

The Revelations of Pseudo-Methodius and Scriptural Study at Salisbury in the Eleventh Century

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The *Revelationes* of Pseudo-Methodius (henceforth simply Pseudo-Methodius) was written in Syriac in about 690 as a response to Muslim advances against Byzantine Christianity.¹ A work of lurid and sensationalist anti-Islamic propaganda, it attempts to terrify Christians into action by depicting Islam within an apocalyptic framework that represents the seventh century as the end-time. Pseudo-Methodius derived its authority partly from its attribution to Methodius, bishop of Patara, who was martyred in 311, and partly by grafting itself onto biblical history. It was translated into Greek in about 700x710 and into Latin in about 732.² We now know of over thirty Greek and two hundred Latin manuscripts from the eighth through fifteenth centuries and from throughout Western and Eastern Europe.³

By the end of the Middle Ages there were four Greek and two Latin recensions of Pseudo-Methodius (henceforth R1 and R2), plus numerous translations from the Latin into vernacular languages, including English.⁴ The original Syriac version is represented in the Latin R1. With one exception to be discussed below, all copies of Pseudo-Methodius written in England, whether in Latin or in English, are R2. For some time I have been working on a reception history of Pseudo-Methodius in England, and what I have found is that unlike on the Continent, in England Pseudo-Methodius was apparently not read as an apocalypse. England was far enough away from Islam that Pseudo-Methodius never had the national, ethnic, political, or religious significance for England that it had for seventh-century Syria, where it originated, or for eighth-century Byzantium, where it was translated into Greek. Instead, in England Pseudo-Methodius seems to have been used as a patristic source for the study of Old Testament history.

The original Syriac version of Pseudo-Methodius narrates world history from Creation through the succession of empires (Alexander to Rome), then foretells the rise of Islam, the eventual triumph of the last Roman emperor, the coming of Antichrist, and the end of the world. R2 skips from the first mention of the Ishmaelites in Genesis to their return as the nations of Islam in the final world age, omitting the succession of empires. Various studies have shown the significance of Pseudo-Methodius on the Continent as an apocalypse that directly influenced Adso's *Libellus de Antichristo*, the *Visions of Daniel*, the *Cosmography of Aethicus Ister*, and possibly the Pseudo-Ephremian 'Sermo de fine mundi'.⁵ The role Pseudo-Methodius accorded to Alexander the Great, who imprisons Gog, Magog, and the 'unclean nations' until the end of the world, connected it to the medieval Alexander legend.⁶

Pseudo-Methodius is well known to intellectual historians and to theologians, but little has been written about its English reception.⁷ Charlotte D'Evelyn, Aaron Jenkins Perry, and Gerrit H.V. Bunt have studied the MB versions, and as part of her study, D'Evelyn briefly described the Latin versions. Comparing the Latin R2 text to MB uses of Pseudo-Methodius, which she found in direct translations as well as in texts that adapted Methodian material, D'Evelyn observed that later medieval texts in England limit themselves to Cain and Abel and their twin sisters Calmaria and Delbora, Jonitus the fourth son of Noah, dating of events in the first millennium, and the return of the Ishmaelites in the last world age.⁸ My question is why this is so: in other words, what explains the English preference for the biblical material in Pseudo-Methodius? Since it is not possible to survey the entire tradition in this brief essay, here I will focus only on how the earliest occurrences of Pseudo-Methodius in England may point the way to its later reception.

British libraries hold fifty-three of the Latin manuscripts of Pseudo-Methodius. Of these, twenty-four have their origin or provenance in England before the end of the Middle Ages.⁹ Others could be added from British medieval library catalogues, but in the interest of space I will ignore them here. In the MB period three vernacular versions were made.¹⁰ The two earliest Latin manuscripts from England, Salisbury Cathedral Library MS 165 and London, BL MS Royal 5.F.xviii, were copied at the Salisbury Cathedral scriptorium before 1100.¹¹ On the basis of incipits, only R2 is found in England, both in Latin and vernacular manuscripts, with only one exception to be discussed momentarily. This fact is apparently not widely known, since bibliographical

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surveys (e.g., the Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues) routinely cite the editions of Sackur or even de la Bigne, which contain R1 texts, rather than the editions of D'Evelyn and Prinz, which contain the correct R2 texts.¹²

As Salisbury was established only in 1075, Salisbury 165 and Royal 5.F.xviii were part of the earliest program of copying in the cathedral scriptorium. In her magisterial study of the Salisbury scriptorium in its first fifty years, Teresa Webber observes that the Salisbury scribes did occasionally obtain exemplars from two different textual traditions, using the second manuscript as an exemplar for further copying. The manuscripts at Salisbury were copied rapidly, many from foreign exemplars since the texts were not available in Anglo-Saxon England, and in some cases it is possible to show that all English copies of a text derive from a Salisbury exemplar.¹³

Although I cannot claim that the Royal manuscript is the exemplar for any other R2 copies, I can say that Salisbury 165 is the sole R1 text that I have found in or from England; and the Royal manuscript is the earliest R2 text that I have found in or from England.¹⁴ In the period Webber studies, there were two phases of copying, which Webber identifies in terms of two teams of scribes, Group I and Group II.¹⁵ The text of Pseudo-Methodius in Salisbury 165 belongs to Group I, while the text of Pseudo-Methodius in Royal 5.F.xviii belongs to both Group I and Group II, since it was copied by a Group I scribe into a booklet that otherwise belongs to Group II, suggesting the continued activity of that scribe in the second phase of copying.¹⁶ Thus, Salisbury 165 would be slightly earlier than Royal. It is therefore tempting to speculate that Royal was procured as a replacement and then used as an exemplar for further copying.

If the text of Pseudo-Methodius in Salisbury 165 was judged to need replacing, why was it? The booklet itself (fols 11r–22r) was clearly considered important enough to correct, as there are interlinear and marginal corrections, perhaps by the scribe who copied it. After the booklet containing Pseudo-Methodius was bound with the other booklets that comprise the manuscript, someone annotated the manuscript with the *nota* 'D.M.' (*dignum memoria*; literally, 'worthy with respect to memory'). It is one of about twenty-five Salisbury manuscripts that bear 'D.M.' marks written by this hand. Most of the 'D.M.' notes are in patristic *originalia*, and according to Webber their general function is to identify *sententiae* for excerpting. Webber admits that she is not able 'to discover any one criterion which accounts for all his choices of *senten-*

tiae,' but the pastoral, moral, and therefore potentially sermonic nature of the material marked 'D.M.' suggests to her that the notator may have been Archdeacon Hubald (active ca. 1078–99), who in turn may have been Webber's Group I scribe i, both a scribe and a corrector of a number of eleventh-century Salisbury books.¹⁷ This notator wrote the heading for the text of Pseudo-Methodius on fol. 11r. The text itself was written by Group I scribe xii.¹⁸

In Salisbury 165's Pseudo-Methodius, what was worthy of committing to memory? The 'D.M.' marks are symmetrically placed. The first is on fol. 14r, where Alexander encloses the unclean nations in the twin mountains known as the *ubera aquilonis*, or 'breasts of the north,' and the other is on 19v, where the unclean nations break forth at the end of the world.¹⁹ Since the difference between R1 and R2 is that R2 skips from the first mention of the Ishmaelites to their return as the Arabs (i.e., Muslims in the seventh century), it is immediately clear that the 'D.M.' marks do not indicate the difference between R1 and R2, since the Ishmaelites and unclean nations appear at very different points, the unclean nations occurring later both in past history and in future history. The Ishmaelites appear historically in the time of Isaac and eschatologically (because Pseudo-Methodius pretends to be 300 years prior to the seventh century) after the Christianization of Rome, whereas the unclean nations appear historically in the time of Alexander and eschatologically in the days of the Last Roman Emperor.

In R1 of Pseudo-Methodius, the unclean nations are said to be descended from Noah's son Japheth ('Sunt autem ex filiis Iapeth nepotes,' Salisbury 165, fol. 13v), whose cohort includes the biblical figures Gog and Magog: 'In novissimis vero temporibus secundum iezechielis prophetiam que dicit: In novissimo die in fine seculi exiet gog et magog in terra israhel' [fol. 14r: In the last times, according to the prophecy of Ezekiel, who says: on the last day in the final age, Gog and Magog will go forth into the land of Israel].²⁰ Magog is listed as a descendant of Japheth in Gen. 10:2. Gog and Magog are paired in Ezek. 38–9 as scourges through whom God will punish Israel. In Apoc. 20:7–9, Gog and Magog are the peoples of the four quarters of the earth who are gathered for battle by Satan when he is released from his prison in the last days, and who are immediately destroyed by a fire sent by God from heaven. Together these biblical chapters inform the section about the unclean nations in Pseudo-Methodius, providing not only Gog and Magog, but the place of their imprisonment in the mountains of the north (Ezek. 38:1–6), their assault on Israel in the last days (Ezek. 38:8,

16), and their return and destruction at the end of time (Apoc. 20:7–9). The unclean nations themselves are not biblical. According to Paul Alexander, they come rather from the Pseudo-Ephraem, and they are found in other apocalypses akin to Pseudo-Methodius.²¹

The 'D.M.' *nota* on fol. 14r is to the right of lines 17–18 on the page, where God instructs Alexander to imprison the unclean nations in the *ubera aquilonis*: 'Continuo igitur deprecatus [est] deum Alexander et exaudiuit eius obsecrationem et precepit dominus deus duobus montibus quibus est uocabulum ubera aquilonis' [Alexander implored God unremittingly, and he heard his entreaty; and the Lord God directed him to the two mountains which are called the breasts of the north]. Since the 'D.M.' *nota* is placed at a distance from the text and not connected to it with any kind of marking, it is unwise to assume that the 'D.M.' *nota* refers only to this one sentence. It may, for instance, refer generally to the entire passage about the unclean nations, which begins at the bottom of fol. 13v and continues through the top of 14v. The other 'D.M.' *nota*, on fol. 19v, could likewise refer generally to the entire passage about the unclean nations. The folio begins by characterizing the time of peace that Pseudo-Methodius predicts will occur after the defeat of the Ishmaelites. Then the gates of the north are opened and the nations enclosed by Alexander pour forth, wreaking havoc. At that point the Last Roman Emperor appears. The *nota* mark is in the far left margin across from lines 21–4: 'Emittet dominus unum principem militię suę et percutiet eos in momento temporis. Et post hæc descendet rex romanorum et commorabitur in ierusalem ebdomada temporum et dimidia' [The Lord will send the one who is foremost in his army, and he will smite them in an instant. And after this the king of the Romans will descend, and he will dwell in Jerusalem for a week and a half of times]. Thus in both cases the 'D.M.' mark is placed opposite references to kings.

As this last quotation shows, despite the neat symmetry of the passages about the enclosed nations, in R1 of Pseudo-Methodius, the Last Roman Emperor does not engage Gog, Magog, and the unclean nations. Instead, God dispatches the 'one who is foremost in his army,' perhaps the archangel Michael, to dispose of them 'in an instant.' Any typological relationship between Alexander and the Last Roman Emperor fails because the Last Roman Emperor is in fact reserved for battle against the Antichrist, or 'son of perdition,' who arises immediately after the appearance of the Last Roman Emperor: 'Et post hæc descendet rex romanorum et commorabitur in ierusalem ebdomada

temporum et dimidia, quod est decem annos et dimidium, id est mensibus sex temporum. Tunc apparebit filius perditionis' [fol. 19v: And after this the king of the Romans will descend, and he will dwell in Jerusalem for a week and a half of times, which is ten years and a half, which is six months of times. Then the son of perdition will appear].²²

The 'D.M.' marks suggest an interest in eschatology that is in keeping with what we already know about the development of scriptural studies in England after the Conquest. In the late eleventh century, English cathedrals witnessed a trend towards building collections in patristics, a renewal that spread to monastic houses in the twelfth century.²³ Salisbury in particular led this trend in cathedral libraries. William of Malmesbury says in *De gestis pontificum Anglorum* that Salisbury scholars were the most renowned for learning in all of England, and the evidence of surviving manuscripts bears this out, since Salisbury leads by far, followed by Canterbury, Exeter, and Durham.²⁴ About half of the books at Salisbury were patristic texts, and the collection was both broad and deep, formed out of *originalia* rather than extracts.²⁵ In her study of Salisbury manuscripts, Webber emphasizes that 'many of the texts copied at Salisbury were either not present in England before the Conquest, or were not widely available.'²⁶ For the most part, Salisbury's exemplars came from Normandy rather than from other English houses. The library at Salisbury was developed according to the recommendations of Cassiodorus in Book I of his *Institutiones*, which emphasized biblical and patristic study. The Cassiodorian renewal seems to have been a cathedral phenomenon rather than a monastic one. Salisbury was the first English library to attempt the program, which was also carried out more or less simultaneously by cathedral communities in Normandy such as Mont-Saint-Michel.²⁷

Nevertheless, despite the attention indicated by the 'D.M.' *notae*, the R1 text in Salisbury 165 was probably recognized as deficient for biblical study, and the 'D.M.' marks themselves may in fact provide a clue as to why the scriptorium supplied itself with the R2 in Royal 5.F.xviii. As mentioned earlier, R2 skips from the first occurrence of the Ishmaelites to their return in the last days. By ending its historical section at that point, R2 focuses only on biblical (and pseudo-biblical) history and eschatology, omitting secular history as represented in R1 by Alexander and the succession of empires. There are no enclosed nations in R2 until the last days. In both R1 and R2, the Last Roman Emperor, identified in R2 as a Christian king, arises in response to the Ishmaelites, identified in R2 as Saracens, defeats them, and ushers in a period

of peace.²⁸ At that point, the enclosed nations break forth, led by Gog and Magog. Since Gog, Magog, and the unclean nations have not been mentioned previously in R2, it is necessary now to identify them as the progeny of Japheth. As in R1, in R2 they are destroyed in an instant by an angel, although as in Apoc. 20:9, the agent of destruction is fire.²⁹ Thus, R2's handling of the enclosed nations is more in keeping with scripture, where they appear only in Apoc. 20 – that is, in the last days. Indicating this is possibly part or all of the intention of the 'D.M.' *notae* in Salisbury 165's Pseudo-Methodius.

Admittedly, this argument about Salisbury 165 has moved out on a conjectural limb. But there is other evidence that R2 was preferred in Salisbury, and later in England as a whole, because unlike R1 it was specifically aimed at scriptural study. The role of the R2 of Pseudo-Methodius in patristic studies at Salisbury can be explained partly by the long version of its prologue found in many manuscripts, which authorizes itself with claims that Methodius himself translated the text from Hebrew and Greek into Latin and that Jerome praised the book:

In Christi nomine incipit liber beati Methodii episcopi aeclesiae Patren[s]is et martiris Christi quam [i.e., quem] de hebreo et greco in latinum transfere curavit, id est de principio seculi et interregna gentium et finem seculorum. Quem illustrissimus virorum beatus Hieronymus in suis opusculis collaudavit. (Royal 5.F.xviii, fol. 29b).³⁰

[In the name of Christ, here begins the book of the blessed Methodius, bishop of the church of Patara and martyr of Christ, which he took pains to translate from Hebrew and Greek into Latin; that is, regarding the beginning of the world, the intervening kingdoms of the peoples, and the end of the world. The blessed Jerome, most noble of men, praised this book in his minor works.]

This pious fraud (which also misleads the reader about the *interregna gentium*) surely enhanced the status of R2, not only for the Salisbury canons but for many medieval readers, because it associated Pseudo-Methodius with books by Jerome such as the *Liber interpretationis hebraicorum nominum* that were a regular part of biblical study. Some later R2 manuscripts from England even show a variant prologue in which Jerome himself is said to be the translator into Latin.³¹ Significantly, the R2 prologue presents Methodius as the Latin translator of texts originally in the biblical languages Hebrew and Greek. In contrast, R1

begins with an address by an unidentified 'Petrus monachus,' whose self-presentation as a Latin translator of an originally Greek text puts the Latin R1 at a further remove from Methodius than the incipit of R2, where Methodius himself is the Latin translator:

... doctrina beati igitur Methodii martyris dicta de Greco in Latino transferre sermone curavi, et quoniam nostris sunt aptius prophetata temporibus, in quos finis saeculorum, sicut apostolus inquit, pervenerunt (1 Cor. 10:11) ut iam per ipsa quae nostris cernimus oculis vera esset credamus ea quae praedicta sunt a patribus nostris. Propter quod magis arbitratus sum hunc libellum de Greco in Latinum vertere laboravi.³²

[... I have taken pains, therefore, to translate sayings from the teaching of the blessed martyr Methodius out of Greek into Latin; and (I have done this) because the prophecies are more relevant to our own times, upon whom, as the apostle says, the end of the world has come, so that perhaps through those truths which we witness with our own eyes we may believe those things which were foretold by our fathers. Because I have perceived more, I have laboured to turn this little book from Greek into Latin.]

The R1 in Salisbury 165 probably disqualified itself because it lacked any sort of prologue at all to explain its origin or purpose. Its title, 'Liber Methodii Incipit,' written in majuscules above the first line of text, appears to have been added as an afterthought after the folio was written, rather than incorporated into the lineation of the page. The hand is wobbly and the line of letters is crooked. Since there is no evidence that Salisbury 165 ever left Salisbury Cathedral library or that it was ever used as an exemplar for other copies at the library, it seems likely that it was deemed inadequate for scriptural study, and a proper R2, with a prologue that explained its origin and pedigree, was acquired within a short time.

Having considered Pseudo-Methodius's two oldest witnesses in England, it is necessary to caution against assuming that a text's presence can be demonstrated only by its earliest known manuscript. One way of supplementing blank spaces in the manuscript record is through citation, allusion, adaptation, and other forms of intertextuality. Tom Hill's essay on the possible influence of Pseudo-Methodius on the West Saxon royal genealogies asks if the fourth son of Noah, inserted to provide an ancestor for Heremod (the same king who fig-

ures in *Beowulf*) in the genealogies, may be at least inspired by Ionitus from the *Revelationes*.³³ According to Pseudo-Methodius, in the 300th year of the third millennium, Noah sent his son Ionitus to the land of Eoam, where he went as far as the region of the sun, and there Ionitus received wisdom directly from God. He is said to be the inventor of astronomy and the teacher of Nebroth (who perhaps represents the biblical Nimrod), a giant descended from the line of Seth, and together they ruled.³⁴

The fourth son of Noah in the West-Saxon genealogies is at some remove from Pseudo-Methodius's Ionitus. Two manuscripts of the genealogies call him Hrapra and the third calls him Sceaf, and only two of the three identify this person as the son of Noah. The difference in names can be explained by genealogical manipulation.³⁵ All three use the same formula to identify him as being born on the ark – 'se wæs geboren on þære earce Noes' – but even though Pseudo-Methodius makes it clear that Ionitus was born after the Flood, the idea of a fourth son of Noah could hardly have come from another source.³⁶ The only other known possibility would be the Syriac *Book of the Cave of Treasures*, which was almost certainly unknown in England because it was never translated into Latin.³⁷ English monks could have seen manuscripts of Pseudo-Methodius either in their travels or by courtesy of loans. There might have been manuscripts in England before Salisbury 165 that are now lost. Whatever the case, the West-Saxon genealogies offer the tantalizing possibility that Pseudo-Methodius may have been known in England, at least indirectly, before the end of the ninth century, the date of the Parker Chronicle, even if it is not attested by manuscript evidence. If Pseudo-Methodius lies behind even a small part of the West-Saxon genealogies, then even at this early date it is being used as an aid to scriptural study rather than as an apocalypse. If it does not, at the very least the West-Saxon genealogies show an interest in the kind of information that was later satisfied by Pseudo-Methodius.

More concrete evidence of this interest, and support of the argument I have advanced about the Salisbury manuscripts of Pseudo-Methodius, may be found in the OE *Hexateuch* (or *Heptateuch*) in London, BL MS Cotton Claudius B.iv, from St Augustine's, Canterbury, a 'part-Bible' by several translators, including Ælfric, who was responsible for Genesis at least as far as chapter 22.³⁸ Unlike the other eight manuscripts of the *Hexateuch*, Cotton Claudius B.iv contains some thirty late OE notes and many more Latin notes, all of which were written by two hands. The general interest of these notes is historical, chronological,

onomastic, and genealogical; and the notes show wide reading in Roman, Greek, Jewish, and patristic authorities. N.R. Ker dates the notes by the earlier of the two hands, which are both in OE and Latin, to the mid-twelfth century.³⁹ Some of the notes by this hand (but not those by the later hand) contain material from Pseudo-Methodius, use of which ceases after the rise of Ishmael (Gen. 25), since at that point the historical account in Pseudo-Methodius diverges from that of Genesis. Not coincidentally, this is also where R2 departs from R1. Again, here is Pseudo-Methodius serving not as an apocalypse but rather as a source of supplemental information about the earliest period in biblical history.

In this chapter I have offered suggestions as to how the two earliest manuscripts of Pseudo-Methodius in Salisbury during the eleventh century may explain the preference for R2 of Pseudo-Methodius in England. I have also argued that from its first appearance in the eleventh century, Pseudo-Methodius was important in England for understanding biblical history. Before the existence of the two Salisbury manuscripts that bear witness to Pseudo-Methodius in England, the West-Saxon genealogies studied by Tom Hill show interest specifically in the descendants of Noah, an interest found also in Pseudo-Methodius. Not long after R1 was replaced by R2 at Salisbury, someone at Canterbury annotated the *Hexateuch* in Cotton Claudius B.iv with Methodian material that enabled the manuscript to be used for the study of biblical history. Without a manuscript stemma it is impossible to demonstrate a direct relationship between Royal 5.Fxviii, the first known R2 in England, and later copies of Pseudo-Methodius of English origin. However, given the pre-eminence of Salisbury for scriptural study in the early Anglo-Norman period, it is at least possible that some of the extant English manuscripts of Pseudo-Methodius were copied from the Royal manuscript or from an intermediary made from it.⁴⁰

NOTES

- 1 *Die syrische Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius*, ed. G.J. Rehrink, 2 vols, CSCO 540–1, *Scriptores Syri* 220–1 (Leuven: Peeters, 1993), 1:di–xodx.
- 2 *Die Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius: Die ältesten griechischen und lateinischen Übersetzungen*, ed. Willem J. Aerts and George A.A. Körtelkaas, 2 vols, CSCO 569–70, *Subsidia* 97–8 (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 1:1–35.
- 3 Greek manuscripts are listed in W.J. Aerts, 'Zu einer neuen Ausgabe der

- "Revelationes" des Pseudo-Methodius (Syrisch-Griechisch-Lateinisch), in *XXIV. Deutscher Orientalistentag vom 26. bis 30. September 1988 in Köln ausgewählte Vorträge*, ed. Werner Diem and Abdoljavad Falaturi (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1990), 123–30. Latin manuscripts are listed in Marc Laureys and Daniel Verhelst, 'Pseudo-Methodius, *Revelationes*: Textgeschichte und Kritische Edition; Ein Leuven-Groninger Forschungsprojekt,' in *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, ed. Werner Verbeke, Daniel Verhelst, and Andries Welkenhuysen, *Mediaevalia Lovaniensia* ser. 1, *Studia* 15 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1988), 112–36.
- 4 Anastasios Lolos, ed., *Die Apokalypse des Ps. Methodios*, Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie 83 (Meisenheim am Glan: Hain, 1976), 4, 26–40; Laureys and Verhelst, 'Pseudo-Methodius, *Revelationes*'; Otto Prinz, 'Eine frühe abendländische Aktualisierung der lateinischen Übersetzung des Pseudo-Methodios,' *DA* 41 (1985): 1–23 at 4–5.
 - 5 On Pseudo-Methodius as an apocalypse, see Paul Alexander's last work, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, ed. Dorothy deF. Abrahamse (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986); and also Walter Emil Kaegi, Jr., 'Initial Byzantine Reactions to the Arab Conquest,' *Church History* 39 (1969): 139–49; Francisco Javier Martinez, 'The Apocalyptic Genre in Syriac: The World of Pseudo-Methodius,' in *IV Symposium Syriacum, 1984: Literary Genres in Syriac Literature, Groningen-Oosterheessen, 10–12 September*, ed. H.J.W. Drijvers et al., *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 229 (Rome: Pontifical Institute for Oriental Studies, 1987), 337–52; Harnes Möhring, *Der Weltkaiser der Endzeit: Entstehung, Wandel und Wirkung einer tausendjährigen Weissagung*, *Mittelalter-Forschungen* 3 (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke, 2000), 54–104, 136–43, 321–49; G.J. Reinink, 'Pseudo-Methodius und die Legende vom römischen Endkaiser,' in *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology*, ed. Verbeke et al., 82–111; G.J. Reinink, 'Die syrische Wurzeln der mittelalterlichen Legende vom römischen Endkaiser,' in *Non Nova sed Novae: Mélanges de civilisation médiévale dédiés à Willem Noomen*, ed. M. Gosman and J. van Os (Groningen: Bouma's Boekhuis, 1984), 195–209; David J.A. Ross, *Alexander Historiatus: A Guide to Medieval Illustrated Alexander Literature*, 2nd ed., *Athenäum Monografien, Altertumswissenschaft, Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie* 186 (Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1988), 34–5. On Pseudo-Methodius's influence on other apocalypses, see Daniel Verhelst, 'La préhistoire des conceptions d'Adson concernant l'Antichrist,' *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 40 (1973): 52–103 at 94–7; Hermann Josef Frede, *Kirchenschriftsteller: Verzeichnisse und Sigel*, 4th ed., *Vetus Latina: Die Reste der altlateinischen Bibel* 1.1 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1995), 576; and G.J. Reinink, 'Pseudo-Methodius and the Pseudo-Ephremian "Sermo de fine mundi,"' in *Media Latinitas: A Collection of Essays to Mark the Occasion of the Retirement of L.J. Engels*, ed. R.I.A. Nip et al., *Instrumenta Patristica* 28 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1996), 317–21.
 - 6 Alexander, *Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, 188–9 (English translation of Syriac text, page 41); Ross, *Alexander Historiatus*, 34; Gerrit H.V. Bunt, *Alexander the Great in the Literature of Medieval Britain*, *Mediaevalia Groningana* 14 (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1994), 9. More broadly on the theme of Alexander's imprisonment of the unclean nations, see Andrew Rummy Anderson, *Alexander's Gate, Gog and Magog, and the Inclosed Nations*, *Medieval Academy of America Monographs* 5 (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1932).
 - 7 Katharine Scarfe Beckett devotes a chapter to Pseudo-Methodius in her recent book, *Anglo-Saxon Perceptions of the Islamic World*, CSASB 33 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Unfortunately, though, Beckett's argument about late Anglo-Saxon knowledge of Pseudo-Methodius is based on a mistake about the date of the text of Pseudo-Methodius in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 163, which she believes is eleventh-century rather than twelfth-century. The first part of Bodley 163 was known in Anglo-Saxon England (Helmut Gneuss, *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: A List of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100*, *MRTS* 241 [Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2001], no. 555), but Pseudo-Methodius occurs in the second part of the manuscript (fols 245–8v). The false notion that Bodley 163 is entirely from the eleventh century comes from N.R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (1957; repr. with a Supplement, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 151, which does not distinguish parts of the manuscript. Part 2 of the manuscript has most recently been dated to the early twelfth century by Karsten Friis-Jensen and James M.W. Willoughby, *Peterborough Abbey* (London: British Library, 2001), 6 and item BP8b.
 - 8 Charlotte D'Evelyn, 'The Middle English Metrical Version of the *Revelations* of Methodius: With a Study of the Influence of Methodius in Middle English Writings,' *PMLA* 33 (1918): 135–203 at 146; corrigenda in *PMLA* 34 (1919): 112–13.
 - 9 To the forty-eight from England in Laureys and Verhelst, 'Pseudo-Methodius, *Revelationes*,' I can add five in English libraries: Cambridge, University Library MS Mm.V.29, item 5, fols 119v–22v (s. xii, England?); Exeter, Cathedral Library MS 3514, item 1a, pp. 1–6 (s. xiii^{med}–xiii³⁻⁴, probably England); Salisbury, Cathedral Library MS 165, item 2, fols 11r–22r; Winchester, Cathedral Library MS 7, item 12, fols 112r–15v (s. xii/xiii–xiii^{med}, origin

- undetermined); York, Cathedral Library MS XVI.Q.14 (42), item 9, fol. 58r (s. xiii, origin undetermined). Sources: C. Hardwick and H.R. Luard, *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts Preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge*, 5 vols and an index vol. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1856–67), 4:357*; Gneuss, *Handlist*, no. 749; N.R. Ker and A.J. Piper, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, 5 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969–2002), 2:822, 4:585, 4:781.
- 10 There are one verse and two prose versions. The metrical version, in London, BL MS Stowe 953 (s. xv^{1–2}, Norfolk), is edited by D'Evelyn, 'The Middle English Metrical Version.' One of the prose versions, in London, BL MS Harley 1900 (s. xv) and San Marino, CA, Huntington Library MS HM 28561 (s. xv) (a manuscript unknown to Perry), is edited by Aaron Jenkins Perry, *Dialogus inter Militem et Clericum, Richard FitzRalph's Sermon 'Defensio Curatorum,' and Methodius 'De Bygynyng of þe World and þe Ende of Worldes'* by John Trevisa, EETS o.s. 167 (London: Oxford University Press, 1925). Although both manuscripts contain John Trevisa's translation of Ranulf Higden's *Polychronicon*, Perry established that Trevisa was not the translator of Pseudo-Methodius. The other prose versions are in London, BL Additional MS 37049 (s. xv) and in the now-lost Burleigh House manuscript owned by the Marquises of Exeter. Further see Perry, *Dialogus*, xv–xxvii, and Gerrit H.V. Bunt, 'The Middle English Translations of the Revelations of Pseudo-Methodius,' in *Polyphonia Byzantina: Studies in Honour of Willem J. Aerts*, ed. Hero Hokwerda, Edmé R. Smits, and Marinus M. Wosthuis, with the assistance of Lia van Midden, *Mediaevalia Groningana* 13 (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1993), 131–43.
- 11 See my entry, 'Ps Methodius, *Revelationes*,' in *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture: A Trial Version*, ed. Frederick M. Biggs, Thomas D. Hill, and Paul E. Szarmach, with the assistance of Karen Hammond, MRS 74 (Binghamton, NY: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1990), 33–4. Two other early manuscripts belong probably to the twelfth century: (1) Oxford, Bodleian Library Bodley MS 163 (Peterborough) is a composite manuscript whose text of Pseudo-Methodius is in a booklet (fols 228–49) that appears to be later than the rest of the manuscript (see above, note 7). (2) Oxford, St John's College MS 128, although dated to the beginning of the eleventh century in H.O. Coxe, *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum qui in collegiis aulisque Oxoniensibus hodie adseruantur*, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1852), 38–9, is put to the second half of the twelfth century by Otto Prinz, 'Eine frühe abendländische Aktualisierung,' 4, n. 17, on the advice of Bernhard Bischoff.
- 12 D'Evelyn's text is a transcription of Oxford, St John's College 128 with variants from Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Bodley 163. Prinz's text is based on three continental manuscripts plus St John's 128 and London, BL MS Royal 5.F.xviii. R1 incipit: 'Sciendum namque quomodo exeuntes Adam quidem et Evam [sic] de paradiso virgines fuisse.' Oldest manuscript: Zürich, Zentralbibliothek MS C 65, fols 80v–8v (St Gall, s. viii). R2 incipit: 'Sciendum namque, fratres karissimi, quomodo in principio ...' Oldest manuscript: Trier, Stadtbibliothek MS 564/806, fols 35r–49v (s. viii^{ca}).
- 13 Teresa Webber, *Scribes and Scholars at Salisbury Cathedral c. 1075–c. 1125*, Oxford Historical Monographs (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), 55, 45.
- 14 Identification of Salisbury 165 as R1 is based on my examination of the manuscript. I am grateful to S.M. Eward, Librarian and Keeper of the Muniments, Salisbury Cathedral, for permission to see it in May 1993. The date of the Royal manuscript is from a consideration of Webber, *Scribes and Scholars*, ch. 1, and dates proposed for the other surviving manuscripts.
- 15 Webber, *Scribes and Scholars*, 8–30, esp. 29–30.
- 16 Webber, *Scribes and Scholars*, 153 (no. 48), 145–6 (no. 9), 159 (no. 5).
- 17 Webber, *Scribes and Scholars*, 135, 132–9, esp. 138–9.
- 18 Webber, *Scribes and Scholars*, 153.
- 19 These passages correspond to *Sibyllinische Texte und Forschungen*, ed. Ernst Sackur (Halle: Niemeyer, 1898), 72–4, 91–3.
- 20 These passages correspond to *Sibyllinische Texte*, ed. Sackur, 72, 74. Here and elsewhere, the text shows variants unknown to Sackur, who for the second passage reads 'In novissimis vero temporibus secundum Ezechielem prophetiam, que dicit: In novissimo die consummationes [var. consummationis] mundi exiet Gog et Magog in terra Israel' [74: Truly in the last times according to the prophecy of Ezekiel, which says: 'On the last day of the end of the world Gog and Magog will go forth into the land of Israel']. In quoting from Salisbury 165 I have normalized punctuation and capitalization, and I have silently expanded abbreviations.
- 21 Alexander, *Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, 187.
- 22 The text here in Salisbury 165 at first appears incorrect, but rather it is hypercorrect where it describes the period of the Last Roman Emperor's rule. Sackur (92–3) reads: 'et domorabitur in Hierusalem septimana temporum et dimedia, quod est anni et dimedium, et cum supplebuntur decem et demedium anni, apparebit filius perditionis' [and he will make his dwelling in Jerusalem for a week and a half of times, which is of year and a half periods; and when ten and a half years are fulfilled, the son of perdition will appear]. In Sackur's text, each 'time' is a year and a half; seven of these make ten and a half years. In Salisbury 165, 'a week and a half of

- times' is directly converted into ten and a half years, but then a half year is defined as six months, apparently so as to avoid confusion with the half-time period in the phrase 'week and a half of times.'
- 23 R.M. Thomson, 'The Norman Conquest and English Libraries,' in *The Role of the Book in Medieval Culture: Proceedings of the Oxford International Symposium 26 September–1 October 1982*, ed. Peter Ganz, 2 vols, Bibliologia 3–4 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1986), 2:27–40 at 37–9.
- 24 William of Malmesbury: 'Clerique undecunque litteris insignes venientes, non solum libenter retenti, sed etiam liberaliter coacti ut remanerent. Denique emicabat ibi magis quam alias canonicorum claritas, cantibus et litteratura juxta nobilium' [The monks who were most outstanding in letters, coming from all over, were not only gladly retained, but they were even freely constrained to remain. Ultimately, the renown of the celebrated canons there spread equally for singing and for literature]; quoted from *De gestis pontificum Anglorum*, ed. N.E.S.A. Hamilton, Rolls Series 52 (London: Longman, 1870), 184. On eleventh-century English copying, see N.R. Ker, *English Manuscripts in the Century after the Norman Conquest*, The Lyell Lectures 1952–3 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1960), 7–8, and Thomson, 'The Norman Conquest and English Libraries,' esp. 33. On the unusual breadth and depth of the Salisbury canons' interests, see Webber, *Scribes and Scholars*, 32–4, 42–3, 75–81. Richard Gameson compares Exeter specifically to Salisbury in 'The Origin of the Exeter Book of Old English Poetry,' *ASE* 25 (1996): 135–85 at 158–9.
- 25 Webber, *Scribes and Scholars*, 31–2, 35, and ch. 2.
- 26 Webber, *Scribes and Scholars*, 45.
- 27 Webber, *Scribes and Scholars*, 31–7. The renewed copying in eleventh-century England may not have been entirely due to the Norman Conquest. J.E. Cross, 'Hiberno-Latin Commentaries in Salisbury Manuscripts,' *Hiberno-Latin Newsletter* 3 (1990): 8–9, demonstrated that a number of Salisbury manuscripts contain hitherto undetected Irish exegetical material.
- 28 Texts are in Sackur, *Sibyllinische Texte*, 88–91 and D'Evelyn, 'Middle English Metrical Version,' 200.
- 29 This passage is in D'Evelyn, 'Middle English Metrical Version,' 201.
- 30 Quoted from George F. Warner and Julius P. Gilson, *Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Old Royal and King's Collections*, 4 vols (London: British Museum, 1921), 1:126. Despite its inaccuracy the phrase 'et interregna gentium' (literally, 'and the intervals between the reigns of the people') is found in other R2 prologues, such as Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Bodley 163 and Oxford, St John's College MS 128 (quoted in D'Evelyn, 'The Middle English Metrical Version,' 192). Some R2 prologues omit it – for example, the text in Prinz, 'Eine frühe abendländische Aktualisierung,' 6. The MB prose versions use the R2 prologue, including 'et interregna gentium,' either translating the prologue entirely into English (London, BL Harley MS 1900, fol. 21b; San Marino, Calif., Huntington Library MS 28561, fol. 21a) or beginning in Latin and then switching into English (London, BL MS Additional 37049, fol. 11a). Texts are given in Perry, *Dialogus*, xv, xxv, and xxiv.
- 31 For example, Cambridge, University Library MS Mm.V.29, item 5 (s. xii), fol. 119v (given incorrectly as 118b in the CUL catalogue): 'Libellus Bemetoli quem beatus Jeronimus de greco in latinum transtulit vel composuit' [The little book of 'Bemetolus' that the blessed Jerome translated or put together out of Greek into Latin].
- 32 *Sibyllinische Texte*, ed. Sackur, 59–60. Emphases in Sackur. Vulgate (ed. Weber) 1 Cor. 10:11 reads 'in quos fines saeculorum deveniunt' [unto whom the end of the world has come].
- 33 Thomas D. Hill, 'The Myth of the Ark-Born Son of Noe and the West-Saxon Royal Genealogical Tables,' *Harvard Theological Review* 80 (1987): 379–83.
- 34 See the text of R1 in *Sibyllinische Texte*, ed. Sackur, 63–4. R2's account is essentially the same: see D'Evelyn, 'Middle English Metrical Version,' 194–5.
- 35 The fact that this son is born on the ark is strikingly similar to the story of the origin of Sceaf in the chronicles of Æthelweard and of William of Malmesbury. See the note to lines 4–52 in Klaeber, *Beowulf*, 123.
- 36 First, both recensions specify that Ionitus was born in the 612th year of Noah's life, whereas the Flood took place in Noah's 601st year. Second, both recensions are quite clear that only eight people left the ark: Noah and his wife, and their three sons and their wives. R1: 'Iam in trium milium annorum, postquam exivit Noe de arca, aedificaverunt filii Noe novam possessionem in exteriora terra et appellaverunt nomen regionis illius Thamnon secundum nuncupationem numeri, qui exierunt de archa, id est VIII. C autem anno de tercia chiliadama natus est Noe filius secundum ipsius similitudinem et vocavit nomen eius Ionitum' [Now in the 3000th year, after Noah left the ark, the sons of Noah built a new estate in a foreign land, and they named the region Thamnon after the number of those who left the ark, that is, eight. But in the 100th year of the third chiliad a son was born to Noah in his likeness, and he called him Ionitus]; *Sibyllinische Texte*, ed. Sackur, 63. R2: 'Sexcentesimo et duodecimo anno uite Noe in tercio milario seculi reedificare cepit Noe et filii eius novam possessionem in terram et apellauerunt regiones illas tamnon secundum nuncupationem numeri quo [sic = qui] exierunt de archa, id sunt octo. Tricentesimo autem anno in

tercio miliario seculi genuit Noe filium et uocavit nomen eius Ionitum' [In the 612th year of Noah's life, in the third millennium of the world, Noah and his sons began to build a new estate on the earth, and they called those regions Tamnon according to the number of those who left the ark, that is, eight. But in the 300th year in the third millennium Noah begat a son, and he called him Ionitus]; 'Middle English Metrical Version,' ed. D'Evelyn, 194 (repunctuation my own).

- 37 *The Cave of Treasures* exists only in Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopian versions (Stephen Gero, 'The Legend of the Fourth Son of Noah,' *Harvard Theological Review* 73 [1980]: 321–30 at 323 n. 14); neither is there any evidence of indirect knowledge in Anglo-Saxon England.
- 38 Ker, *Catalogue*, 142, dates the OE text to s. xi¹. Texts: *The Old English Illustrated Hexateuch*, ed. C.R. Dodwell and Peter Clemoes, ERMF 18 (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1974); Samuel J. Crawford, 'The Late Old English Notes of MS. (British Museum) Cotton Claudius B. iv,' *Anglia* 47 (1923): 124–35. See also Richard Marsden, *The Text of the Old Testament in Anglo-Saxon England*, CSASE 15 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 402–16.
- 39 Ker, *Catalogue*, 142.
- 40 Earlier versions of the essay were presented at the Center for Oriental, Medieval, and Early Renaissance Studies, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (May 1993); the First International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds (July 1994); and the 30th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Mich. (May 1995). Here I wish to thank Alasdair MacDonald, Gerrit H.V. Bunt, Gerrit Reinink, Frederick M. Biggs, and William Stoneman for information shared at various stages.