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***“SHAPES OF APOCALYPSE Arts and Philosophy in Slavic Thought”*** ,. By Ayse Dietrich\*,  
Published by: Academic Studies Press, Boston. Edited by Andrea Oppo, Year of Publishing: 2013.  
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This book is comprised of a collection of essays that treat the topic of the apocalypse in Slavic thought. It investigates the philosophical, literary and aesthetic idea of apocalypse in the Slavic world from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries. This book conveys the various approaches which have been taken toward the theme of the apocalypse in Slavic culture.

The book contains three sections: the first is dedicated to philosophy, the second to literature and the third to music and visual arts.

The philosophy section consists of three studies: an introduction by Andrea Oppo, the articles “The Titled Pillar: Rozanov and the Apocalypse by Giancarlo Baffo and “Salvation Without Redemption: Phenomenology of (Pre-) History in Patočka’s Late Work” by Riccardo Papparuso.

Oppo’s introduction provides a general introduction to apocalypse as a philosophical concept and discusses two basic approaches to understanding the myth of the apocalypse philosophically. The first approach views the apocalypse historically, the final event in a sequential passage of time which brings everything to an end. The second approach, on the other hand, views the apocalypse as an instant whose accomplishment is possible in the present. Based on these two perspectives Oppo, among the Russian thinkers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, analyses N. Berdjajev’s views.

The article “The Titled Pillar: Rozanov and the Apocalypse” written by Giancarlo Baffo examines Vasilij Rozanov’s conception of apocalypse. Baffo begins his analysis with Merežkovskij’s belief that Rozanov was the first to comprehend the way in which the beginnings of the Russian Revolution had been influenced by the relationship between Judaism and Christianity in Russia. Additionally, the article examines Rozanov’s critique of a purely spiritual Christian faith and the link between artistic creation and renunciation of the world.

Riccardo Papparuso’s article “Salvation Without Redemption: Phenomenology of (Pre-) History in Patočka’s Late Work” examines the idea of the ‘End of History’ put forward by Jan Patočka.

According to Papatrasso, in Patočka's view history has already come to an end, since the current technical-scientific era has satisfied humanity's empty desires, but has also demonstrated the utter non-sense of life. Patočka's "Post-History" paradoxically presents a return of pre-historical reality, but also shows the apocalypse to be a force for destruction without redemption.

The Literature section contains four articles: "The Sacrament of End. The Theme of Apocalypse in Three Works by Gogol" by Vladimir Glyantz, "Apocalyptic Imagery in Dostoevskij's *The Idiot* and *The Devils*" by William J. Leatherbarrow, "Black Blood, White Roses: Apocalypse and Redemption in Blok's Later Poetry" by Irene Masing-Delić and "Apocalypse and Golgotha in Miroslav Krleža's *Olden Days: Memoirs and Diaries 1914-1921/1922*" by Suzana Marjanić.

The article "The Sacrament of End. The Theme of Apocalypse in Three Works by Gogol" by Vladimir Glyantz examines *The Portrait*, *The Nose* and *The Government Inspector* by Gogol for their religious apocalyptic symbolism. The article discusses Gogol's personal life, expectation of the apocalypse, and the hidden meanings and relationships in Gogol's writings.

William J. Leatherbarrow's article "Apocalyptic Imagery in Dostoevskij's *The Idiot* and *The Devils*" examines the use of biblical motifs from the St. John's Book of Revelation in *The Idiot* and *The Devils* by F.M. Dostoevskij. The article not only analyzes the parallels between sections of these novels and the Book of Revelation, but the socio-political context of nineteenth century Russia and Europe.

Irene Masing-Delić's article "Black Blood, White Roses: Apocalypse and Redemption in Blok's Later Poetry" deals with Aleksandr Blok's lengthy poem *The Twelve* and his later poetry. In particular, Blok's use of illness as metaphor is examined. The author sees 'syphilis' in Blok's poetry as a symbol of the decadence of the old world; only a Revolution can purify the world from evil and bring about a new birth of life and culture.

The final article in this section, Suzana Marjanić's "Apocalypse and Golgotha in Miroslav Krleža's *Olden Days: Memoirs and Diaries 1914-1921/1922*" examines Krleža's literary diaries about the First World War and their apocalyptic thinking.

The Music and Visual Arts section includes four articles: "The Apocalyptic Dispersion of Light into Poetry and Music: Aleksandr Skrjabin in the Russian Religious Imagination" by Polina Dimova, "From the Peredvižniki's Realism to Lenin's Mausoleum: The Two Poles of an Apocalyptic-Palingenetic Path" by Chiara Cantelli, "Theatre at the Limit: Jerzy Grotowski's *Apocalypsis cum Figuris*" by Andrea Oppo and "On Apocalypse, Witches and Desiccated Trees: A Reading of Andrej Tarkovskij's *The Sacrifice*" by Alessio Scarlato.

Polina Dimova's article "The Apocalyptic Dispersion of Light into Poetry and Music: Aleksandr Skrjabin in the Russian Religious Imagination" examines the influence of Aleksandr Skrjabin's synesthetic concept of light found in his music on Russian religious philosophy.

The article "From the Peredvižniki's Realism to Lenin's Mausoleum: The Two Poles of an Apocalyptic-Palingenetic Path" written by Chiara Cantelli concerns about figurative arts and the Peredvižniki's Realism of the end of the nineteenth century and socialist art from the Stalinist era in Russia.

In Andrea Oppo's article "Theatre at the Limit: Jerzy Grotowski's *Apocalypsis cum Figuris*" his apocalyptic vision of theatre is analyzed.

The article "On Apocalypse, Witches and Desiccated Trees: A Reading of Andrej Tarkovskij's *The*

*Sacrifice*” written by Alessio Scarlato examines Andrej Tarkovskij’s last work *The Sacrifice* and his idea of apocalypse.

For anyone concerned with or interested in the topic of the apocalypse in arts, literature and philosophy in Slavic culture this book would be invaluable and it is likely to become a primary reference source for future research in the study of religious concepts in general, and the apocalypse in particular.

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