UNTOLD TALES FROM THE BOOK OF REVELATION

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UNTOLD TALES FROM THE BOOK OF REVELATION

SEX AND GENDER, EMPIRE AND ECOLOGY

By
Stephen D. Moore

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Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ACCS NT	Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture New Testament
ACNT	Augsburg Commentaries on the New Testament
ANRW	*Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung*. Edited by Hildegard Temporini and Wolfgang Haase. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1972–.
AOTC	Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries
BADG	W. Bauer, W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979.
BibInt	*Biblical Interpretation*
BNTC	Black's New Testament Commentaries
BTB	*Biblical Theology Bulletin*
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
EPRO	Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'Empire romain
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
ExpTim	*Expository Times*
HDR	Harvard Dissertations in Religion
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
IBC	Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
ICC	International Critical Commentary

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Int	*Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology*
JAC	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JECS	*Journal of Early Christian Studies*
JÖAI	*Jahreshefte des Őesterreichischen archäologischen Institutes*
JRS	*Journal of Roman Studies*
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
KEK	Kritisch-Exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
LSJ	H. G. Liddell, R. Scott, H. S. Jones. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
NCB	New Century Bible
NIBCNT	New International Biblical Commentary on the New Testament
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
NPNF 1	*The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series 1. Edited by Philip Schaff. 1886–1889. 14 vols. Repr. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994.
NTD	Das Neue Testament Deutsch
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
ÖTK	Ökumenischer Taschenbuch-kommentar
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTP	*Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*. Edited by James H. Charlesworth. 2 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1983.
PMLA	*Publications of the Modern Language Association*
RB	*Revue biblique*
SBLEJL	Society of Biblical Literature Early Judaism and Its Literature

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SBLRBS	Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study
SBLSP	*Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers*
SBLSymS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
SEJC	Studies in Scripture in Early Judaism and Christianity
SemeiaSt	Semeia Studies
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SP	Sacra pagina
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–76.
TLG	*Thesaurus linguae graecae: Canon of Greek Authors and Works*. Edited by L. Berkowitz and K. A. Squitier. 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.
USQR	*Union Seminary Quarterly Review*
VCSup	Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZBK	Zürcher Bibelkommentare

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1
What Is, What Was, and What May Yet Be

> Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. (Rev 22:10)

Revelation does not carry its warning on its label. It is only when we have devoured the book, avidly read it right through, that we learn that its seal was always already broken. Revelation is an unsealed book. Toxic poisons trickle from it. Consciousness-altering fumes waft out of it. Desperate hope and vindictive joy issue from it.

> Question: What kind of person spends innumerable hours poring obsessively over this unsafe apocalypse, breathing in its vapors and mulling over its mysteries?
>
> Answer: Either a member of an apocalyptic sect or a biblical scholar.

Both the apocalyptic believer and the apocalyptic specialist are consumed by the same desire. Affect theorist Lauren Berlant defines desire as "a state of attachment to something or someone, and the cloud of possibility that is generated by the gap between an object's specificity and the needs and promises projected onto it" (2012, 6). I myself have experienced intense, if ambivalent, attachment to the Apocalypse; the present book is testimony to that. And I have stumbled around in the Apocalypse's cloud of possibility ("Then I looked, and there was a white cloud," 14:14), at once toxic and euphoric, for more decades than I care to count, first as a member of an apocalypse-avid house church, then as a biblical critic. "Desire visits you as an impact from the outside," continues Berlant, "and yet, inducing an encounter with your affects, makes you feel as though it comes from within you" (2012, 6). I first encountered the Apocalypse in my late

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teens, flicking impatiently through the pages of the New Testament ("of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: Newly Translated out of the Original Greek; and with the Former Translations Diligently Compared and Revised, by His Majesty's Special Command"), hungry for palpable religious experience. My eye and drug-addled brain were caught and held by Rev 4:1: "After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter" (KJV). And all at once I was on the cloud elevator rising, if not to heaven, then to a transformed earth, now ubiquitously electric with cryptic code, but decipherable to those who knew how to deploy the (code)book of Revelation. I had become a member of the esoteric Church of the Apocalypse worldwide.

I have long since migrated, of course, to another equally far-flung, no less esoteric community, the guild of biblical scholars. "What does it mean about love," asks Berlant, "that its expressions tend to be so *conventional*, so bound up in institutions like marriage and family, property relations, and stock phrases and plots?" (2012, 7). By extension, what does it mean about the love, however ambivalent, that I feel for the Apocalypse that its expressions tend to be so tightly bound up in the austere, abstracted institution of biblical scholarship, despite Revelation's own extravagant imagistic excesses and urgent behavioral demands?

At least I will always know what it feels like to realize that the world will end at noon this Sunday.

I had stopped watching the clouds ("Look! He is coming with the clouds; every eye will see him," 1:7) by the time I started writing on Revelation. By then, too, certain unprecedented challenges to the monochrome model of Revelation scholarship had been voiced. That model had been trundling along for more than a century, pushed from behind and pulled from the front by the laboring horde of historian-philologists, their blinders set to screen out any context for the Apocalypse other than the ancient one, together with any awkward questions about its ethics or ideology. The fundamental premise of the historical-philological model was already in place by the eighteenth century; Johann David Michaelis articulated it concisely as follows: "The Apocalypse contain[s] prophecies, with which the very persons to whom it was sent, were immediately concerned" (1801, 4:504).[1]

1. The first German edition of Michaelis's work appeared in 1750.

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Far and away the most impertinent early challenge to the inherited model of Revelation scholarship was posed by Tina Pippin in her *Death and Desire: The Rhetoric of Gender in the Apocalypse of John* (1992a). Pippin's was not the first feminist reading of Revelation; it had been preceded by the feminist studies of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (1981; 1985; 1991) and Adela Yarbro Collins (1987; cf. 1993a). But Pippin's was the most scathing critique of Revelation—or, arguably, of any New Testament text—to have appeared up to that point. More than an instance of feminist criticism, it was an instance of ideological criticism, a development that had only recently coalesced in biblical studies (see Jobling and Pippin 1992).[2]

The liberatory scholarly agendas of Pippin, Yarbro Collins, and, most explicitly, Schüssler Fiorenza, expressed as feminist scholarship on Revelation, emerged out of the broad current of liberation hermeneutics that had been flowing around, and occasionally through, the field of biblical studies for decades. Liberation hermeneutics also found searing expression in Revelation scholarship in books by Allan Boesak, black South African anti-apartheid activist (Boesak 1987), and Pablo Richard, Chilean socialist and advocate for the poor (Richard 1995).

These various streams are swollen by now, and have overflowed in different directions. Feminist studies of Revelation[3] have spilled over into masculinity studies[4] and womanist studies,[5] and, through slightly more circuitous channels, have also flowed into queer studies.[6] Forms of liberationist exegesis other than the feminist forms, meanwhile,[7] have overflowed into empire-critical and postcolonial strategies of reading.[8] But empire-critical and postcolonial approaches have also mingled with feminist or

2. And which *The Postmodern Bible*, coauthored by a team of scholars that included Pippin, subsequently defined as a form of criticism designed to analyze biblical texts "for their ideological content and mode of production," and "to grasp the ideological character of contemporary reading strategies" (Bible and Culture Collective 1995, 277).

3. See also Garrett 1992; Keller 1996; Pippin 1992b; 1992c; 1994b; 1995; 1999; 2005; 2012; Rossing 1999a; Vander Stichele 2000b; Levine 2009; Carson 2011; Samuelsson 2012; Huber 2013.

4. See Moore 1996, 117–40; Frilingos 2004, 64–115; Huber 2008.

5. See Martin 2005; Smith 2012; 2014.

6. See Pippin and Clark 2006; Runions 2008a; Moore 2009; Huber 2011.

7. See also Míguez 1995; González 1999; Rowland 2004; Blount 2005; 2007; Rhoads 2005.

8. See Howard-Brook and Gwyther 1999; Ruiz 2003; Westhelle 2005; Moore

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other gender-attuned approaches.[9] Explorations of Revelation attuned to literary theory, or critical theory more broadly, have also appeared, some narrative-critical,[10] others poststructuralist.[11] Many ecological readings have also taken root in Revelation.[12] Surprisingly, given the richness of the soil, studies of Revelation's reception in contemporary popular culture were late-blooming,[13] but have now come into their own.[14]

Old-school historical-critical commentaries on Revelation, meanwhile, began to break the scales in the late 1990s, David Aune's monumental—and magnificent—three-volume commentary weighing in at around 1,500 pages (Aune 1997; 1998a; 1998b), soon followed by G. K. Beale's 1,200 page commentary (Beale 1999) and Grant Osborne's 900-page commentary (Osborne 2002). The advent of colossal commentaries in any subfield of biblical studies may be taken to signify either an unprecedented flowering of that subfield or terminal exhaustion of the critical paradigms in which the commentaries are rooted. What will feel like vitality to the scholars most invested in the paradigms will seem like fatigue—an exhaustive and exhausting recital of the all already said—to the scholars less invested in the paradigms. In Revelation scholarship, the former scholars overwhelmingly outnumber the latter scholars, a situation not likely to change in the foreseeable future—although the lines between the two groups should not be drawn too starkly. Work on Revelation like Steven Friesen's and especially Christopher Frilingos's (Friesen 2001; Frilingos 2004) showed how clunky historical criticism could be trans-

2006, 97–121; Carey 2006; 2008; Seesengood 2006, 66–84; Kang 2007; Sánchez 2008; Carter 2009; 2011; Darden 2011; Diehl 2013.

9. See Kim 1999; Moore 2001, 173–99; McKinley 2004; Keller 2005, 33–94; Schüssler Fiorenza 2007, 111–47; Marshall 2009; Nelavala 2009; Smith 2012.

10. See Barr 1998; 2001; 2003; Resseguie 1998; 2005, 213–40; 2009.

11. See Derrida 1992b; 2007; Quinby 1994; Price 1998; Keller 2002; Keller and Moore 2004; Royalty 2004; Chrulew 2008; Samuelsson 2012.

12. See Rossing 1999b; 2002; 2005a; 2008; Keller 2000; 2005, 67–94; Reid 2000; Maier 2002; Hawkin 2003; Martin 2009; Bauckham 2010, 174–78; Bredin 2010, 165–80; Cate 2010, 145–55; Horrell, 2010, 98–101; Sintado 2010, 271–334; cf. Adams 2007, 236–51.

13. For rare early examples, see Dellamora 1995; Brasher 1998; Vander Stichele 2000a.

14. See Rossing 2005b; Frykholm 2007; Lyons and Økland 2009; Walliss and Quinby 2010; Gribben and Sweetnam 2011; Howard 2011; Clanton 2012; Partridge 2012; Runions 2014; cf. Blount 2005, 91–118.

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formed into elegant cultural history through a modest infusion of theory, postcolonial theory in Friesen's case and postcolonial and gender theory in Frilingos's case.

In the early to mid-1990s, my own interests as a New Testament scholar expanded from poststructuralism into cultural studies and gender studies, especially masculinity studies, and soon branched out additionally into queer theory and postcolonial studies. More recently, posthuman animality studies, a poststructuralist inflection of ecological studies, and affect theory, a post-poststructuralist reckoning with emotion and other associated states, have been my main intellectual preoccupations. For me, however, the passage from one passion to the next has never entailed the abandonment or renunciation of the previous passion. They all move eclectically in and out of focus as I read and write, as is perhaps apparent in certain of the later essays in this collection.

To my mind, Revelation irresistibly invites engagement from all the methodologies or reading strategies I have just named, which is why my own passage through these interlocking approaches has been tightly bound up with Revelation almost from the start (see Moore 1995a; 1998; 1999). Consider, for instance, what a powerful magnet Revelation is for gender studies. Revelation has provoked vigorous feminist engagement, as have certain other New Testament texts. What is distinctive, however, about Revelation is the degree of passion it arouses. No other New Testament text, arguably, has induced such deep divisions among feminist interpreters. These divisions have been epitomized by "the 'Great Whore' debate," with scholars such as Tina Pippin (1992a) and Caroline Vander Stichele (2000b) in one corner and scholars such as Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (1998, 205–36) and Barbara Rossing (1999a) in the other. At issue is the question of whether Revelation's symbol-soaked female characters—Jezebel and the great whore, on the one hand, the woman clothed with the sun and the bride, on the other—are harmful to flesh-and-blood women.

Queer theory, meanwhile—that term classically naming poststructuralist analysis of sex and sexuality, particularly in their instability, fluidity, constructedness, and malleability—finds in the Apocalypse a more anomalously sexed and aberrantly gendered universe than any other in the New Testament.[15] To begin with, Revelation *has* characters who perform

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15. Admittedly, Revelation pales in this regard relative to certain extracanonical early Christian texts, most especially *Odes of Solomon* 19:1-6.

sexual acts, which exceedingly few New Testament texts do: a "fornicating" female prophet (2:20-22; cf. 2:14), a prodigiously promiscuous prostitute (14:8; 17:1-2; 18:3; 19:2). More significantly for queer theory, however, Revelation also has a Jesus with female breasts ("girt about the paps [*tois mastois*] with a golden girdle" [1:13], as the King James translators matter-of-factly put it); a choir of 144,000 male virgins (14:1-4); a bride whose groom is a sheep (19:7-9; 21:9); and other arresting deviations from standard sex/gender scripts, whether ancient or modern.

Revelation's attraction for empire-critical and postcolonial studies is also immense. No other New Testament text thematizes "earthly" empire as single-mindedly as Revelation—and precisely in order to attack it with scathing intensity. What exactly the authors of the Gospels and Acts or the apostle Paul thought about Rome is a subject for nuanced scholarly deliberations and heated disagreements. Almost no critical interpreter of Revelation, however, doubts that it was intended as an all-out attack on imperial Rome. Revelation is the New Testament example par excellence of anti-imperial resistance literature (whether or not one sees that resistance as compromised by a compulsion to model God's empire on Rome's empire). As such Revelation invites, and has received, intense scrutiny both from scholars who wish to reconstruct Revelation's biting religio-cultural and socioeconomic critique of imperial Rome and from scholars who wish to turn that critique on contemporary neocolonialism or global capitalism (not that these are always two different groups of scholars).[16]

Revelation has also been a magnet for ecological work on the New Testament. Other New Testament authors predict a divinely ordained dissolution of the cosmos (see especially 2 Pet 3:7, 10, 12), but none describes it with such apparent relish as John of Patmos. Revelation's most spectacular ecocidal visions are concentrated in the seven trumpets and seven bowls sequences (see especially 8:7–12; 16:2–12). Eventually, "the first heaven and the first earth" are bulldozed away altogether to make room for "the new heaven and new earth" (21:1). As we shall see, a remarkable number of interpreters have managed nevertheless to wrest positive ecotheological significance from the jaws of ostensible ecocidal disaster in Revelation

16. On the different varieties of empire-attuned work in New Testament studies, see Moore 2006, 8-23; 2011a.

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by highlighting 22:1–2, the Edenic city park in the new Jerusalem with its healing tree and life-giving stream.

Sex, gender, empire, and ecology are the ingredients that slosh around singly or, more often, in combination in the interlinked essays that make up this volume. Chapter 2, "Mimicry and Monstrosity," begins with scene-setting sections that attempt, in somewhat traditional style, to resituate Revelation in its original imperial context: the Roman province of Asia under the principate, perhaps in the latter decades of the first century CE. The postcolonial theory of Homi Bhabha is then wheeled in, and Revelation's relations to Rome are reframed in terms of Bhabha's key analytic categories of colonial ambivalence, hybridity, and especially mimicry. Chapter 3, "Revolting Revelations," continues to reflect on Revelation and empire, now crossreading Revelation with two further intertexts, one proximate and the other distant. What links Revelation, the roughly contemporary Jewish text 4 Maccabees, and modern Irish nationalism is a shared preoccupation with blood sacrifice and martyrdom. Gender also looms large in this essay, particularly Revelation's construction of the masculinities of God and his Messiah through repeated acts of war: war making men making war making men making war.… Chapter 4, "Hypermasculinity and Divinity," analyzes the hegemonic yet curiously queer masculinity of Revelation's deity more fully. In Revelation, a numinous, aphasic, phallic male form is the object of unceasing adoration and the central fixture of the narrative's throne-room spectacle. This theme is explored in tandem with the contemporary cultural spectacle of male bodybuilding. As such, this essay is also an exercise in cultural studies. The final stretch of the essay attempts a defamiliarizing reframing of Revelation's climactic big reveal with a different, more mundane cultural spectacle: the TV reality show makeover.

Chapter 5, "The Empress and the Brothel Slave," was coauthored with Jennifer A. Glancy. The focus here shifts from Revelation's God and Christ to its "great whore," Babylon, a figure whom traditional scholarship has tended to construe as a courtesan or well-heeled prostitute. Glancy and I counterargue, through appeal to the now extensive body of classical scholarship on ancient Roman prostitution, that the *pornē* Babylon is better construed as a tattooed brothel slave, albeit one who, paradoxically, is also represented as an "empress." The essay then moves to a crossreading of Revelation's Babylon and another "whore-empress," Juvenal and Tacitus's Messalina. In chapter 6, "Raping Rome," Babylon remains the focus, but now as the goddess Roma, the (singularly queer) personification of Rome

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and its military might. The cult of Roma had particularly deep roots in Roman Asia. As Babylon, Roma is mercilessly parodied in Revelation. She is stripped of her habitual armor and decked out as a drunken prostitute—but only to be punitively stripped once more, violated, and annihilated. Judith Butler, equipped with her theory of gender performativity, is called in to decipher this multilayered scene of gender masquerade and sexual humiliation. Chapter 7, "Retching on Rome," marks the book's final return to Revelation's sexualized violence, but now through the medium of affect theory, the name for the post-poststructuralist analysis of emotions and still more elemental forces rooted in bodies and passing between bodies. Through Sara Ahmed's brand of affect theory in particular, Revelation's "whore" may be reconceived as a circulating object that is saturated or "sticky" with affect, and the complex dynamics of Revelation's affective economy may be teased out. That economy works by sticking "figures of hate" together: Jezebel, the whore, the beast(s), and the dragon. Affect theory also enables us to better understand why Rome is figured in intensely sexualized terms in Revelation: the intolerable cultural closeness of Rome requires representation that evokes intimate contact felt on the surface of the skin, contact at once alluring and repellent.

Chapter 8, "Derridapocalypse," was coauthored with Catherine Keller. We take turns deploying the later writings of Jacques Derrida to read Revelation in its context and ours. "Later Derrida" is the Derrida of the so-called turn to religion. The later writings are replete with concepts such as "the messianic," "faith," "the absolute secret," and "justice beyond the law"—all illuminatingly applicable to Revelation and its interpretation. Empire is again a unifying theme in this essay, whether as the protocolonial Roman Empire or the neocolonial American Empire, specifically in its post-9/11 incarnation. In chapters 9 and 10, "Quadrupedal Christ" and "Ecotherology," later Derrida remains an enabling resource. Now, however, it is Derrida's animality theory that is employed to reframe Revelation. These complementary chapters are applied exercises in posthuman animality studies, the name for theoretical analysis of the systemic othering of the animal by which the human is constituted. The chapters take as their point of departure the fact that Revelation is an animal book extraordinaire, a theological bestiary. They explore certain prominent aspects of Revelation that have been curiously underremarked by other ecological interpreters, such as that Revelation's Christ moves through most of the narrative not on two legs but on four, and they ponder at length the ecotheological implications of that oddity. Chapter 10 ends by taking the mea-

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sure of the immense megalopolis in which Revelation's paradisal stream and tree are situated, asking whether that über-urban space, or even its stream and tree, merit the treatment they have received from so many ecological interpreters of Revelation—that is, as symbols of release from our current environmental nightmare.

All of these essays have been published previously, some recently, others some time ago. In effect, this book is a freestanding companion to *The Bible in Theory: Critical and Postcritical Essays* (Moore 2010), which was a larger collection of my previously published articles and essays—excepting those on Revelation, which I was holding over for this volume. As with the earlier volume, each essay in this volume is prefaced with a specially composed headnote that contextualizes it. As with the earlier volume, too, I did not attempt, as I revised or retouched the older essays in this volume, to incorporate scholarship that appeared subsequent to the essay's original date of publication—mountains of scholarship that would have been exhausting to scale. But the main reason I decided not to take a time capsule into the past to rewrite surreptitiously and thoroughly the early essays of my younger self while he gazed out the window and daydreamed was that my mind has changed relatively little about Revelation since I first began to teach it and write about it. What has mainly changed is that I now see Revelation as a Jewish text through and through and all the way down, a realization reflected particularly in chapter 7 of this volume. I have also become more agnostic about the date of Revelation. In some of the earlier essays in the volume, I tend to side in the great dating debate with the late-in-the-reign-of-Domitian team over against the shortly-after-the-death-of-Nero team. But now I tend to see that entire debate as a textbook example of Stanley Fish's once famous pronouncement on interpretive disagreements. Revelation's dating clues—the cipher 666 (13:18); the code name "Babylon" (17:5; also 14:8; 16:19; 18:2, 10, 21); the five-have-fallen-one-is-living riddle (17:9–11); the mortal wound that has been healed (13:3, 12, 14); the measuring of the temple (11:1–2); and the handful of other lesser clues—"provid[e] just enough stability for the interpretive battles to go on, and just enough shift and slippage to assure that they will never be settled," allowing us to continue to debate the date earnestly and heatedly, "but with no hope or fear of ever being able to stop" (Fish 1980, 172).

The Bible in Theory would not have come about if Tom Thatcher had not had the idea for it, and since that volume is parent to this one, Tom's idea has borne double fruit. I am also doubly grateful to Tom for including

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this volume too in his Resources for Biblical Study series, to keep the first one company, and to Bob Buller, SBL editorial director, for demonstrating once again that his concept of "biblical study" is, like Tom's, a commendably capacious one. I am particularly grateful to Jennifer Glancy and Catherine Keller, first, for the exhilarating experience of being able to co-write on Revelation with each of them, and second, for permitting the results of those collaborations to be reprinted in this volume. Tina Pippin was the ultimate inspiration for the string of essays that make up this collection. Her *Death and Desire* (1992a) came out when she and I were comrades in the Bible and Culture Collective (see Bible and Culture Collective 1995), plotting the revolution that never quite came about, and she enabled me to see that there were problems in Revelation more profound than whether the temple was still standing or had fallen when it was composed. She impelled me to wrestle with those problems in my teaching and finally to write on them myself.

Most of the essays in this book began as SBL papers or invited lectures. For the latter I owe debts of gratitude to Joseph Bristow at UCLA; Jennifer Glancy at the University of Richmond; David Jasper at the University of Glasgow; Brigitte Kahl and Hal Taussig at Union Theological Seminary; Amy-Jill Levine at Vanderbilt University; Hugh Pyper at the University of Leeds; and Mark Vessey, Sharon Betcher, and Harry Maier at the University of British Columbia/Vancouver School of Theology. I was fortunate to have some wonderful respondents along the way, notably Randall Bailey, Kwok Pui-lan, and Erin Runions. Also, an invitation from Brigitte Kahl to teach a "minicourse" at Union on Revelation, empire, gender, and ecology challenged me to begin to put all of these elements together.

The students who have participated in my doctoral seminars on Revelation have been an ongoing source of inspiration to me, not least the four who, to date, have written, or are writing, dissertations on it: Lynne Darden, Shinwook Kang, Christy Riley, and Shanell Smith. I found the 2013 Revelation seminar especially energizing, and I feel compelled to issue a shout-out (modeled on the "great shout" of Rev 10:3) to all the doctoral students who took it: Perry Brock, Sarah Emanuel, Lindsey Guy, Midori Hartman, Jimmy Hoke, Jonathan Koscheski, Paige Rawson, and Karri Whipple. Maia Kotrosits visited the class and opened our eyes to the potential that affect theory represents for Revelation. She and Alexis Waller have been my guides as I have ventured into this area. A special word of gratitude is due to Karri Whipple, who served as my research assistant as I attempted to turn my Revelation essays into a book. This

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long-delayed collection would still be languishing in limbo were it not for her energy and efficiency.

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