

Article

Thomas Müntzer and the World to Come

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Abstract: This article examines the figure of Thomas Müntzer in Marxist historiography, as well as the “utopianisation” of Müntzer in Ernst Bloch’s 1921 study on Thomas Müntzer as Theologian of the Revolution. I review some of the differences in Martin Luther and Müntzer in their competing views for the future after the break from Rome, and the theological thrust of Müntzer’s vision. This is then connected with elements from Bloch’s Müntzer, chiefly focussing on spirit and history.

Keywords: Thomas Müntzer; Reformation; Ernst Bloch; GDR; utopia

1. Introduction

On Slaughter-hill in the German spa-town of Frankenhausen, Thuringia stands the Panorama Museum, which was built in the early 1980s to house a mural by the artist Werner Tübke in commemoration of the 450-year anniversary of the battle of Frankenhausen. The battle of Frankenhausen, on that very hill, was the final battle of the Peasants’ war, where 6000 peasants were cut down by the princes’ troops on 25 May 1525. Tübke’s enormous panoramic painting (14 × 123 metres), which was originally named “Early Bourgeois Revolution in Germany”, has today been renamed as “The Peasant War Panorama”. Its main panel under a full rainbow depicts the Battle of Frankenhausen and Thomas Münzer approached by Death playing the bagpipe. In the forefront, Martin Luther stands at a well with, among others, Philip Melanchthon, Erasmus of Rotterdam, and Albrecht Dürer (Gillen 2011).

The name of Tübke’s painting, “Early Bourgeois Revolution in Germany” was the term used in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) for the Reformation, as the first out of two—one might say three, if we include 1989—bourgeois revolutions in Germany, the second one being the revolution of 1848–1850.¹ The fact that is “early” is because the bourgeoisie at this stage had not ripened to be able to take full advantage of the revolt against the feudal mastodent of the Catholic Church and the ensuing socio-economic change. It is bourgeois because the interests defended in the Reformation were those of the rising bourgeoisie, and it is a revolution because it meant the break-away from the pope-emperor and transition to a different form of rule, as well as the seizing and transfer of enormous wealth. Finally, the revolution has a place; it is “in Germany”, which indicates the national emphasis of the GDR leadership, a perspective which came to govern historical research in the years following 1960.²

The idea of the Reformation and the Peasants’ War as a revolution is the key here, in that the crisis of the times, the upheavals of the European world in the late 15th and early 16th century, and the shift in power relations, which had weakened the position of the Catholic empire, were also the context for Thomas More’s novel Utopia. In the German state of Saxony, in place of a novel, there were competing socio-political visions of the future world. The reformer Martin Luther would eventually look to the political opportunities, while the radical Thomas Müntzer’s outlook became dominated by the desire for socio-economic change. Thomas Müntzer’s vision, his “theology of revolution” was incompatible with the bourgeois revolution, and thus stood no chance (Bauer 2019, p. 280). Luther, by



Citation: Petterson, Christina. 2023. Thomas Müntzer and the World to Come. *Religions* 14: 1065. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14081065>

Academic Editor: Tamara Prosic

Received: 11 July 2023

Revised: 3 August 2023

Accepted: 15 August 2023

Published: 19 August 2023



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contrast, while initiating the revolt, withdrew, and sided with the princes against the revolution, laying the ideological groundwork for centuries to come.

The present article looks at the diverging visions of the two reformers, and then turns to Ernst Bloch's conceptualisation of Thomas Müntzer as a utopianist, a theologian of the (Marxist) revolution.

2. Luther and Münzer: The Pitchforks of the Peasants and the Swords of the Princes

In Marxist historiography of the Reformation in Germany, it is acknowledged that Luther instigated the revolution against Rome, but at a crucial point sided against the peasants with the princes (Engels 1982, pp. 347–51). Friedrich Engels' description of Luther's volte face is particularly vivid:

Luther had put a powerful tool into the hands of the plebeian movement by translating the Bible. Through the Bible he contrasted the feudalised Christianity of his day with the moderate Christianity of the first centuries, and the decaying feudal society with a picture of a society that knew nothing of the ramified and artificial feudal hierarchy. The peasants had made extensive use of this instrument against the princes, the nobility, and the clergy. Now Luther turned it against the peasants, extracting from the Bible such a veritable hymn to the God-ordained authorities as no bootlicker of absolute monarchy had ever been able to match. Princesdom by the grace of God, resigned obedience, even serfdom, were sanctioned with the aid of the Bible. Not the peasant revolt alone, but Luther's own mutiny against religious and lay authority were thereby disavowed; not only the popular movement, but the burgher movement as well, were betrayed to the princes.³

In his exposition of this quote, Roland Boer argues that this betrays Engels' overall narrative, that the Reformation was but a thinly veiled class struggle, in other words, that the religious aspect was of little or no importance (Boer 2012, pp. 295–97). What this quote demonstrates is, thus Boer, the "political ambivalence at the heart of Christianity" (Boer 2012, p. 295), and that Luther had unleashed the revolt, indeed threw the spark in the gunpowder,⁴ and ignited the anger of peasants and of Thomas Münzer: "Luther's own teaching and practice set Müntzer on his radical path" (Boer 2012, p. 296), a fact which Engels does not acknowledge.

Karl Kautsky notes that it was neither an extraordinary insight nor extraordinary audacity which made Luther the centrepiece of the Reformation. It was the combination of his social background as a peasant-son and training as a theologian which placed him at the right place at the right time as a perfect agitator, and as such able to unite the grievances across class lines (Kautsky 1895, pp. 16–17). Kautsky also does not see Müntzer as "a man ahead of his time, religiously and politically", as advocated by Zimmermann, but that there were no original thoughts to find in Müntzer, who merely expressed the sentiments of the communist mindset of his time. Where Müntzer *did* stand out was not in "philosophical reason or organisational talent, but rather his revolutionary vigour and above all, his statesmanlike view" (Kautsky 1895, pp. 45–46).

Kautsky, like Engels before him, does not analyse the theological disputes between Luther and Münzer, and hence, does not provide us with an understanding of their respective positions, which have great significance for their ideals for a future society.

This is better understood by the historian Carl Hinrichs, whose 1952 study of the disputes between Luther and Müntzer over authority and the right to resist is very attentive to the theological tunes of both (Hinrichs 1962).

Hinrichs analyses three central writings of Müntzer in the context of Luther's political manoeuvres. The three Müntzer texts are 'The Sermon to the Princes' held in Allstedt in early July 1524 to Duke Johann of Saxony and his nephew, the Elector Prince Johann Friedrich, along with other political figures;⁵ 'The Testimony of Luke and the Exposé of False Faith',⁶ and 'Vindication and Refutation', Müntzer's refutation of Luther's Letter

to the Princes of Saxony, scathingly subtitled ‘against the unspiritual soft-living Flesh in Wittenberg’.

Here we will dwell on the first chapter, where Hinrichs analyses the differences between Luther’s and Müntzer’s interpretation of the relationship between the church and the authorities. For Luther, the correct balance between these two powers is expressed in Paul’s letter to the Romans 13, verses 1–2 (NRSVA): “Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore, whoever resists authority resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgement”.⁷ Luther’s exposition of this two-sword doctrine was published in ‘Von weltlicher Obrigkeit, wie weit man ihr Gehorsam schuldig sei’ (On temporal authority, how far one owes obedience to it) (Luther [1523] 1900). This text appeared at the beginning of 1523 and was dedicated to Duke Johann of Saxony.

Hinrichs points out that on the one hand Luther’s statement on the authorities constitutes a sharp attack when they extend their authority into the souls of humans, whereby they are “presumptuously setting themselves in God’s place, lording it over men’s consciences and faith” (Luther 1930, p. 230). On the other hand, if they remain within their worldly bounds, the domain of the sword, Luther presents a justification of the authorities, as indicated in the quote from Romans 13, 2 above. In contrast, Müntzer’s emphasis is on Romans 13, 3–4 (NRSVA): “For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Do you wish to have no fear of the authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive its approval; for it is God’s servant for your good. But if you do what is wrong, you should be afraid, for the authority does not bear the sword in vain! It is the servant of God to execute wrath on the wrongdoer”. Müntzer gives these verses an interesting twist, initially in two letters,⁸ which, as Hinrichs notes, do not constitute a fully developed counter-view to Luther, but nevertheless take a decisive starting point for a stand against Luther’s interpretation (Hinrichs 1962, p. 35). From Romans 13, 3–4, Müntzer argues that the obedience proclaimed in verses 1 and 2 is only valid if the authorities fulfil the tasks of protecting the pious and taking revenge on the wicked as stated in verses 3 and 4. This is the duty of the sword, ‘but should this change, then the sword will be taken from them [the princes] and will be given to the people who burn with zeal so that the godless can be defeated’ (Hinrichs 1962, p. 35; Matheson 1988, p. 69). Romans 13 could, thus, at one and the same time give rise to the traditional interpretation of the God-given subordination to the authorities, which Luther used to establish his doctrine of church and state, but also, as we see in Müntzer, to the revolutionary right of resistance of the people, which leads to the idea of the sovereignty of the people, as the bearers of God’s will.

Hinrichs connects this interpretation of Romans with Müntzer’s idea of history and of the church, expressed in his sermon to the princes on the book of Daniel, chapter 2—which, argues Hinrichs, is presumably why this text was chosen as sermon text.

In contrast to Luther, who saw history as a battlefield between God and Satan, and thus not governed by any law of development or goal perceptible by humans, Müntzer sees, in line with Daniel’s eschatological vision, a purposefulness of history, “that only gives the political action legitimized by the right of resistance its final orientation” (Hinrichs 1962, pp. 39–40). In this way, Müntzer’s right of resistance within the march of world history brought Romans 13 and Book of Daniel together. Müntzer’s own role, as one in direct contact with revelation through spirit—unlike Luther, who held to revelation through scripture only—meant he could position himself as a Daniel, and give an accurate explanation of the situation at hand.

In this context, the text [Daniel 2] dealing with visions and dreams gave Müntzer the opportunity to emphasise the historical-eschatological significance of his concept of ‘spirit’, his view of the ‘inner word’ independent of tradition and scripture, by placing it in the great context of world history and its final goal: the appearance of the true ‘spirit’, of genuine knowledge is the characteristic of the dawning of the perfect final state. (Hinrichs 1962, p. 43)

Müntzer's emphasis on the spirit is what really sets him apart from Luther. 'Spirit' has for Müntzer existed in the human heart since creation, and is that which must be awakened. This subjective experience of the 'Spirit', the awakened heart, is what creates the chosen group, that as such stand equal before God—in the same way that this spirit manifested itself in the early Christian community of equals (Acts 2:42–45; 4:32–37). For Müntzer, 'church' is the union of the chosen people, who have had the direct experience of God's spirit and will, and the perfect state and property-free final state of humanity thereby realised here on earth, reaching back to the originally pure state, and circumventing centuries of negligence and dilapidation (Hinrichs 1962, p. 46). It is this re-established covenant that Müntzer is attempting to persuade the princes to join, to submit to the sovereignty of God, as witnessed by Thomas Müntzer.

The princes did not opt for Müntzer's social and spiritual vision. Less than a year after his sermon to the princes, Müntzer led the peasants and miners into the battle of Frankenhausen, where thousands were killed, and Müntzer himself captured. After torture, he was executed and his remains publicly displayed in Mühlhausen on the 27 May 1525.

3. Transition: Thomas Müntzer and Ernst Bloch in the GDR

In 1960, Ernst Bloch's study of Thomas Müntzer was published by Aufbau publishers in Berlin. Given that Thomas Müntzer was a revolutionary hero in the GDR, this is perhaps no surprise. However, Ernst Bloch, the author, had been removed from his post as Professor of Philosophy at the University of Leipzig, where he had worked since moving to the GDR from his American exile in 1949, and removed as editor of *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie*, which he had founded in 1953.⁹ The reason for this was the perception of his philosophy as being anti-Marxist. The re-publication of his Müntzer study, thus, is a bit of a surprise, and did not prevent him remaining in West Germany, where he was visiting when construction of the Berlin Wall commenced the following year. This might explain why Bloch's study is not referred to in much of the scholarship on Müntzer from the GDR.¹⁰ Conversely, it is also not an oft-cited study on the other side of the ideological divide—which is perhaps due to Bloch's Marxism. The study does, however, occupy a significant spot in the development of Bloch's utopian thinking, written as it is between the two editions of *The Spirit of Utopia*, published in 1918 and in 1923 (Moir 2019, p. 20). Bloch's utopian thought, then, emerged during the German (Weimar) Republic, established in 1918 after the end of the First World War. The socialist movement, also influenced by these nationalist developments, had seen the dissolution of the Second International in 1916 and the establishment of the Third International, Comintern, by Lenin in 1919. And indeed, Bloch's utopian drive is, as recognised by many (Jameson 2005, p. 3, n3), connected with the Soviet Union, which here, in 1921, had not yet come into being. In *Thomas Müntzer*, Bloch concludes that the proletarian thrust, the utopian drive of Thomas Müntzer and other figures of the submerged revolution, will climax in Germany and Russia (Bloch 1960, p. 182). Perhaps this is why it is republished in the GDR in 1960, at a time when Bloch's understanding of utopia had become more detached from actually existing socialism.

Thus, even though Hinrichs' study was written three decades after Bloch's Müntzer book, I have used it as a bridge between the historical Müntzer and Bloch's interpretation of Müntzer as a manifestation of the utopian impulse, to which we now turn.

4. Bloch's Müntzer: Incarnation of the Spirit of Utopia

In his study of utopianism, Fredric Jameson distinguishes between utopian literature, present in above all, science fiction, and a utopian impulse, which finds "its way to the surface in a variety of covert expressions and practices" (Jameson 2005, p. 3). This second strand is what Jameson identifies in Bloch's magnum opus (1954–1959), *The Principle of Hope* (Bloch 1986). But while *The Principle of Hope* is a study which traverses disciplines, genres, and cultural formations (Boer 2016, pp. 21–22), the Müntzer essay is more focussed on a single person within history. However, it is more than this, because in Thomas Müntzer,

Bloch sees an embodiment of the submerged utopian impulse, of the revolutionary fire and fervor always fighting for a better world.

In her study of Ernst Bloch's speculative materialism, Cat Moir points out that Bloch's Marxism and atheism meant that 'utopia' was a historical-material possibility, and to assert this empirical basis required a "non-dualist epistemology" (Moir 2019, p. 100). While Moir is taking this as a way into discussing the precursors and to building blocks of Bloch's epistemology, I want to use this to look at the theological realm of Luther and Müntzer, and thus return to some of the points from Hinrichs above.

In his chapter on Müntzer's sermon, Bloch writes:

However doubled the origin and region of the inner word may appear in Müntzer's work and in various astral alienation of Christian mysticism, spiritual freedom, the heart grasping itself, the unfallen, uncreated spark, the mystical function of the soul's foundation ultimately remains both subject and object of piety: The Son echoes in the distant darkness of the Father, and God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit shatter in face of the onslaught of subject-magic as mere images, transient images of self-stepping forth, that is, the *we*-revelation as the only real image of God. (Bloch 1960, p. 174)

While for some (Grabowsky-Hotamanidis 1995, pp. 23–24; Holl 1922, p. 403), this quote indicates that Müntzer wanted to place the individual Self in place of God, and thus, surrender completely to individualism, this seems to me to miss the point of Müntzer's idea of the church as community of the chosen, as well as Bloch's appreciation of him: it is not a self-revelation, it is a *we*-revelation—the community as the image of God. Over against Luther's absolute weakening and degradation of human power in service of the princes (Bloch 1960, p. 120), humanity for Müntzer is much more agentive and decisive. As noted by Hinrichs, Müntzer's humans carry the revolutionary power to seize the sword of God, should the powers that be demonstrate negligence or hesitation in carrying out their divine duty of care. Such an anthropology also means that there is a role for humans in shaping the future. As noted by Moir, Bloch emphasised 'the mediating role human beings can play in the process of trying to bring about a materially possible utopia' (Moir 2019, p. 103), a theory most likely developed in his study of Müntzer.

This human power and strength stems from the divine spirit, or spark, which resides in humans, and which can be lit through revelation—a revelation not limited to scripture as with Luther, but could also take shape in dreams and visions. These very subjective awakenings were well known in the history of Christianity and would continue to do so:

Müntzer, however, not only unleashed the old heretical subjectivism anew at the gates of a new age—and from here the excitement continued, bursting forth in Spanish mysticism, in the *espressivo* of the Baroque, appeared again in weakened form in sentimentalism, and finally in the strange spiritual-religious stirrings of romanticism; rather with spiritualism, Müntzer also set the foothold against all this boundless expressiveness in its very core, in lived, conceived praxis Christianity and in an apocalyptic remembrance. (Bloch 1960, p. 178)

Again, the lived practice of Christianity is the communal thrust of Müntzer's spirituality, which thus, is not individual enthusiasm, but always embodied and remembered collectively. The old heretical subjectivism is hinted at in one of Bloch's florilegia,¹¹ where towards the end of an assembly of Müntzer-quotes from *Manifest Exposé of False Faith, On Counterfeit Faith*, and a letter to the Brothers in Stolberg, we find the following: "faith is nothing else, than the Word incarnated in us, flesh and Christ was born in us".¹² Bloch points out that at other times, Müntzer does not submit to the idea that Christ is already dwelling in the heart, but rather that "God speaks his holy word, that is, his only begotten Son into the inward parts of the soul, and points the desolate soul to this birth".¹³ The difference, says Bloch, is whether the divine spark is already there as a divine spark, or whether "even the innermost subject must pass away" and admit God as the "the wholly other", with the human hearts is no more than "the paper or parchment where God inscribes with

his finger his immutable will and eternal wisdom" (Bloch 1960, p. 173). Whichever version we follow, it echoes a range of ghosts from the first centuries of Christianity, where the precise nature of Christ had not yet been fully clarified, and a variety of options ranging from what we could call docetic/gnostic were much more prevalent than is often readily acknowledged—especially in the text which would be canonized as John's Gospel. It is in John's prologue that we have the text (NRSVA): "And the Word became flesh and lived among us", with "among" being a somewhat unusual, yet universally accepted translation of the preposition *en*, in. Müntzer's statement from Franck, that "the Word incarnated in us" and Haferitz's "God speaks his holy word, that is, his only begotten Son into the inward parts of the soul" both reflect such an understanding, namely that the becoming flesh of God's word was not (exclusively) in his son, but in humanity.¹⁴ John's apocalyptic epistemology, where the hearers hear the voice of the son, and will be saved, is very close to Müntzer's notion of the church.

Another possible reason for Bloch's fascination with Müntzer is Bloch's interest in history. As Moir points out, "Bloch understood human beings as temporal beings, whose orientation towards the future can clearly be perceived in the material traces of the utopian imagination left over from the past" (Moir 2019, p. 104). An excellent example of this is the utopian hermeneutics practiced by Bloch in search of the revolutionary traces in the biblical texts.¹⁵ In a different context, but no less applicable, Moir notes that as was the case for Walter Benjamin, also for Bloch the "material traces" of past injustices, i.e., lost battles, downtrodden resurrections, and executed revolutionaries constitute a "utopian surplus", "inscribed in matter as knowledge of the possibility of utopia, and strive towards it as flowers turn towards the sun" (Moir 2019, pp. 120–21).

The repression of these impulses is nearly as strong in favour of an ideologically sanitised history, as Bloch points out in *Spirit of Utopia*:

And of course, as though one had not been burned badly enough, this is how it remains even today. The War ended, the Revolution began and with it, seemingly, the open doors. But correct, these soon closed again. The black-marketeer moved, sat back down, and everything obsolete drifted back into place. The profiteering farmer, the mighty grand bourgeois truly put out the fire in places, and the panicked petit bourgeois helps to enfeeble and encrust, as always. Nonproletarian youth itself is more coarse and stupid, has its head thrown further back than any youth before; the universities have become true burial mounds of the spirit, hotbeds of "Germany, awaken!" and filled with the stink of rigidity, corruption and gloom. [. . .] *They reenact that Restoration's recuperation, when the cloddish slogans, the corporative state were recalled; when the traditionalism of Vaterland was rampant against the truly Christian, indeed even quite properly medieval idea of humanity; when that insensible Romanticism appeared that forgot Munzer yet revered the junk of heraldry, that ignored the true German popular tradition, the Peasant's War, and saw only knights' castles rising into enchanted, moonlit nights. Once again, predictably, the writer helps apply the brakes; indeed, Expressionism's former priests-incinerating what they had just recently exalted-rush to help incompetent literary homesteaders patch together misrepresentations from the tasteful ruins of the past, in order to bar the way for the vitally formative sensation of the future, of the city, of the collective; in order to insert the reaction's black market deception into a better ideology; in order to make their lamentable hygiene, their doubly imitative Romanticism absolute.*¹⁶

Such forces of rewriting history make the hermeneutics of utopia all the more necessary, and breaking through the crust and rekindling the fire. This is what has drawn Bloch to Thomas Müntzer. In the life and fate of Thomas Müntzer, Bloch can demonstrate the understanding of history connected to the submerged history of utopia. To be sure, we can understand Müntzer from the perspective of the knights' castles, which is what we are encouraged to do in the liberal framework. But we should, as Bloch shows us, work against such a diachronic dislocation, and strive to understand events as witnesses to life at

a meta-historical level.¹⁷ For Bloch, Müntzer is an embodiment of the realm of meta-history. A force perhaps not always visible to the naked eye, but always present in the course of history.

5. Conclusions

In the social turmoil that was the reformation, a number of visions for the future emerged. In this article, I have focussed on the competing visions of Thomas Müntzer and Martin Luther, and the Reformation that prevailed. However, Ernst Bloch's utopian hermeneutic dug out Thomas Müntzer from the rubbish pile of bourgeois history, and uses Müntzer as an example or manifestation of his utopian hermeneutics. Bloch thus represents a different path in the reception history of Thomas Müntzer than that of the GDR, although wrote at a time when he saw the Revolution in Russia as the advent of Utopia.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Notes

¹ Both analysed by Friedrich Engels in (Engels 1982, pp. 327–58; Engels 1960, pp. 3–108).

² See the interesting and clear analysis of the concept of the “early bourgeois revolution” in historical research in the GDR in Bauer (2019).

³ Engels (1978, p. 419). See also Kautsky (1895, pp. 21–22). Take note also of Kautsky's important point that Luther's betrayal did not lead to the defeat of the peasants, nor did his joining the princes mean their victory. No individual, notes Kautsky, however powerful, could orchestrate the power-relations of the classes, and Luther's decision should be seen as joining the victorious side rather than occasioning it. Kautsky (1895, p. 22).

⁴ Kautsky's words, Kautsky (1895, p. 12).

⁵ Duke Johann, Elector Prince Johann Friedrich, Dr. Gregor Brück, called Pontanus, the Chancellor of the Electorate of Saxony, Dr. Hans von Grefendorf, Elector Saxony's councillor, the castle owner Hans Zeiß, as well as the mayor and council of Allstedt.

⁶ Unless otherwise indicated, the English translation of Müntzer's works are taken from Matheson (1988).

⁷ Paul's letter was written to the Christian congregations in Rome, and thus deals specifically with the relation to the Roman authorities of the first century, but has come to be a statement of the position of the church over against the state. See the brief comments by Paul Tillich on the politico-theological abuse of this text in his chapter on The Kingdom of God within History in his Systematic Theology. Tillich (2011, pp. 388–89). See Voelz (1998).

⁸ To Frederick the Wise, written in Allstedt, 4 October 1523, letter 45 (pp. 67–70) in Matheson (1988). The second letter is on behalf of the Council and commons of Allstedt to Duke John of Saxony, 14 June 1524, letter 50 (pp. 79–81) in Matheson. For the German versions see Bräuer and Kobuch (2010, pp. 199–207, 252–56).

⁹ Amberger (2013). For a more general overview see Moir (2019, pp. 125–28).

¹⁰ In his article, mentioned earlier, Eckhart Gillen reports that the artist Werner Tübke who painted the panorama had learned much from Bloch's study, and that Bloch's study was the first study of Müntzer since 1842. Gillen (2011, p. 115, n30).

¹¹ In his book, Bloch has long paragraphs of Müntzer quotations, assembled from various writings, but not indicated as such.

¹² I have not been able to find this quotation in Müntzer's works, but this is found in a list made by Sebastian Franck on what would be regarded as heretical statements by the “Papist Church”, Franck (1531, p. 161). See quotation in Bloch (1960, p. 164).

¹³ This quote, while presented as one by Müntzer, is actually from a sermon by Simon Haferitz, one of Müntzer's disciples. See Haferitz, Simon, Ein Sermo[n] vom Fest der heiligen drey König [Eilenburg] https://dhh.thulb.uni-jena.de/receive/ufb_cbu_00011584 (accessed on 29 June 2023) p. 11. For an analysis of this sermon and Haferitz's reliance on Müntzer and Johannes Tauler, see Evener (2015).

¹⁴ I have analysed John's gospel following a non-gospel trajectory to bring out some of the debates of the nature of Jesus in early Christianity. See Petterson (2016).

¹⁵ See Boer's chapter on Bloch and the Bible in Boer (2007).

¹⁶ Bloch (2000, pp. 235–36). My emphasis.

- ¹⁷ This dual view of history over against History is also present in Jameson (1981). For an attempt to deploy this meta-historical hermeneutics to archival research, see Petterson (2021).

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