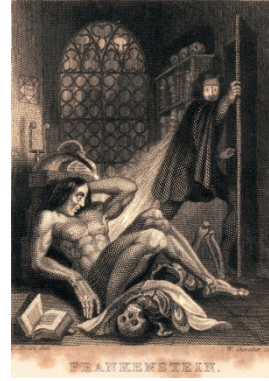


God and the Gothic: The Dark Imagination

Alison Milbank



1. **The Theology of Darkness:** ‘the darkness and light to thee are both alike’ (Psalm 139: 12);

There is in God—some say—

A deep, but dazzling darkness ; as men here

Say it is late and dusky, because they

See not all clear.

O for that Night ! where I in Him

Might live invisible and dim !

Henry Vaughan, ‘The Night’

Dionysius the Areopagite, *Mystical Theology*. Supernal Triad, Deity above all essence, knowledge and goodness; Guide of Christians to Divine Wisdom; direct our path to the ultimate summit of your mystical knowledge, most incomprehensible, most luminous and most exalted, where the pure, absolute and immutable mysteries of theology are veiled in the dazzling obscurity of the secret Silence, outshining all brilliance with the intensity of their Darkness, and surcharging our blinded intellects with the utterly impalpable and invisible fairness of glories surpassing all beauty.

2. **The Monstrous Middle Ages:** the book of nature. Monster/*monstrare* (to show); even Satan is a sign



3. **The Reformation and the Antichrist**



4. The Enlightenment and the Grotesque



5. The Enlightenment and the Spectral



6. The Nineteenth Century and the Double

'With every day, and from both sides of my intelligence, the moral and the intellectual, I thus drew steadily nearer to that truth, by whose partial discovery I have been doomed to such a shipwreck: that man is not truly one, but truly two. I say two, because the state of my knowledge does not pass beyond that point. Others will follow [...] and I hazard the guess that man will be ultimately known for a mere polity of multifarious, incongruous and independent denizens'. R. L. Stevenson.

7. The *fin de siècle* to 2013: The Vampire



8. What is at stake? Death? The material? The buffered self?