

Assistant Professor in Systematic Theology, Ethics or Philosophy of Religion specialising in Apocalyptic and Post-Apocalyptic Imaginaries

Apocalyptic and Post-Apocalyptic Studies: Description of the Research Field

Apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic studies is an interdisciplinary field that explores end-time representations in the biblical tradition and beyond. Drawing from religious texts, literature, art, film, popular culture, and media representation, this field investigates how individuals and societies imagine, narrate, and respond to cataclysmic upheaval—both real and fictional. At its core, the field examines the symbolic, moral, and existential meanings ascribed to destruction and renewal, often with a focus on human responsibility, agency, and hope in the face of collapse.

Theologically, apocalyptic studies draw on the established research into ancient and medieval apocalyptic texts and imagery. Systematic theology helps interpret apocalyptic texts not merely as predictions of future events, but as symbolic and theological discourses about justice, sovereignty, and power. Through doctrines such as creation, providence, sin, redemption, and eschatology, it frames apocalyptic motifs within a broader theological narrative. This allows scholars to distinguish between fatalistic or sensationalist appropriations of apocalyptic rhetoric and the deeper theological insights they intend to convey.

Philosophically, the field engages with questions of temporality, history, meaning, narration, and the limits of human knowledge and control. Thinkers like Jacques Derrida, Giorgio Agamben, Jean-Luc Nancy, and Paul Ricœur have interrogated the apocalyptic as a philosophical trope—raising fundamental questions about power structures and the potential of radical transformation. Post-apocalyptic scenarios often serve as laboratories for ethical and ontological reflection: What remains of the human when civilization ends? What obligations persist when moral and legal structures vanish?

Ethically, the field engages with questions pertaining to contemporary challenges such as climate change, artificial intelligence, and political authoritarianism. These global threats are frequently described in apocalyptic terms, and such framing influences public perception, policy, and emotional response. The field thus contributes to critical discourse by for example interrogating the uses and misuses of apocalyptic language. Moreover, it also explores strategies of resilience: how communities might cultivate hope, solidarity, and moral imagination in the face of systemic collapse.

Ultimately, apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic studies offer vital tools for understanding how societies confront existential threats—past, present, and future. By bridging theology, philosophy, and ethics, the field deepens our capacity to reckon with catastrophe, resist despair, and envision transformation.

The department has successfully supported two initiatives, one interdisciplinary project on conspiracy theories with bearing on apocalypticism (2023-2026) <https://www.beyondtruthandlies.ht.lu.se> and a comprehensive research programme on apocalyptic imaginaries (2023-2028) <https://www.endoftheworld.lu.se> There is also within the department a long-term commitment to research in the reception of biblical texts with special

focus on political alt rights movements where apocalyptic imaginaries do play a decisive role.
<https://www.ctr.lu.se/forskning/forskningsprojekt-vid-ctr/scripture-and-secularism/>

Apocalyptic and Post-Apocalyptic Studies: The Role and Responsibilities of the Assistant Professor

The recruitment is very timely, as the research field is now well established through the programme and previous adjacent project, which allows the department to see more concretely the gap in the research team; what is now needed is a solid systematic theologian who is capable of tackling the normative issues that are raised in politics, ethics and philosophy.

The department offers a rich environment through a longstanding work on political theology, and connections between theology and political philosophy, while the emerging milieu directly, concretely and programmatically dealing with apocalypticism will not only include the recruited scholar into something that is existing but furthermore see this as an important step in developing and deepening the construction of a research environment focused on apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic studies.