkinsopp, *The Pentateuch*, 74-76. For the variant reading of *gibborim* at 6:4, E. Fox, *The Five Books of Moses* (Schocken, 1995/1997). Finally, Ezekiel may have relied on similar connotations for his "fallen warriors of long ago" at 32:27.

31) On rape and harems, see especially M. Kline, "Divine Kingship and Genesis 6:1-4" (*Westminster Theol. Jnl*. 24, 1961-62) 193-96, and Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 494-97. W. Wifall viewed the incident in light of a "dynastic history" surrounding King David and a parallel in the latter's infamous encounter with Bathsheba at 2 Sam. 11; see "Gen. 6:1-4: A Royal Davidic Myth?"(*Biblical Theology Bulletin* 5: 3, 1975) 295ff. More recently P. Davies views this problem through the vector of Milik's theory of the priority of 1 Enoch 6-11 to the Genesis 6:1-4 version of the story: "Women, Men, Gods, Sex and Power: The Birth of a Biblical Myth" in *The Feminist Companion to the Bible, Vol. 2*, ed. A. Brenner (Sheffield, 1993) 199-200. See also Fishbane, *Biblical Myth*, 76. Significantly, traditional Jewish readings see *"sons of God"* as Sethites or "sons of nobles" (P.S. Alexander, "The Targumim and Early Exegesis of 'Sons of God' in Genesis 6" (*Jnl. of Jewish Studies*, 23: 1, 1972) 61ff. Eslinger suggests instead the Cainite line, that the reference here ironically points to its claim to divinity: see Kvanvig, "Event," 87 for reference and summary (pp. 111-12) of textual sources for reading two kinds of antediluvians, which allow the 'oppression' interpretations.

32) Kvanvig, "Event," 84-86, 91-92; P. Davies, "Women, Men," 195-96; 198-200; this interpretation already adumbrated in Westermann, *Genesis1-11*, 372-74, 382.

33) Although *gibborim nephilim* at Ezek. 32:27 may rely on a shared sense of *fallen* warriors; see Vervenne, "All They Need," 26-27; Zimmerman, "Heilige Hochzeit," 348.

34) Levine, *Numbers 1-20*, 359; Batto, *Dragon*, 209 n. 57; Westermann 378. On possibility of a shared tradition, Kvanvig, "Event," 91-92; also H. Gese, "Der Bewachte Lebensbaum und die Heroen: Zwei Mythologische Ergänzungen zur Urgeschichte der Quelle J," in his *Vom Sinai zum Zion* (Kaiser, 1974) 109-110.

35) It is possible that some of the people continued to practice obeisance to the deceased well into the Exilic period, a practice, continuous with the West Semitic roots of Israelite religion, but vilified in Deuteronomistic and priestly ideologies. Smith, *Origins*, 68-69; also his *Early History of God* (2nd edn., Eerdmans/Dove, 2002) 162-170, esp. 168ff. Genesis 14 and especially 15 have been seen to import 'Deuteronomistic' concerns back into Primeval History, linking Abraham to the events of exodus and conquest: Carr, *Fractures*, 163-66; Blenkinsopp, *Pentateuch*, 122-123.

36) Vervenne ("All They Need," 27; see also 37) quotes R. B. Allen comparing the Nephilim in these contexts to the idea of "bogeymen"; Smith, *Origins*, 69; Kvanvig, "Event," 91-92. This 'uncanniness' may have been retrojected as far back as Abraham's first passage through the land, when God "covenanted" with him (Gen. 15:17-21) promising his descendants the lands

of the Rephaim and others. Rephaim already appear as a vanquished Transjordanian people at Gen. 14: 5.

37) Hendel, "Demigods," 21.

38) A classical statement on Dtr.[1] and Dtr.[2] is F. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Harvard, 1973) 278-89; J. Tigay on Deuteronomy author/s' reaction to Assyria in *Deuteronomy*, xxi, xxiii, 435; I. Finkelstein and N. Silberman, *The Bible Unearthed* (Touchstone, 2001) 301-05.

39) Manasseh's sins are one fateful 'historical' crux of such sin: Cross, *Myth*, 285-86; on quasi-historicity of the Deuteronomistic History, see M. Z. Brettler, *The Creation of History in Ancient Israel* (Routledge, 1995) 76-78, and Finkelstein and Silberman, *Bible Unearthed*, 92-96, 303-10. As extreme applications of the *herem* or war 'ban' at Deut. 13 and 20 chillingly testify, from a severe Deuteronomistic perspective the vilified 'other' can just as much be an Israelite reverting to idolatry as an impure heathen "foreigner." S. Niditch, *War in the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford, 1993) 56-7, 63-4.

40) Collins, *Apocalyptic*, 44, 51. The texts, probably written no later than the late 3rd century and suggesting still older, and separate, provenance, clearly reveal Babylonian and other influences, if not conceptual formation in the Babylonian Diaspora: G. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1* (Hermeneia, Fortress, 2001) 7, 61-62, 279-80.

41) 1 Enoch 7: 2.

42) K. Pomykala, "A Scripture Profile of the Book of Watchers" (in Evans and Talom, eds., *The Quest for Context and Meaning* (Brill, 1977) 266-70.

43) *1 Enoch* 15: 8-9, 11-12; translation appears in J. VanderKam, "1 Enoch, Enochic Motifs, and Enoch in Early Christian Literature," in VanderKam and Adler, eds., *The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity* (Van Gorum, 1996), 61.

44) Nickelsburg, "Apocalyptic and Myth in 1 Enoch 6-11," (JBL 96: 3, 1977) 396-7; *1 Enoch 1*, 170; Bartelmus, *Heroentum in Israel und seiner Umwelt* (Zürich, 1979) 180-83; see cautions and possible extensions in Collins, *Apocalyptic*, 50-51.

45) Nickelsburg, "Myth," 396-99, and *1 Enoch 1*, 182-87.

46) Nickelsburg (*1 Enoch 1*, 171-72) argues that the Asael material stems from a separate source, and also sees close parallels between the corruptive teachings motif in this segment and the Greek myth of Prometheus, especially in the dramatic version of Aeschylus or its ancient Near Eastern antecedents; this was also noted by P. Hanson, "Rebellion in Heaven, Azazel, and Euhemeristic Heroes in 1 Enoch 6-11," (*JBL* 96: 2, 1977) 226-27.

47) D. Suter, "Fallen Angel, Fallen Priest: The Problem of Family Purity in 1 Enoch 6-16," (*HUCA* 50, 1979) 124-31; Suter makes note of a closely parallel critique of the Jerusalem priesthood in the Testament of Levi (14:5—17:11); see also Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 246.

48) Collins, *Apocalyptic*, 51.

49) ibid. 59.

50) Elaine Pagels, *The Origins of Satan* (Vintage, 1996) 36-38, 45-47; G. Nickelsburg, *Ancient Judaism and Christian Origins*, (Fortress, 2003) 43-48.

51) Nickelsburg, *Judaism*, 75-79; Pagels, *Satan*, 37.

52) Pagels, *Satan*, 39-44; Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 209-10.

53) Pagels, *Satan*, 48-51.

54) ibid, 49; Niditch, *War*, 17-22.

55) *Satan*, 5-10, 56-62 165. D. Dawson (*Readers*, 194-96) for another example of how the demons are turned into a cause of errant religiosity: Justin Martyr will blame demons for the Jews' denial of the messianic status of Jesus Christ, and for the corrosive influence of pagan poetry and myth on the understanding of some Christians, causing both to fail to recognize the divine *logos*.

56) Pagels, *Satan*, 48.

57) Collins, *Apocalyptic*, 272-273; Schlüsser-Fiorenza, *Revelation*, 81-85, 87, 106-10.

58) G. Stroumsa, *Barbarian Philosophy* (Mohr Siebeck, 1999) 32; Blumenberg, *Work on Myth*, 238; for his extensive reflections on the relationship between myth and dogma, see pp. 96-98, 215-260.

59) Among the early Church Fathers there were reputable defenders the 'revealed' status of the Book of Watchers and other pseudepigraphic texts; for examples and an accounting of the shift in these texts' status for Christian interpreters, see VanderKam, "Enochic Motifs," 35-60.

60) Pagels, *Satan*, 149-50, 154-55, 163-67; Stroumsa, *Philosophy*, 34-37, 100-07; also Stroumsa, "Postscript: The Future of Intolerance," in Stanton and Stroumsa, eds., *Tolerance and Intolerance in Early Judaism and Christianity* (Cambridge 1998) 357-58; Nickelsburg, *Judaism*, 193-97.

61) Stroumsa, *Philosophy*, 22-23, 64-65, 83-84; R. Marcus, *The End of Ancient Christianity* (Cambridge, 1990) 141-42, 153-55; P. Brown, *Authority and the Sacred* (Cambridge/Canto, 1995/97) 8-11, 22-26.

62) Pagels, *Satan*, 182-84; Stroumsa, "Postscript," 357-58. For the influence of the *1 Enoch* rendering of the Gen. 6:1-4 story in later Judaic and Christian tradition, see Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 71-78; and VanderKam, "Enochic Motifs," 60-87. Surveyed also in my doctoral dissertation, *Giant Signatures: Myths and Histories of a Robust Stranger* (unpublished, Pacifica Graduate Institute, 2004), 172-209, 224-69.

63) *Work on Myth*, 3-4. Blumenberg lived 1920-1996.

64) E. Cassirer, *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen*; W. Nestle, *Vom Mythos zum Logos.*

65) *Work on Myth*, 6.

66) ibid. 5; the absolutism of reality is the "totality of what goes with this situational leap, which is inconceivable without super-accomplishment in consequence of a sudden lack of adaptation." ibid. 4.

67) ibid. 5-6.

68) ibid. 14, 16; and the title of Part One of his study.

69) ibid. 14; for Otto, see also infra. 20-21, 62-63.

70) ibid. 22-24; Fishbane, *Biblical Myth*, 37, 48-49.

71) *Work on Myth*, 65-66. One might add here as well: Yahweh, in confrontation with the chaotic sea. For West Semitic background to ancient Israelite conceptions of 'monsters', see Smith, *Origins*, 28-33.

72) *Work on Myth*, 42-43; on genealogies of gods and the importance of names for both pagan and Christian, 38-42. For one overview of the theological disposition and implications of Blumenberg's ideas about the role of imagination and metaphor in filling in the indeterminacies of the experience of the lifeworld, see P. Stoellger, *Metapher und Lebenswelt: Hans Blumenberg's Metaphorologie als Lebenswelthermeneutik und ihr religionsphänomenologischer Horizont* (Mohr Siebeck, 2000) 363-83.

73) I argue this in my doctoral dissertation, *Giant Signatures*, 14-22, 212-14.

74) On commonalities and distinctions of the traditions in respect to aspects of apocalyptic and eschatological thought, see Neusner, Chilton, and Graham, *Three Faiths, One God* (Brill, 2002), vii-viii, 255, 295, 298-306; also, P. Koslowski, "Introduction," in Koslowski, ed. *Progress, Apocalypse, and Completion of History and Life After Death of the Human Person in the World Religions* (Kluwer, 2002) 2-5; in this volume, see also M. Zakzouk, "The Islamic Doctrine of the Eschatological Completion of History and Eternal Life," 93-100. On the contemporary conflict, see Juergensmeyer, *Terror*, passim; Lincoln, *Holy Terrors*, 12-16.

75) Schüssler-Fiorenza, *Revelation*, 138-139; G. Kepel, *Jihad* (Harvard, 2002) 24-27, 38-42, 314-21. See also Lincoln, *Terrors*, 12-16, 33-50, on contemporary examples of paradigmatic structures for justifying religious antagonism or violence in the present through a scriptural past.