

# Introduction

What does the ancient metaphor of divine glory have to do with the poststructuralist trope of the “im-possible?”<sup>1</sup> Provisionally, the “impossible” is a term employed by philosopher Jacques Derrida to refer to something that is not formally impossible, such as the proverbial “squared circle,” but, rather, is impossible within the given structures of the world. An example here might be a true democracy where each person’s voice carries equal importance. Yet the dash in “im-possible” also denotes a sense of possibility or hope, that perhaps the structures of the world that perpetuate injustice, for example, might be overcome and thus make the im-possible become possible. Might there then be glory in the im-possible, and if so, does that mean that a passion for the im-possible is a passion for divine glory? Or are divine glory and the im-possible no more related than Jerusalem and Athens—a theological concept and a philosophical notion, respectively, which should not be intertwined? Preliminarily I offer that the abyss of im-possibility suggested by Martin Luther’s *theologia crucis*, or theology of the cross, might help us frame divine glory in terms of *transformation* rather than *fulfillment*.

A root question here is whether there is space within which a poststructuralist theology might germinate from deeply Protestant sources. After all, poststructuralist thought is generally understood to be an exploration into the distances and uncertainties between words and their meanings. The image perhaps most closely associated with Protestant theology, meanwhile, is that of the revealed word of God, a direct communication from the divine that would seem to brook no uncertainty. Indeed, there has been much recent theological discussion mining the poststructuralist affinities with the Christian apophatic tradition of unsaying, but the historical sources employed in these discussions are generally patristic, medieval, or Roman Catholic. Those that have brought in Protestant traditions tend to be more critical of the poststructuralist project.<sup>2</sup>

1. We will turn more fully to what is meant by “im-possible” in chapter 4.

2. The Radical Orthodoxy movement, for example, tends to have a particular fondness for Patristic thought. Catherine Keller, meanwhile, draws upon Nicholas of Cusa, while Shelly Rambo engages the work of Hans Urs von Balthasar. There are also a few examples of theologians that bring poststructuralist thought together with the theology of Karl Barth, such as Christopher Boesel and Graham Ward. Also,

It might seem, then, that constructing a poststructuralist Protestantism is an im-possible task. That is, it is not formally impossible; rather, it is made impossible by the abstract structures created by humans and so cannot be done without an opening or rupturing of those structures. Yet it is specifically here, in the need for rupturing, that I suggest we can turn to the very cradle of Protestant thought to find the necessary tools for making the im-possible possibility of a Protestant poststructuralist theology possible. By turning to the interconnected concepts of a theology of the cross, the hidden God, and divine glory that haunt Martin Luther's thought, we might find the kind of shattering event of God that unleashes the transformative potency of divine im-possibility.

As we shall see, the theology of the cross is considered by many to be the core concept of Martin Luther's theology. Yet it is hardly a simple concept. It is comprised of a complex set of concepts hotly debated by scholars. For now, I would suggest that "a critique of misplaced glory" is a reasonable one-line definition of Luther's theology of the cross. In the Heidelberg Disputation, generally acknowledged as Luther's clearest explanation of a theology of the cross, he famously distinguishes between a "theologian of the cross" and a "theologian of glory." The cross, he contends, disrupts all human pretensions to glory. Rather, the cross tells us to look to God hidden with Jesus in his suffering, which is precisely where there seems to be no glory, in order to see God's glory rightly. In the glory of God with us in suffering, God does the impossible. For Luther, the impossible work of God is specifically framed in terms of God offering justification. In his treatise "The Freedom of a Christian," for example, he writes of human attempts to justify oneself before God, "That which is *impossible* for you to accomplish by trying to fulfill all the works of the law—many and useless as they all are—you will accomplish quickly and easily through faith."<sup>3</sup> For our purposes here the salient point is that God's glory, understood rightly, according to Luther, brings forth something impossible.

A connecting point between Luther and poststructuralist thought comes through the work of John D. Caputo, a contemporary American philosopher and theological thinker. Caputo appeals to the concept of a *theologia crucis*, though not specifically as Luther understands it, in arguing for recognizing the "weakness of God" to effect the kingdom of God in bringing justice into a world riddled with injustice. That is, he wishes to view the name "God" as referring to a provocative force agitating for and calling out for

as we shall see in the first chapter, Vitor Westhelle makes some connections to critiques of ontotheology in contemporary Continental philosophy, particularly in its Heideggerian form.

3. Martin Luther, "The Freedom of A Christian," in *Three Treatises*, trans. W. A. Lambert, rev. Harold J. Grimm (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970), 283. Italics added.

justice to be realized rather than as referring to someone or something with agential power of its own. Despite this insistence on God as a weak force, for Caputo, faith is an active hope that the impossible possibility of a transformation toward justice in the world may actually occur. There is no guarantee of this happening for Caputo, and so he uses Derrida's locution "im-possible," to mark the relationship between possibility and impossibility within the concept of hope. As we shall find, Caputo's hope for the im-possible possibility of transformation could be read as the signifier of a passionate desire for the messianic coming of divine glory into a world that lacks it. Might we begin, then, to see a certain linkage between glory and im-possibility in the thought of both Caputo and Luther?

Yet also enfolded within the thought of each is an element of the abysmal in the divine. In Luther's later work, for instance, he expands his understanding of the hidden God to include an abysmal element beyond revelation in Christ as well as hidden in Christ's suffering. For Luther, such an encounter with the murky mysteries of the unrevealed divine inspires only terror and brings no hope. Thus he primarily urges looking away from such depths, even as he steadfastly maintains their existence. Caputo, meanwhile, based on his engagement with traditions of negative theology, assumes as a constitutive element of this weak theology a sense of God as abyss or "beyond being." One might even say he revels in the openness and potentiality brought forth by such a void. It is, in fact, the abysmal God that he fervently desires "might come."

Sounding out resonances between Luther and Caputo, I intend to construct a theology of the cross that stands within the Lutheran lineage of a *theologia crucis* but also within Caputo's deconstructive sensibilities. This theology of the cross functions to critique misplaced glory, as Luther's does. While Luther challenges human pretensions to glory in his theology of the cross, my aim is to critique a *theology* or *logic of fulfillment* in construing glory. Rather, I will advocate a *theology* or *logic of open transformation*, a concept more in line with Caputo's thought. Such a theology is a thoroughly eschatological enterprise, but not with an eschatology that purports to have any clear vision of the end of time. It is, rather, an eschatology of rupture, of the event of God opening im-possible spaces within the world unpredictably, so that the kingdom of God might, ever so fragilely, be manifested.

Such a theology will attempt to affirm both ends of two dyads suggested by Luther's *theologia crucis*. The first dyad is between God as chaotic abyss, sometimes called by contemporary Luther scholars "Hiddenness II," and God as revealed in Jesus' suffering on the cross, also known as "Hiddenness I" in much current academic debate. The second dyad is the *theologia crucis* as describing

on the one side a personally transformative encounter with the divine, or “personalist” position, and on the other as advocating a “contextualized public theology.” We will explore the debates surrounding both of these dyads in chapter 1. We can then map how various thinkers working under Luther’s influence fit onto the grid suggested if we understand the first dyad as an  $x$  axis and the second as a  $y$  axis. This grid provides four basic positions for a *theologia crucis*: Personalist/Hiddenness I, Personalist/Hiddenness II, Public Theology/Hiddenness I, and Public Theology/Hiddenness II. It may be helpful to have this grid represented visually:

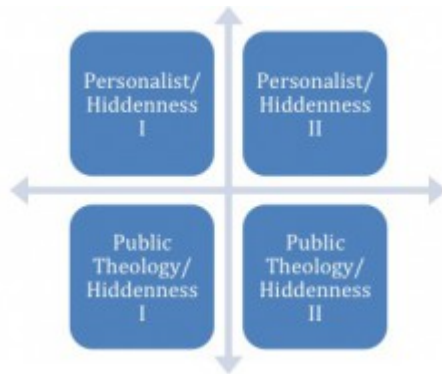


Chart 1-1.

I will then suggest a contemporary understanding of *theologia crucis* that can affirm something of each of the four positions. To do so, I will argue for understanding the divine as having two distinct elements. Such a division would hearken to Luther’s distinction between the hidden abysmal God and the God revealed in Christ, yet also draw upon Caputo’s greater willingness to engage the God of the abyss. Each of these elements has both personal and public theological significance, thus creating a four-quadrant theology of the cross similar to my diagram of the approaches to interpreting Luther’s *theologia crucis* that we have just seen. Specifically for my proposal, I will draw on the Gospel of Mark to suggest that the two regions within the divine be understood as a pair of silences: the silence of the cross and the silence of the empty tomb. These silences characterize the two regions of the divine. Divine glory may be found in the inseparability of the two. Such a theology understands faith in Christ as an anticipation of the im-possible arising out of divine glory beyond the abyss of suffering known through the cross. This faith clings to

the messianic potential of both personal transformation and the hope of justice coming into the world, but without guaranteeing that either will ever actually arrive. Before continuing with this argument, however, let us first sketch some of the background debates and nuances surrounding the terms “glory” and “theology of the cross.”

## GLORY

If a theology of the cross acts as a critique of misplaced glory, it must grapple with the question of what it means to speak of divine glory. The biblical tradition is overflowing with references to God’s glory. A seminal account of biblical understandings of divine glory can be found in the first volume of Emil Brunner’s *Dogmatic Theology*. In particular, he notes the surprising linguistic transformation that occurred when the Greek word *doxa* was used to translate the Hebrew word *kabod*. In the Hebrew Scriptures, *kabod* refers to the amount of honor or esteem a person has in relation to their position within creation. It can theoretically be used for all people, but is especially used for kings.<sup>4</sup> Most often, though, *kabod* refers to God. Biblical scholar Sverre Aalen writes that, “When it is used of God, it does not mean God in his essential nature, but the luminous manifestation of his person, his glorious revelation of himself.”<sup>5</sup> Thus *kabod* refers most often to God’s self-revelation. There is also an elemental sensibility to *kabod*, as this glory could be perceived through winds and thunder, in the pillar of cloud and flame that led the Israelite people through the wilderness, and even in more mundane phenomena. Indeed, the *kabod* of God gives earthy ordinariness a new dimension.

The Hebrew *kabod* made its way into the Septuagint as *doxa*. In secular Greek *doxa* is usually translated “view, opinion,” though it can also be translated, “esteem, honor.” Once it was used in the Septuagint, *doxa* took over the meaning of *kabod*, so much so that the usual secular meaning never appears in the New Testament writings. There are some New Testament instances of *doxa* meaning “esteem” or “honor,” though, such as Romans 2:7, 10 and 1 Timothy 1:17. More often, however, the meaning is influenced by *kabod*, referring to the appearance or manifestation of a person, and stressing the impression this creates on others.<sup>6</sup>

4. H. Hagermann, “*doxa*,” in *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 3 vols., ed. Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 1:345.

5. Sverre Aalen, “Glory, Honor,” in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, 4 vols., ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 2:45.

The word is commonly used in the New Testament, appearing over 160 times. There is often an eschatological element to the New Testament understanding of *doxa* that includes an expectation of a revelation of glory at the end of time, but that is not the extent of its location. Aalen writes, “Glory reveals itself from heaven, but its goal is the transfiguration of the created world and mankind.”<sup>7</sup> Divine glory makes a difference in the here and now as well as marking an expectation that the realization of the kingdom of God is still coming. Thus *doxa* acts as a real world power of transformation.

One other distinctive element of the New Testament’s use of *doxa* is often noted: it dares to use divine *doxa* in referring to Jesus. This is particularly true of the Gospel of John, which has the greatest concentration of uses of *doxa* within the New Testament corpus. Interestingly, however, the Gospel of Mark, to which we will turn in the final chapter, has few occurrences of *doxa*. In fact, there are only three instances: 8:38, 10:37, and 13:26.<sup>8</sup> The first and last of these are Jesus’ predictions of the Son of Man coming in glory, while in the middle occasion the sons of Zebedee ask to sit at Jesus’ right and left hand when he comes in glory. Thus these are all predictions and expectations of glory to come. The Markan text does not directly relate glory to Jesus or give specific indication of the fulfillment of those expectations of glory. Thus the connection between Jesus and *doxa* that is so strong elsewhere in the New Testament is left as a provocative hope in Mark. As my constructive work will glean from an interpretation of Markan theology, the distinctive Markan understanding of glory is worth bearing in mind.

For Brunner, meanwhile, “the glory of God is the sum-total and the unity of all that God shows forth, in the fullness of [God’s] revelation, of the realization of [God’s] sovereignty.”<sup>9</sup> The glory of God, then, is God reigning fully in the kingdom of God. Divine manifestation in the world is a necessary part of this glory, but Brunner gives particular emphasis to an eschatological dimension because he understands the end of time to be the moment of complete revelation where God’s manifestation comes to fullness. Indeed, he argues, “[Glory] designates above all the perfect revelation at the end of the ages—the manner of Divine Being, as it will be when the sovereignty of God, and communion with God, will be perfect, God with us and God in us, in its perfection.”<sup>10</sup> We see a logic of fulfillment employed here. Divine glory is above

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid., 2:48.

8. It is also used in 16:14, but this is generally considered to be a later addition to Mark.

9. Emil Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of God: Dogmatics, Vol. 1*, trans. Olive Wyon (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1950), 286–87.

all about a fulfillment of the world that can only occur outside the boundaries of time. In this logic, true glory comes only beyond our world and not in it. Yet do not such grandiose time-defying conceptions of glory bring us far from the depth dimension within the quotidian of *kabod*, or indeed of the real-world transformational power of *doxa*?

More recently, theologian Mayra Rivera has suggested that glory may be perceived in the material encounter between those who cry in suffering and those who respond to such cries. In her understanding, glory is the trace of a divinity who is a mysterious excess beyond being that impresses a call of concern for the Other upon us. She explains, “The cry of a hungry person and the groaning of creation manifest the persistence of glory, the astonishing fact that all the world’s callousness and violence have not overcome it.”<sup>11</sup> Thus even those who are weak and suffering have some access to glory. In fact, Rivera notes the theology of the cross articulated by Luther in the Heidelberg Disputation as a historical antecedent of this sense of divine glory being manifested in weakness and suffering.<sup>12</sup>

Such encounters with the Other in need may in fact provide a revelatory moment in which the divine may be known, ventures Rivera, but never in a fully graspable way. “Incomprehension remains in revelation,” she suggests, “not because some knowledge is kept hidden but because knowledge is never fully adequate for the glory’s significance.”<sup>13</sup> Glory, then, comes about out of relationship among and with those who are suffering. As a relationship, it cannot be contained by knowledge but, rather, it contains the elusive mysteriousness of the Other.

Following Rivera, I venture that glory has to do with God being made known through interactions within the world. Tentatively, then, we can understand it as referring to a moment of transformation; anticipating Caputo’s terminology for “God” we might say that the word *glory* harbors an event of transformation whereby the impossible becomes possible and thus God is made real in the world. Part of this transformation, I would add, is a kind of solidarity with the Other in suffering that does not trample over the ungraspable uniqueness of the Other.

10. *Ibid.*, 287.

11. Mayra Rivera, “Glory: The First Passion of Theology?” in *Polydoxy: Theology of Multiplicity and Relation*, ed. Catherine Keller and Laurel C. Schneider (London: Routledge, 2010), 176.

12. *Ibid.*, 184. The reference to Luther is not part of Rivera’s main argument and she does not develop the details of Luther’s thought. Rather, in a note she points to the resonances between the material she is working with and Luther’s position.

13. *Ibid.*, 177.

The New Testament connotation for *doxa* does include an eschatological element of an expectation of divine revelation at the end of history. I suggest we understand this as a messianic hope, whereby cries for and of the suffering encompass a plea for comfort and, indeed, a recognition of a divine desire for a justice that brings comfort to the oppressed and suffering, but with no guarantee or even likelihood that such justice will ever come to fruition. That is, divine glory may indeed have an element of watchfulness of divine revelation to come, but such revelation cannot be separated from its effects in history. Thus glory should not be understood extra-historically, even if it is understood with an eschatological component; rather, the eschatological dimension of glory is construed via a logic of open transformation. Thus I contend that it is a misuse of the concept of glory to employ it in serving concerns detached from fleshly existence. Glory, rather, has to do with the manifestation of the divine within the nitty-gritty of the world, a point inherent in Luther's *theologia crucis*. Indeed, I propose that God's glory might be found in the opening of im-possible new possibilities for justice in the world.

#### LUTHER'S *THEOLOGIA CRUCIS*

Luther's *theologia crucis* is an elusive concept. As Lutheran theologian Vitor Westhelle has noted, it is more a theological disposition than a static doctrine.<sup>14</sup> It combines an interconnection of a variety of difficult concepts, including the cross, God's hiddenness, the experience of despair and godforsakenness, and faith. Making things more complex, each of these components has a variety of different meanings for Luther. As we have already seen, he employs two different meanings for the "hiddenness" of God. In fact, he sometimes uses both meanings within the same treatise. The early understanding of hiddenness, which has come to be known as Hiddenness I, involves God hidden by working through the opposite of where humans tend to expect God, such as in the midst of suffering rather than grandiose glory. The form of hiddenness Luther addresses in his later work, Hiddenness II, is a more abysmal sense of the divine. As a further example, Luther also uses the word *cross* at different times to mean both the historical cross on which Jesus was crucified and contemporary experiences of suffering. Yet working through these double meanings we can find a hermeneutic that is essential to Luther's theological vision—one that can break new ground in contexts far from Luther's own.

14. Vitor Westhelle, "Use and Abuses of the Cross: The Reformation, Then and Now," *Trinity Seminary Review* 28, no. 2 (Summer-Fall 2007): 84.



Given the ambiguities within the doctrinal cluster known as Luther's *theologia crucis*, it is perhaps no surprise that there is among scholars no agreed-upon definition of his theology of the cross. Indeed, even the centrality of the concept to his thought is debated by some.<sup>15</sup> While I will shortly review the various descriptions of Luther's theology of the cross, my intention is not to side with any particular position in its claims to have uncovered the "authentic" *theologia crucis*. Rather, for me, the strength of engaging Luther's thought is the fact that it is so obviously complex and even conflicting that it cannot be reduced to a single vision. Instead, there are a variety of schools of interpretation that are each valid interpretations of Luther. This is an example of Caputo's contention that everything boils down to hermeneutics. It is my proposal that we can draw insights about Luther's thought and, more importantly, about God through each of the schools of interpretation at various times and in various contexts.

I am not so much interested here in the historical critiques of Luther's *theologia crucis* as I am with drawing upon its force field in order to construct a contemporary *theologia crucis* that brings together elements of this received tradition with more current discussions and concerns as well as recent biblical scholarship. I wish to engage the tensions between different approaches to Luther's thought, and find how the tensions have been manifest, nuanced, and expanded upon by different facets of the Lutheran tradition. While I am particularly dealing with tensions between interpretations, these tensions are rooted within the specific doctrinal locus of the *theologia crucis*. The details of that locus will be treated later, but in broad terms the constructive import of Luther's *theologia crucis* lies in its critique of misplaced glory. It is a critique we will find that Luther himself does not always sustain, but even the places where his turn to glory is problematic his positions point to some provocative potential.

15. Michael Root, for instance, points to the "thin textual basis" for the theology of the cross, arguing that it was not a primary concern of Luther's, given the few references he made to it and the scant attention paid it by pre-twentieth-century Lutheran theologians, as I will outline below. See his "The Work of Christ and the Deconstruction of Twentieth-Century Lutheranism," presented at the 31st Annual Symposium on the Lutheran Confessions, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN, Jan. 17–18, 2008, available at <http://mroot.faculty.ltss.edu/RootFrWne.pdf>.

SCHOOLS OF INTERPRETATION OF LUTHER'S *THEOLOGIA CRUCIS*

Those looking into the details of Luther's *theologia crucis* quickly find themselves crossing a minefield of scholarly debate. Even applying the term *theologia crucis* to much of Luther's thought is somewhat controversial. The terms "theology of the cross" or "theologian of the cross" appear in only four of Luther's works: Lectures on Hebrews (early 1518), *Asterisci Lutheri adversus Obeliscos Eckii* (March 1518), the Heidelberg Disputation (April 1518), and the Explanations to the 95 Theses (August 1518). It can hardly escape notice that, along with the appeal to a theology of the cross, these works also all share being dated 1518. It would seem, then, that Luther found the designation important enough to use explicitly in only one year of his life. This led to a traditional view that the theology of the cross was a minor aspect of Luther's theology left over from medieval influences that he moved beyond after his early works.<sup>16</sup> Yet, starting with Walther von Loewenich in the 1920s, a variety of Luther scholars have claimed that the *theologia crucis* remains a key concept throughout Luther's works.

Because of the difficulties in terminology and in systematizing Luther's unsystematic thought, there are a variety of schools of interpretation of Luther's theology of the cross. Philip Ruge-Jones, in the first chapter of his book *Cross in Tensions: Luther's Theology of the Cross as Theologico-social Critique*, gives an excellent overview of these major strands of interpretation. I specifically intend to draw from the tensions between two of the schools of interpretation, and so I will give a brief sketch of his description of them here.

The first interpretive family Ruge-Jones points to is what he calls the "Crisis or Conflictive Theology of the Cross," and includes Loewenich and Paul Althaus. For Loewenich, Ruge-Jones writes, "The starting point . . . is the recognition that Luther's theology of the cross was forged in the midst of a public struggle with the church of his day."<sup>17</sup> Luther's theology, then, functioned as a critique against the church and its claims to power and authority. It is a public theology and not about personal piety. Loewenich himself writes, "We dare never forget that Luther's theology of the cross cannot be dismissed as the brooding product of a lonely monk, but it proved its worth for him when he stepped forth into an unprecedented battle."<sup>18</sup> Luther's

16. See B. A. Gerrish, "To An Unknown God?: Luther and Calvin on the Hiddenness of God," in *The Old Protestantism and the New: Essays on the Reformation Heritage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), for a short history of modern scholarship in regard to Luther's *theologia crucis*.

17. Philip Ruge-Jones, *Cross in Tensions: Luther's Theology of the Cross as Theologico-social Critique* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2008), 2-3.

*theologia crucis*, for Loewenich, is an epistemological claim: “The goal of my investigation was to show that the theology of the cross was a theological principle of knowledge for Luther,” he writes.<sup>19</sup> It is a way of searching for God, not in strength or preconceived notions of divinity but through an encounter with Christ humiliated on the cross. Luther’s theology of the cross for Loewenich, then, was what we might call a *contextualized epistemology*. To this point Althaus adds a connection between epistemology and ethics, writing, “For Luther, concern for the true knowledge of God and concern for the right ethical attitude are not separate and distinct but ultimately one and the same. The theology of glory and the theology of the cross each have implications for both [epistemology and ethics.]”<sup>20</sup> Ruge-Jones most closely aligns himself with this model, although as we shall see he calls for a reading of Luther that amplifies the social and political components even more acutely than the others of this school.

The second model Ruge-Jones points to is the “Proclamation Theology of the Cross.” Gerhard Ebeling, the most influential of twentieth-century Luther scholars, exemplifies this model in his focus on Luther’s linguistic innovation, including a verbal theology that holds “pairs of contradictory claims that are never synthesized, but always held in tension.”<sup>21</sup> Some such pairs include law/gospel, freedom/bondage, God hidden/God revealed, and omnipotent God/humbled God. Theological truth resides in the tension between the two poles. The role of the theologian is to make proper distinctions between the terms so that the proper functioning of each pole is properly understood. Justification, the centerpiece of Luther’s thought for Ebeling, occurs in the proclamation, for example, of the difference between the demands of God’s law and the freedom of God’s grace, so that through this word-event justification is effected. The theology of the cross, then, is a proclamation of the word of God that allows making a proper distinction between when God is to be identified by one side of a pairing or another. To this point Gerhard Forde later adds a bit of an epistemological twist, in that one can only make the proper distinctions when one has been saved by having an experience of the cross. Both see in Luther a word that speaks directly to the individual believers’ inner turmoil, regardless of the historical situation, rather than Loewenich’s sense of the *theologia crucis* as a

18. Walther von Loewenich, *Luther’s Theology of the Cross*, trans. Herbert J. A. Bouman, (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1976), 113.

19. *Ibid.*, 219.

20. Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther*, trans. Robert C. Schultz (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), 27, quoted in Ruge-Jones, *Cross in Tensions*, 12.

21. Ruge-Jones, *Cross in Tensions*, 15.

hermeneutic born out of a specific historical context that can be translated into new situations.

The various interpretations of Luther's thought will help in forming a framework for understanding subsequent theological development of the theme of a theology of the cross. Key issues from Luther's thought that help form this frame include his understanding of *Anfechtung* (often translated as "suffering") and faith, as well as two different forms of divine hiddenness, and the question of whether the *theologia crucis* is primarily aimed at an individual's relationship with God or if the personal relationship is embedded within a wider social critique. Each of these schools tend to side either with the personal side of an experience of the cross or to the social critique dimension. It is perhaps exegetically inevitable that one side or the other of the dyad be read more strongly. Yet constructively I wish to argue for the necessity of vigorously affirming each of the schools. Only by affirming each of them can we unlock the distinctive contribution of each of the four quadrants of approaches to the *theologia crucis*, and by so doing realize the extent of the radicality of its implications for both the individual and on sociopolitical issues.

In the first chapter, I will examine how Luther understands the major doctrinal issues embedded within his *theologia crucis* and how they work together in some of Luther's major relevant texts, especially the Heidelberg Disputation and "On the Bondage of the Will." I will then turn to contemporary theology that draws on Luther's *theologia crucis*. Particularly as we turn to the ethical implications of the *theologia crucis*, the divide between the personalist and the socially embedded readings of Luther will become apparent. In general, the personalist reading is favored by the Ebeling/Forde tradition, while the Loewenich/Althaus tradition tends toward the latter end of the dyad. Yet it is worth noting the lack of significance of Hiddenness II for any of the interpreters. They tend to ignore it (proclamation school), reject it (Ruge-Jones), or minimize it (Loewenich). No doubt Luther's warnings to stay clear of pondering the abyss have contributed to their focus on Hiddenness I. Yet if we imagine a grid with the axis made up of our dyads of personalist/public theology and Hiddenness I/Hiddenness II, we can begin to place the theologians we encounter within the field of thought suggested by Luther. For instance, Forde argues for a Personalist/Hiddenness I position, while Ruge-Jones advocates a Public/Hiddenness I position. Others that we encounter, such as contemporary Lutheran feminist theologians Deanna Thompson and Mary M. Solberg, read Luther in a Personalist/Hiddenness I fashion but advocate constructing a Public/Hiddenness I position.

Indeed, the grid becomes particularly useful in mapping later constructions of a *theologia crucis*. It provides a framework for understanding the moves made by thinkers in some way within the force field of Luther's thought. For instance, we could categorize Søren Kierkegaard's famous concept of the leap of faith in relation to God as "incognito"—that is, taking on the unrecognizable form of a servant—as an articulation of a Personalist/Hiddenness I understanding of a theology of the cross. In chapters 2 through 4, then, I will move to place other thinkers on the grid. In chapter 2, for example, I will examine the theology of Jürgen Moltmann as a well-crafted example of a contemporary Public/Hiddenness I theology. I will also draw from his thought the importance of including the resurrection as an essential component of a *theologia crucis* that has an effective ethical component. Further, Moltmann's use of Hegel's concept of godforsakenness as a modern form of *Anfechtung* is an additional useful tool in constructing a *theologia crucis*. Yet we also find in Moltmann a desire to overcome the abyss through an extra-historical coming of Christ in an out-of-this-worldly glory. That is, he employs a logic of fulfillment to posit an end of history when God will course through all things and thus bring creation to its glorious fulfillment.

By chapter 3 it will be time to venture onto the abysmal side of the grid. The Lutheran lineage is thinner here, often relegated to philosophy rather than theology proper. Yet it is a tradition, I would argue, deeply rooted in Lutheran modes of thinking. This line of thinking draws on the mystical esoteric contemplation of Jacob Boehme. Boehme, I suggest, can be understood as a Personalist/Hiddenness II thinker. Falling within this line of thinking, Paul Tillich is probably best understood as a Personalist/Hiddenness II thinker as well, although he comes the closest of anyone reviewed here to balancing multiple quadrants. Boehme and Tillich affirm the idea of tensions within the divine that in some ways allows for differences within the divine so that God both is and is not an abyss, allowing them to affirm something of the Hiddenness II side of the grid. Thus Boehme, for example, can affirm both the Hiddenness I and Hiddenness II ends of that dyad. Tillich follows this flexibility, adding in through his concept of *kairos* the potential for a political dimension. Yet both Boehme and Tillich understand the tensions within the divine to be ultimately resolved outside of time. That is, they have a form of the conception of glory that Brunner highlighted where there is a fullness of revelation that stands outside of the normal confines of this world that will overcome the abyss and dissolve the apparent contradictions into a perfect clarity. It is a glory that functions as a cheat code for solving an unsolvable riddle rather than a

this-worldly event of transformation, in much the same way as it does for Moltmann.

In chapter 4 I will turn to Caputo's deconstructive proposals. His thought lies fully on the abysmal side of the hiddenness dyad, while interestingly mixing personalist and public elements. In Caputo's use of the abyss, might we find tools for a challenge to the tradition of extra-historical glory? His theology of the weakness of God might not seem glorious to some. Instead of images of eternal glory, he bids us keep our focus on where we are—here and now—with an uncertain hope for justice that might come. Yet might this lack of grandiose glory actually be more appropriately glorious than the out-of-this-world glory that consistently creeps into the abysses of the others? I suggest so, though I also argue that Caputo's purely abysmal theologizing comes at the cost of the value of Hiddenness I for understanding the cross as a site of solidarity for those who suffer; a placeless place where the suffering saints may comfort one another and perhaps perceive the glory of God.

Having mapped the crosses and abysses of Moltmann, Boehme, Tillich, and Caputo, in the final chapter I will constructively argue for a *theologia crucis* that can affirm all four quadrants of the grid. That is, I will seek to construct a theology of the cross that attends to both personalist and public theology dimensions while also giving space for two regions in the divine in a manner similar to Luther's Hiddenness I and Hiddenness II. Such a theology of the cross will employ a logic of open transformation by affirming divine glory as a phenomena that occurs within the life of the world rather than as an eschatological fulfillment of an abyss. Glory in this sense may be flickering and uncertain, but a transformative event in which we may hope nonetheless. To engage this complex glory, I suggest we open our ears and turn to the silence of the cross, as well as the silence stemming from the encounter with the empty tomb, following Moltmann's insistence on the linkage between the cross and the resurrection. In the abyss of silence, I will argue, we may find intolerable suffering, but in such a placeless place we might perceive divine glory—that is, an event of this-worldly transformation whereby God might become real in the world—as well.