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The Bede Goes On: Pastoral Eschatology in the Prologue to the *Chronicle of Moissac* (Paris BN lat. 4886)

This article presents a close reading of the introduction to the ninth-century Chronicle of Moissac *as it occurs in the twelfth-century manuscript Paris BN lat. 4886. It will be argued that the combination of the main text of this prologue – a reworking of Bede's ideas on the Six Ages of the World – and the interlinear and marginal glosses to this part of the text show that the narrative of the* Chronicle *as a whole should be understood as an eschatological commentary on the political situation in the Frankish Empire in the early years of Louis the Pious, as seen from the vantage point of an author working in Aquitaine, in the South-Western corner of the empire. At the same time, it will be shown that the text is given a timeless quality through these marginal comments, which may have prompted the copyist responsible for the extant manuscript to maintain them despite the different circumstances at the time.*

The *Chronicle of Moissac* (*CM*) is an enigmatic text.[1] At first glance, it appears to be one among multiple examples of Carolingian historiographical customs, not least because it presents itself as a reworking and continuation of the *Chronica Maiora*, chapter 66 of the eighth-century Northumbrian monk Bede's *De temporum ratione* – a work on the meaning and calculation of the passage of time, which was hugely influential throughout the early medieval West.[2] Through this connection, the *CM* belongs to a larger "family" of Carolingian texts that attach themselves to Bede's work. It was probably first written in the early ninth century as a product of the monastic network in Aquitaine, the kingdom created by Charlemagne in 781 to facilitate the administration of the South-Western reaches of the Carolingian realm. Focusing on this political context highlights the idea that the *CM* presents a localised

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1 The most recent and most complete edition of the *Chronicon Moissiacense* was made by Claszen and Kats, *Chronicon Moissiacense Maius*; Kettemann, *Subsidia Anianensia*, Beilage 2: *Chronicon Moissiacense* und *Chronicon Anianense*: Synoptische Edition der Handschriften Paris BN lat. 4886, fols. 43v–54v und Paris BN lat. 5941, fols. 2r–49v, provides a partial edition and commentary as well. The oldest reliable – albeit partial – edition was prepared by Pertz, *Chronicon Moissiacense*, with additional improvements in *Ex chronico Moissiacensi*. A translation of the text for the years 802–814 may be found in King, *Charlemagne: Translated Sources*, 145–149.
2 On Bede's influence, see, among others, Wallis, "Bede and Science," 113–126, and Westgard, "Bede and the Continent in the Carolingian Age and Beyond," 201–215.

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interpretation to the history of the empire and the role of the Carolingians in its development, which in turn matters for our interpretation of Paris BN lat. 4886 as a whole.[3] Moreover, the fact that the narrative is built on foundations laid by Bede also shows the universal aspirations of the author, while also showing the enduring influence of the Northumbrian monk throughout the Frankish world.

The main enigma surrounding the *CM* starts from the fact that it only survives in two manuscripts that date from centuries after the initial composition of the narrative. Of these two, BN lat. 4886, from the late eleventh and early twelfth century, is the earliest.[4] The other manuscript, also in Paris (BN lat. 5941) dates to the fourteenth century and contains the same ninth-century core but now heavily interpolated to fit with that manuscript's aim of presenting the history of Barcelona in a broader context.[5] While the *CM* thus represents the end of a "chain of chronicles", an eleventh-century copy of a ninth-century compilation based on an eighth-century narrative using sources from the seventh, sixth, and fifth centuries, its scanty manuscript transmission raises many questions about the text as a whole, its origins and the adaptations it has gone through between the moment of first inscription and the earliest witnesses.[6] While these questions are still being resolved, some things seem to be clear regardless. The *Chronicle of Moissac* was based on a plethora of earlier historiographical works, including Orosius, Fredegar and his continuator, the Annals of Lorsch and most notably Bede's *De temporum ratione*, which, as noted, provides the backbone for the narrative as a whole. When we reach the final entry for the year 818, the readers have seen the narrative of a world where the Christian Church and the Roman Empire together guaranteed peace and stability. Within this framework, the Carolingian dynasty, despite the challenges they faced and the diversity within their realm, proved itself a worthy heir of both these traditions.[7]

Taken at face value, this seems nothing out of the ordinary for a Chronicle written at the height of Carolingian power. However, the way the Carolingian history of the *CM*, or at least the version in BN lat. 4886, has been connected to Bede's views of the past is noteworthy. It is not alone in this. One of the *CM*'s close relatives, the equally enigmatic *Chronicon universale* or *Chronicle of 741*, versions of which may be found in Leiden, Scaliger 28 or Munich, BSB Clm. 246, also present themselves as

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3 Bede, *De temporum ratione*, ed. Jones; trans. Wallis, *Bede: The Reckoning of Time*. On the historiographical context of the *Chronicle of Moissac*, see Bellarbre, "La "nation" aquitaine dans l'historiographie monastique."

4 This manuscript is available online, through the *Gallica* database: https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10540997j.

5 Available online through *Gallica*: https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8562475. On this manuscript and its relation to Catalan literary culture, see Philipp-Sattel, *Die Anfänge der katalanischen Schriftkultur im Mittelalter*, 89–107.

6 The term "chain of chronicles" is borrowed from Wood, "Chains of Chronicles."

7 For a more detailed overview of the text of the *CM*, its sources and its audience, see, in addition to the commentaries to the editions cited in n. 1, Kramer, "A Crowning Achievement."

continuations or elaborations on Bede's historiography.[8] As such, when on fol. 2v of BN lat. 4886, where the narrative starts in earnest, a decorated capital I marks the point where *In Christi nomine incipit liber cronicorum Bedane famuli Christi* ("In the name of Christ, here begins the book of chronicles of Bede, servant of Christ") it is not dissimilar to the chronicle found in München, BSB, Clm 246, which has a similar setup and a similar approach to Bede's original, but makes different editorial choices throughout.[9] Then, the author of the *CM* added a short section on the sources used by Bede and in this new version of history, citing the Old and New Testament, as well as a selection of the most influential early Christian historical thinkers, such as Orosius, Augustine, Josephus, Jerome, Rufinus, Marcellinus and Isidore, before starting with the story of Adam and the beginning of mankind.[10]

What follows is a fascinating vision of history and the future through the eyes of a multitude of medieval authors, which, if we include the two chapters from *De temporum ratione* appended at the end of the chronicle, takes up roughly three quarters of the manuscript (fols. 2–55 out of 71 total). The remainder of the codex is made up of a broad range of theological, liturgical and pastoral treatises, including the *Decretum Gelasianum* and Isidore's *In libros veteris ac novi testamenti*, but also some as yet unedited treatises, lists of prophets, apostles and popes, and parts of the so-called *Commonitorium Palladii*, an early medieval text on Indian Brahmins associated with the fourth-century bishop Palladius of Helenopolis or, for the Latin version presented here, Ambrose of Milan.[11] It is an eclectic collection, in its eleventh-century form perhaps the dossier of a monastic teacher or a personal miscellany of a scribe or even an abbot. More research is definitely needed to further our understanding of this manuscript and its place in the monastic culture of High Medieval Aquitaine.[12] For now, however, fascinating though this historiographical and monastic codex may be, what interests us are the pages immediately preceding the start of the chronicle, which elaborate on Bede's views of history as explained in his *Chronica Maiora*. Moreover, another layer is added to these pages by a number of glosses by a hand that is roughly contemporary – if not the same – as that of the copyist. This introduction and its glosses will be the focus of this article, as they present an interesting early medieval take on the intersection of past and future and the function of historiography in navigating time itself. These show that the author

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8 See Kaschke, "Enhancing Bede."

9 McKitterick, *Perceptions of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*, 23–28.

10 Although it is very probable that the *CM* in its current form is the product of several generations of authors and compilers, I will refer to them as a singular "author" for the purposes of this article.

11 A full description of this manuscript may be found in Claszen and Kats, *Chronicon Moissiacense Maius*, vol. 1, 18–30. Specifically on the *Commonitorium Palladii*, see Pritchard, "The Ambrose Text of Alexander and the Brahmans." While this article cannot go into further detail here, the presence of this rather curious text, specifically, seems to me an important clue about the purpose behind the manuscript as a whole.

12 See, for instance, Bellarbre, "Aquitania, Wasconia, Hispania," at 199–208.

was aware that Bede's original intent was not simply to write a world history out of literary curiosity, but that he was making an argument about time as well.

Bede's goal with *De temporum ratione* (*DTR*) was to make a polemical case for his views on the calculation of time as part of an ongoing debate in the monastic world of the eighth-century.[13] To Bede, the metaphor of choice – or the "microcosm", as he calls it – was provided by the Six Days of Creation, which corresponded with the Six Ages of the World, supplemented by a more spiritual or eschatological Seventh and Eighth Age.[14] Bede explicates this metaphor twice within *DTR*. The first time occurs in chapter 10, where he, in the words of Faith Wallis, "knits *computus* and exegesis together" so as to emphasise "the analogy between the events of history in each of the six World-Ages, and the events of the day of Creation (in the "primal week") to which each corresponds".[15] The second time marks the beginning of chapter 66, which had as its ultimate goal to illustrate Bede's overarching point that, as James Palmer explains, previous attempts at calculating the age of the world had been found wanting, and that "and that therefore recent history needed re-synchronising to a reformed reckoning".[16] The importance of this went beyond chronological exactitude: the very act of reckoning time also confronted one with the ongoing process of human history – and eventually, salvation.[17]

The author of the *CM* went one step further still, and belaboured the general point that their readers should look beyond the past as a political tool, and become aware of history and their place in the greater scheme of things in order to walk the path towards salvation.[18] He signalled this by appending not only Bede's original prologue to the *Chronica Maiora* to the text, but also an expanded version of his Six Ages: a version in which the author's eschatological agenda comes to the fore clearly and unequivocally. In this sense, it differs from the ninth-century München Clm 246, which does show a similarly creative approach to Bede's *DTR*, but instead of narrating the full Six Ages, its copyist opted to stop partway through the First

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13 Following the reading by Palmer, "The Ends and Futures of Bede's *De temporum ratione*," 139–160.

14 Bede uses the term "microcosm" (*microcosmos*) to refer to the relation between the life of a person and the universe itself in the *DTR*, in Chapter 35 ("The Four Seasons, Elements, and Humours"), trans. Wallis, 100–101, to equate the four seasons to the four humours that determine a person's health, and in Chapter 66 ("The Six Ages of the World"), trans. Wallis, 157. See also O'Brien, *Bede's Temple*, 81–82.

15 *DTR* c. 10 ("The Week of the World-Ages"), trans. Wallis, 39–41. See also the commentary by Wallis in the translation, at 280.

16 Palmer, "The Ends and Futures of Bede's *De temporum ratione*," 146.

17 Cf. Darby, *Bede and the End of Time*, 96–124.

18 Landes, "Lest the Millennium Be Fulfilled." Cf. for a more political reading of early medieval historiography Werner, "Gott, Herrscher und Historiograph," and for the Carolingian case also McKitterick, "Political Ideology in Carolingian Historiography."

Age, and instead add different prologues – the ones to Eusebius' *Chronicle*, the *DTR* by Bede, and Isidore's *Chronica Maiora*.[19]

While the author of the version of the *Chronicon universale* thus retains a sense of historiography in the manuscript BSB Clm 246, its Parisian counterpart has an altogether more eschatological approach. In the remainder of this article, I will focus on the way the author of the *CM* has built upon Bede's foundation. By comparing the Six Ages of Man given in *DTR* to the version presented in this manuscript, I intend to argue that the *CM* was not only written with an eye towards the immediate future of the intended audience, but betrayed a clear and explicit preoccupation with eschatology as well.[20] In doing so, the intentions behind the *CM* will become more apparent, which in turn helps explain the choices made during the compilation of the manuscript in its entirety. Looking at the opening pages of BN lat. 4886 thus helps us focus on one of the links in the chain of chronicles it represents. Thereby, we may shine a light on the way a monastic author in the ninth century (or indeed, a scribe in the late eleventh century) conceived of the intersection between historiography and eschatology in a way that made sense to their intended audience. Because this connection did make sense to their intended audience: as has been noted, there is an eschatological undertone visible in most historiographical endeavours of Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages.[21] The passage of time, from a Carolingian point-of-view, inexorably moved humanity towards the End just as every single individual would have to account for their (mis)deeds after the end of their life.[22] The marginal glosses to the passage under scrutiny, as we will see, highlight that the *Chronicle of Moissac* was part of that same long narrative tradition. They provide an additional dimension to our understanding of this scribe's vision of Bede's "Augustinian" cosmology, and thereby allow us yet another fascinating glimpse into the mind-set of the people involved in the long history of this manuscript.[23]

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19 Palmer, "The Ends and Futures of Bede's *De temporum ratione*," 155–156. The manuscript itself may be consulted online at http://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/~db/0006/bsb00069161/images/. For a description of the manuscript, see Halm, *Catalogus codicum latinorum Bibliothecae Regiae Monacensis*, 63; Bierbrauer, *Die vorkarolingischen und karolingischen Handschriften der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek*, a. 86.

20 For a basic overview of Bede's "Ages of the World," and how the model presented in *De temporum ratione* links up with Bede's other treatise on time, *De tempore*, see Blair, *The World of Bede*, 262–270.

21 See Wieser, "The Chronicle of Hydatius," and, in the same volume, Warntjes, "The Final Countdown and the Reform of the Liturgical Calendar in the Early Middle Ages," for analyses of the interdependence between eschatology, history, and audience in different sources.

22 See Czock, "Creating Futures through the Lens of Revelation in the Rhetoric of the Carolingian Reform."

23 Cf. Brown, "Art.: Bede, Venerable," who noted that a full study of Augustine's influence on Bede was still lacking. But see also Kelly, "Bede's Use of Augustine for his Commentarium in principium Genesis," and Thacker, *Bede and Augustine of Hippo*.

1 Eclectic Six

Bede's ideas about the Six Ages of the World were heavily dependent on the work done several centuries earlier by Augustine, bishop of Hippo and one of the most influential thinkers of the early Church.[24] Adapting several earlier models for the passage of time, Augustine frequently referred to the Six Ages in his works, and in the process showed the adaptability of this seemingly rigid concept. The existence of this metaphor demonstrates the flexibility of how biblical typology combined with ideas of time and eschatology in the early Christian discourse. This may have prompted Augustine to use the metaphor in his refutation of the Manichees, for instance, when he closes the first book with an exposition on the Six Days of Creation as an admonition to do good works while alive, in order to enjoy the fruit of one's labour on the Seventh Day.[25] The fact that these good works should be done on the orders of God should not detract from the enjoyment at the end: by combining the story of Creation with an eschatological outlook, he emphasises how everybody is on the same path towards personal fulfilment, and, essentially, that the Earthly City is never really finished.[26] This "personal" approach also allowed him to use the same metaphor as an educational tool to instruct teachers on how to explain the tenets of faith to new catechumens. In chapter 22 of the treatise *De catechizandis rudibus* ("On Instructing the Unlearned"), the Church Father provides an overview of the Six Ages, of which five had been completed and the sixth was still ongoing. It is worth quoting in full, if only because it may well be the most succinct overview of the ages.

> Of these ages, the first is from the beginning of the human race, that is, from Adam, who was the first man that was made, down to Noah, who constructed the ark at the time of the flood. Then the second extends from that period on to Abraham, who was called the father indeed of all nations which should follow the example of his faith, but who at the same time in the way of natural descent from his own flesh was the father of the destined people of the Jews; which people, previous to the entrance of the Gentiles into the Christian faith, was the one people among all the nations of all lands that worshipped the one true God: from which people also Christ the Saviour was decreed to come according to the flesh. For these turning-points of those two ages occupy an eminent place in the ancient books. On the other hand, those of the other three ages are also declared in the Gospel, where the descent of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh is likewise mentioned. For the third age extends from Abraham on to David the king; the fourth from David on to that captivity whereby the people of God passed over into Babylonia; and the fifth from that transmigration down to the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. With His coming the sixth age has entered on its process; so that now the spiritual grace, which in previous times was known to a few patriarchs and prophets, may be made manifest to all nations [...].[27]

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24 Generally, see Vessey, "From 'cursus' to 'ductus'."
25 Augustine, *Two Books on Genesis against the Manichees*, 1.22–25, trans. Teske, 81–90.
26 See Claster, *The Medieval Experience*, 47–50; McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 351–358.
27 Augustinus, *De catechizandis rudibus*, 22.39, trans. Salmond, 307–308.

It is a deceptively simple chronological overview, an explanatory framework to link the narratives of the Old and the New Testament. Augustine prefigures this framework several times, most notably in Chapters 3 ("Of the Full Narration to Be Employed in Catechising") and 6 ("Of the Way to Commence the Catechetical Instruction, and of the Narration of Facts from the History of the World's Creation on to the Present Times of the Church"). There, he explains that understanding salvation is a matter of knowing and explaining history. In a nutshell, Augustine holds that the way the story of mankind has been told "from what is written in the text, 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth', on to the present times of the Church" contains the keys to achieving salvation. It would be the responsibility of the teacher to distil this down to a level appropriate to the listener(s).[28] Throughout the *De catechizandis rudibus*, Augustine reminds his audience that they should remind their students that everything that happened culminates in the Last Judgment, when mankind has to revisit their sins and reckon with them.[29]

While Augustine's purpose behind the Six Ages was both historical and eschatological, the explicitly educational function of this model in the *De catechizandis rudibus* seems to have been equally important for the reception of the Six Ages by Bede.[30] As alluded to above, Bede saw the purpose of the model not as a "summary" of history or a gathering of historical events, the knowledge of which would help one achieve salvation.[31] Instead, he saw it as a way to emphasise the importance of properly understanding time and the role of mankind within it, as seen from his vantage point in time and space.[32] It was an analogy that both Augustine and Bede would explore in various ways, for example when these Six Ages are also equated to stages in the human life cycle, but which in *De temporum ratione* retains predominantly historical, educational and indeed eschatological foundations with a view towards formulating a vision of the future.[33] The week holds a special meaning for Bede. "Human custom restricts [the definition of a week] to [a period of] seven days", he writes in Chapter 8 of *DTR*, "but according to the authority of sacred Scripture there are many notable kinds [of weeks], all of which, if I am not mistaken, point to a single end: that is, they urge us to hope for endless peace in the grace of the Holy Spirit when all good works are accomplished".[34] A week – or rather, a *hebdomada*, as per the Greek word Bede mentions at the beginning of the

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28 Augustinus, *De catechizandis rudibus*, 3, trans. Salmond, 285–286; and 6, trans. Salmond, 288–289.

29 For instance, in Augustinus, *De catechizandis rudibus*, 7, trans. Salmond, 289–290; and 23.41, trans. Salmond, 308.

30 On this text and its educational approach, see among others Chin, "Telling Boring Stories."

31 Cf. Mégier, "Le temps des Ages du monde, de saint Augustin a Hugues de Fleury."

32 Generally, see Mégier, "Die Historisierung der Apokalypse, oder von der globalen zur geschichtlichen Zeit der Kirche in lateinischen Apokalypsenkommentaren."

33 Darby, "Bede's History of the Future."

34 *DTR*, 8, trans. Wallis, 32, as well as the commentary and relevant literature on 277–279.

chapter – can be any period of comprised of six "time periods" and an additional, equal period of rest or culmination, like for instance the 50 days of Pentecost, or the Sabbatical years prescribed in Leviticus 25.[35] The week thus becomes a cosmological constant, and as such it is no surprise that it is a microcosm for existence in its entirety. It is built into Creation itself: "Thus the first week of all, unique of its kind, from which the others derive their form, is honoured by divine action, because the Lord, completing the adornment of the universe in six days, rested from His labours on the seventh."[36]

All this leads to his chapter on the final kind of week, which, according to the *DTR* chapter 10, is "unique in that it does not come back again to its beginning, is composed of the unstable Ages of this world, and follows in all respects the pattern of the first week".[37] It starts with the creation of light and (consequently) darkness, which causes the "sons of God" to be "separated from their seed" and the eventual birth of monsters and giants, which prompts God to wipe the slate clean with the Deluge: the Evening of the First Day and the rise of (for lack of a better word) Evil is thus implied to be a consequence of the creation of light, which inadvertently stages earthly life as an ongoing proving ground.[38] The Second Day starts with the Ark, and evening sets in when the "Sons of Adam" attempt to build the Tower of Babel.[39] The Third Day, then, begins with the calling of Abraham, and ends, interestingly, when the Hebrew people demand a King to be placed over them, leading to the disastrous reign of Saul. David and Solomon then signal the morning of the Fourth Day, with the Babylonian captivity signalling dusk, and the Fifth Day begins when the "people of Israel" come into their own upon their return until the advent of the Romans and a renewed period of subjugation.[40] All this then leads to the Sixth Day, which started with the appearance of Christ, and which will last until the start of the persecution by the Antichrist – a project that is yet ongoing. The culmination of these two days, in this model, is in a "timeless" Seventh Day which actually started with the death of Abel – the "first martyr" – and which will end when all the righteous are awaiting the resurrection and end of time proper.[41] What follows is the Eighth Age, which has no equivalent in the story of creation, but is simply characterised by the "everlasting joy" granted to the blessed. As Bede clarifies, these final two ages should be on the minds of everybody praying, as they represent not only

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35 See Warntjes, *Munich Computus*, XXX–LI, who shows that Bede was synthesising several longer traditions of dividing and ordering time.

36 *DTR*, 8, trans. Wallis, 32.

37 *DTR*, 10, trans. Wallis, 39–40.

38 See Bequette, "The Six Ages of History and the Renewal of the Human Person."

39 On the development of the exegesis of the Tower of Babel between the Anglo-Saxon and Frankish worlds in the eighth and ninth centuries, see Major, *Undoing Babel*, 96–132.

40 Although only tangentially related to this paper, the importance of the history of the people of Israel as a precursor to Frankish self-assertion is worth noting: Garrison, "The Franks as the New Israel?" Cf. Heydemann and Pohl, "The Rhetoric of Election."

41 Darby, *Bede and the End of Time*, 69–74.

the hopes and fears built into the fabric of Christianity, but also provide a motivation for sinners to repent and – more importantly – willingly accept rebuke by the Lord on their path towards salvation.[42]

Chapter 10 of *DTR* provides the reader with an indication of Bede's ideas about the interaction between cyclical and linear natures of Christian time.[43] The chapter is embedded in a larger overview of the units (days, weeks, months) that make up the years, but at the same time makes clear that this very model implies that all this will end at some point in the future. This point is made even more clearly when Bede revisits the model in Chapter 66 (the *Chronica Maiora*), but instead of linking the Ages of the World to the Days of Creation in Genesis, he here opts to show how these same ages are also paralleled in the stages of a human life – the microcosm mentioned earlier.[44] Serving as a prelude to his *Chronica Maiora*, Bede does not change the basic divisions. He gives the number of years each Age is supposed to have lasted, and at the same time makes history relatable by, for instance, equating the Deluge that ends the First Age with how most people forget their infancy, or the Fourth Age (from David to the Babylonian Captivity) to "youth", because "this age in man is normally apt for governing a kingdom". The current Sixth Age he equates with "senility" because of the uncertainties that come with living in the present, and because the end of this Age will also mark the end of time itself. Before presenting his narrative of the course of history, he once again reminds his readers that "By a happy death, everyone will overcome these Ages of the world, and when they have been received into the Seventh Age of perennial Sabbath, they look forward to the Eighth Age of the blessed Resurrection, in which they will reign forever with the Lord".[45] Life has been long and hard, Bede implies, but if his readers would take all these challenges in stride, they could look forward to a long rest. Bede's primary concern was with the correct calculation of the age of the world, so it made sense that he would not give up Augustine's pastoral or educational impetus. Like Augustine, Bede used the Six Ages to make sure his audience – the monks of his community, and more generally the people he would convince of his approach to *computus* – knew why time, history and the future mattered to them.

2 New Beginnings

This background needs to be taken into account when reading the opening to the *CM*. The text explicitly posits itself as a continuation or exposition of the work done previously by Bede (something made clearer by the addition of the prologue of *De*

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42 Cf. Chazelle, "Debating the End Times with Bede."

43 See Davis, *Periodization and Sovereignty*, 103–131, esp. 126–129.

44 *DTR*, 66, trans. Wallis, 157–159.

45 *DTR*, 66, trans. Wallis, 158.

temporum ratione, the last part of which is still visible on the damaged first folio). However, in Paris BN lat. 4886, the full text of *DTR* itself is missing: the computistical education is gone, and supplanted by the more pastoral approach to time and history also visible in the works of Augustine and Gregory the Great.[46] While Bede was preoccupied with the proper calculation of time, the composer of this manuscript wanted to make their audience realise that the very passage of time itself should be seen as an admonition to reconcile one's self with the intentions behind God's Creation. This adds a pastoral context to the choices made by the author or the copyist for the extended prologue in Paris BN lat. 4886. It becomes clear that he has chosen to highlight the apocalyptic themes that come with the territory. Seemingly unsatisfied with the verbatim copy of the prologue to the *Chronica Maiora* at the beginning of the manuscript, a reiteration of the Six Ages-model is appended before the narrative proper. It does not follow any one version of Bede's or Augustine's Six Ages, but instead presents a convolute of both versions that shows that this writer was more preoccupied with eschatological themes than with chronology.

The reworked prologue will be presented here, together with a translation.[47]

Latin	English
DE PRIMA ETATAE SECULI	ON THE FIRST AGE OF THE WORLD.
Prima aetatae Adam et successores eius frequenti fuerunt Dei locutione laetati, ita ut filii Dei apellarentur.	In the first age Adam and his offspring were happy because they were often speaking with God, so that they were called the "Sons of God".
Cuius aetatis vespera fuit, cum [ipsi filii] Dei filias hominum duxissent uxores et eis nati fuerunt monstruosi homines, quibus [iratus Deus] omnem humanum [genus, quod tunc fuit] diluvio venientae delevit.	Evening fell over this age, when [those sons of] God took daughters of men as wives, and monstrous men were born to them, upon which [angry God] erased the entirety of the human race [as it was then] with a Flood.

Latin	English
Secunda aetatis mane fuit, cum Noe et filii eius per diluvium liberatis dominus benedixisset, dicens crescitae et multiplicamini et tunc culturae Dei illius temporis homines fuerant dediti.	The morning of the Second Age was, when Noah and his sons had been delivered from the Flood and the Lord blessed them, saying "Go forth and multiply" (Genesis 9:7), and from then on mankind was dedicated to the service of God.
Cuius aetatis vespera fuit, cum, relicto Deo, homines caepissent ignem et aquam syderaque, necnon et ipsos mortuos homines, pro Deo adorare. Quibus iratus, Deus solum Habraam de medio eorum aelegens, exire iussit de terra et cognatione sua.	Evening fell over this age, when, having left God behind, the humans began to worship fire and water and the stars, and even the dead instead of God. Thereupon, the angry God, having elected only Abraham from their midst, ordered him to leave his lands and his family.
Tercia aetatis manae fuit laeta et desiderabilis ad Abraam futuri seminis <pro>missio sanctaque et mistica.	The morning of the third age was [marked by] a happy and desirable promise of future offspring to Abraham, which was holy and mystical.
Ysaac et Iacob ceterorumque patriarcharum conversatio. Multarum gentium per Ioseph facta salvatio legisque per Moysen data constitucio et diu expectata in terram repromissionis introductio.	[It was also marked by] the way of life of Ysaac and Iacob and the other patriarchs. For many of the *gentes*, salvation was provided through Joseph and the decree of the law was given by Moses and after a long time the introduction into the Promised Land happened.
Cuius vespera fuit, cum populus Israhel, Dei imperio negleto, regem sibi hominem superesse maluissent. Primumque elegerunt apostatam a Deo Saulem, quem Philistei cum magna ipsius populi partem peri[merunt].	Evening fell over this age, when the *populus* of Israel, neglecting the command of God, desired a human king to be placed above them.[48] And the first they elected was Saul, who apostasised from God, and whom the Philistines together with a large part of that same *populus* (= Israel) killed.
Quartae aetatis mane fuit victorialae et triumphis clarum David regnum gloriosumque et pacificum filii eius Salomonis ymperium templique mirabilis ad mistica constructio.	The morning of the fourth age came victoriously and [saw] an illustrious kingdom due to the triumphs of King David; and also the glorious and peaceful empire of his son Salomon as well as the miraculous and mystical construction of the temple.
Cuius vespera fuit.[49] *Q(uonia)m idem populus peccatis agentibus cum rege, quem tunc habuerunt, in Babiloniam captivitatem ductus est eorumque metropolis Iherusalem, cum templo et omnibus privatis publicis aedificiis, spoliata est igneque consumpta.*	Evening fell over this age, when the same *populus*, having committed sins together with the king they had at the time, was taken to the Babylonian captivity while their metropolis Jerusalem, together with the temple and all private and public buildings, was plundered and consumed by fire.

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48 Generally on *populus* and other such terms, see Heydemann, "Biblical Exegesis and the Language of Community in Late Antique and Early Medieval Europe." From an early medieval perspective, the installation of a king over the *populus*, effectively turning it into a *regnum* was an interesting move, and it might be worth further research to fully understand the way post-Roman sources dealt with this political shift. See Pohl, "*Regnum* und *gens*."

49 Claszen and Kats have opted to attach this clause to the preceding sentence, but given the pattern of the text thus far, we felt it should be the start of the next segment. The manuscript, at fol. 2r, does start another new sentence with "Quoniam," however.

Latin	English
Quintae aetatis manae fuit, cum predictus Dei populus de Babilonia captivitatae liberatur reedificande Iherusalem templique licentia<m> accipere.	The morning of the fifth age came, when the aforementioned *populus Dei* was freed from the Babylonian captivity, receiving permission to re-build Jerusalem and the temple.
Cuius item vespera fuit, cum secundum prophe-ciam patriarchae, legitimo principe deficiente, Herodes alien<igen>a[50] eiusdem gentis susciperet ymperium, multisque illud iniustis et sanguinariis operibus maculasset.	Evening fell over this age, when, in accordance with the prophecy of the patriarch, a legitimate ruler being absent, the foreigner Herodes took the empire over that *gens*, and dishonoured many of them with injustices and bloodthirsty deeds.
Sexta aetatis gloriosum et prefatis omnibus lu-cidius manae fuit, cum Christus filius Dei pro nostrae redemptionis dispensatione homo fieri dignaretur. Suique aevangelii fulgore mundum in tenebris iacentem revocaret atque omnibus in se credentibus vitae aeternae semitam pate-faceret et suos discipulos Spiritus Sancti gracia dedit, hos omnibus gentibus ad predicanda caelestis vitae gaudia misisset.	The morning of the Sixth Age was glorious and brighter than all the preceding ones, because Christ the son of God deigned to become Man for the dispensation of our redemption. And through the light of His message he recalled the world from the shadows it had been cast in, and He opened up the path to eternal life for all who be-lieve in Him; and to His disciples He gave the grace of the Holy Spirit, and sent them to all the *gentes* so as to preach the joys of heavenly life.[51]
Cuius quidem aetatis vespera quando veniet in-certa. Quod vero veniet certissima orribilior ce-teris hominibus tenebrescit, cum ingruente persecutione antichristi [noviss]ima paucis electorum liberatis totus mundus eius iniqua et damnabili crudelitatae maculabitur et ad ulti-mum supernae maiestatis iudicae tocius mundi machina igne consumabitur.	It is uncertain when evening will fall over this age. That it will come is absolutely certain, [and] it will bring a horrible darkness for the remainder of mankind, when, with the arrival of the final persecution of the antichrist and a few of the elect having been liberated, the whole world will be dishonoured by his unjust and damnable cru-elties, and at the end, through the judgment of the Heavenly Majesty, the entire machine of the world will be consumed by fire.

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50 Although the manuscript reads "aliena", we have decided to expand it to "alienigena", to fit with the early Christian trope of Herod as a "foreigner", most famously explained in the works of Augustine: Horbury, *Messianism Among Jews and Christians*, 83–122, at 87.

51 See above, n. 48, on the importance of this shift from *populus* to *gens* and what it might mean for the notions of Other- and Sameness employed by the author.

Latin	English
Septimae vero aetatis primum mane caepit, <quoniam> anima Abel iusti innocentiae suae perfectionae laetata aeternae requi<ei e>sset, gaudio suscepta et per ceteras sex aetatis glorioso semper tramitae decurrens. *Quo<sc>umque Dei electos invenerit eorum animas, de ac corruptionae liberatas, [in suae quietis beatitudinem transducere] laetata est laetarique usque in finem seculi non desinit.*	Truly, the morning of the Seventh Age began, when the soul of Abel the Just, rejoicing in the perfection of his innocence, was received in the joy of eternal bliss, thus always going forward on the glorious path through the other Six Ages.[52] And when he (i.e. Abel's soul) encountered the souls of those elected by God, who have been liberated from corruption […] he was happy to [transport them in the blessedness of his tranquillity] and he will not finish being happy until the end of the world.
Atque sicut in creatione mundi sexta die <per>fectus creatus est homo, sic et sexta aetate Christus sua mirabili dignationae factus homo corporis sui, id est sanctae plenitudine et perfectione predictam septimam aetatem maxima ex parte conplevit.	And also, like during the creation of the world a perfect human was created during the Sixth Day, so in the Sixth Age Christ, having made himself a human body in his wonderful grace – i.e. in the holy abundance and perfection of His body – accomplished the aforementioned Seventh Age for the most part.
Simul et usque in finem seculi conpleturus est, quae quidem aetas vesperam habitura, non est sicut nec septima dies qua Deus opera sua conplevit habuisse legitur,	At the same time, He will accomplish it (the Seventh Age) until the end of time, since this Age will not have an evening, as one reads that the Seventh Day, when God had finished His work, also did not have an evening.
sed feliciore octavae aetatis gloria comulabit cum in ea suscepte animae etiam corpora gloriae resurrectionis sublimata secum ad aeternae vitae et infinitae felicitatis gaudia introducere merebuntur.	But this Age will be accomplished with the happier glory of the Eighth Age, as the souls, having been received into it *(i.e. into the Eighth Age),* will deserve to introduce themselves to the joy of eternal life and of infinite happiness, together with their bodies raised in the glorious resurrection.

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52 *Abel iustus* appears to be a callback to Matthew 23:35 or Luke 11:51. It should be noted that to Augustine, the idea of Abel "the Just" signalled a certain unity between Christians and the righteous people who had lived before the advent of Christ: Sullivan, *Salvation Outside the Church?*, 28–31, citing Augustine, *Epistola* 102 (To Deogratias), ed. Goldbacher, as the most comprehensive overview of his thoughts on the matter.

Latin	English
Sicque et Salomon ait "Omnes vestiti dupli-cibus cum suo rege, cui simul in hoc seculo fi-deliter serviebant sine fine feliciter congaude-bant".	As Salomon said: "All are dressed warmly/doubly with their king, whom they loyally served simulta-neously in this world and have rejoiced with him happily without end" (cf. Prov. 31:21).
De quo eorum duplici gaudio etiam in apocalip-sis legitur. Vidi in quid Iohannes subtus altare animas interfectorum propter verbum Dei et propter testimonium, quod habebant, et clama-bant dicentes "usques quo domine non iudicas et vindicas sanguinem nostrum de his, qui habitant super terram et date sunt illis singule stolae albae dictumque est, ut requiescerent [tem]pus ad huc modicum, donec impleretur numerus conservorum eorum."	About their double happiness can be read already in the Apocalypse, in which John says: "I have seen under the altar the souls of those who had been killed because of the word of God and of the testimony they gave, and they called out, saying 'Lord, how long now before thou wilt sit in judg-ment, and exact vengeance for our blood from all those who dwell on earth? Whereupon a single white robe was given to each of them, and they were bidden to take their rest a little while longer, until their number had been made up by those others'." (Rev. 6:10–11).
Sanctis namque martyribus singulis stolis donabuntur, cum animae eorum felici quietae suscipiuntur, donec perficiatur in finae mundi prefinitus electorum numerus. Duplicabuntur vero stolae cum corporibus receptis atque ab omni corruptionis labe liberatis, simul animae et corpora gaudium Domini sui intrare, mere-buntur.	Likewise, the holy martyrs too will be given a sin-gle robe, because their souls are received into happy bliss until the predetermined number of the elect is completed before end of the world.[53] Truly the robes will be doubled after the bodies have been re-taken and relieved from any mark of corruption, when the souls along with the bodies will be worthy to enter into the joy of their God.
Prestante Domino nostro Iesu Christo, qui cum Patre et Spiritu Sancto honor et virtus et gracia-rum actio per infinita secula seculorum. Amen.	Our Lord Jesus Christ concedes it, who together with the Father and the Holy Spirit is given hon-our and the action of the graces until the end of time. Amen.

Building on the foundations laid by Bede and Augustine, the author of this prologue in Paris BN lat. 4886 has clearly given their own spin to this venerable model. It was reframed to more closely follow the agenda of the *CM*. Gone was the polemical ap-proach to *computus* and the reckoning of time, either because, by the early ninth century, the debate had been resolved to the author's satisfaction, or because it would not be the intention behind this particular version of history.[54] For this ver-

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53 The Latin *prefinitus* appears to refer to the number of the saved given in Revelation 7:4 and 14:1, where it is said that 144.000 people will be saved in the end (12.000 from each of the tribes of Israel).

54 A comprehensive overview of the debate is given in Borst, *Schriften zur Komputistik in Franken-reich*; See also Wallis, "Images of Order in the Medieval Computus," who argues that *computus* had become a pedagogical tool rather than an absolute theological necessity (an idea also explored, using different texts, in Kramer, "*Ecce fabula!* Problem-Solving by Numbers in the Carolingian World.") Given the efforts made by the Carolingians (at least from the top down) to present a uni-form idea of the Church, it would not be in the author's best interest to explicitly engage with that debate again on these pages: they were preoccupied with showing the importance of the Roman/Carolingian Empire for the fulfilment of Creation.

sion, what was important was the idea that history would move inexorably forward, and ensure that salvation would be within the reach of the largest possible number of people: as the *CM* moved closer to the "present" (i.e. the year 818, or the early 820s), it becomes clear that the many narrative strands in the text tie together to show how the Carolingian dynasty, as rulers of the Franks, have been put in a position where their particular brand of Romanness and Christian politics maximises the eschatological potential of their empire.[55] This became especially poignant when, in the wake of Charlemagne's coronation in 800 the interdependence between Church and Empire was considered anew from many angles, with the identification of the (Carolingian-led) Franks as the heirs of the *populus* of Israel being a topic of repeated contention, while the endurance of the Roman Empire also fed into eschatological modes of thinking about history at the time.[56]

Although the *CM* thus feeds into the way the Carolingian court intellectuals attempted to harness historical narratives to steer the overarching political context, the author of the text made clear that their takeover had not happened through their agency *per se*, but that the success of these Frankish rulers was a sign of God's benevolence for all.[57] The new world order created by the Carolingians should, in other words, be seen as an encouragement, a sign that things were moving forward, towards the inevitable end. None of this should mean that readers of the *CM* should simply leave their faith and their fate in the hands of the Carolingians, however.[58] As this prologue shows, and as we will see, the author had clear ideas about the role of individual agency and the dangers this caused to one's chances to reach heaven.

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55 See McKitterick, *History and Memory in the Carolingian World*, 84–155, esp. 92–97, highlighting the importance of the so-called "Encyclopedia" of 809 for Carolingian understanding of time and history, and the influence of the *DTR* on that text. See also Borst, "Alkuin und die Enzyklopädie von 809."

56 See above, n. 41, See also Harris, "The Bible and the Meaning of History in the Middle Ages," 83–104, esp. 91–93, but cf. Nees, *A Tainted Mantle,* 3–17, who cautioned against over-emphasising this view. Generally, unpacking the complex relation between Old Testament history, Roman traditions, and the ecclesiastical and political needs of the ruling elites in the Carolingian present falls well beyond the scope of this article.

57 See Kramer, "A Crowning Achievement." More generally, see Reimitz, *History, Frankish Identity and the Framing of Western Ethnicity*, esp. 120–132 and 218–244.

58 At this point, it is all but impossible to say anything with certainty about the intended audience of the *CM* either in its ninth-century context, or in the version presented in this manuscript. A thorough and more detailed study of Paris BN lat. 4886 is needed in order to shed more light on this question – indeed, the eclectic contents of the manuscript might allow us to get closer to the intended audience than would be possible based on the *CM* alone.

3 A Syncopated Bede

Given that the manuscript explicitly frames itself as a work by Bede, and the pro-
logue to the *Chronica Maiora* is included as well, a comparison between the ex-
tended prologue and the Northumbrian's model will shed more light on the autho-
rial intentions behind the text. The ideas contained in *DTR* chapter 10 will be a
point of departure for this comparison, as it seems closer to both the contents and
the "spirit" of the reworked prologue, and because the inclusion of the Six Ages-
model from the *Chronica Maiora* implies that the author wanted to juxtapose both
versions by adding eschatology to the more overtly computistic approach in the
"original" text. As we will see, the interlineal glosses help emphasise precisely those
points when needed.

The glosses to BN lat. 4886 pose a challenge all by themselves.[59] While a full
analysis of the comments and elucidations throughout the manuscript falls outside
the scope of the present article, it should be noted that glosses in the margins ap-
pear in different hands and in different formats, which has led earlier commenters
to posit that, while some of them must have been added later (albeit not long after
the initial composition),[60] some of them may have been present in the exemplar
from which the eleventh-century copyist was working.[61] This seems especially true
for some of the glosses to the *CM* proper, which are highlighted in red and black
boxes and thus might be distinguished by virtue of being "original".[62] Given that
the *CM* was never continued when the current manuscript was compiled, and the
glosses appear to be as relevant to a ninth-century audience as to a later one – if
not more so, as they highlight important events and persons – this idea is certainly
plausible. The scribe might have simply kept them for antiquarian reasons, or be-
cause he considered them to be an integral part of the text or a reading aid of sorts.
For the other type of frequently occurring glosses, however, it is even less sure if
they belonged to the exemplar or were added by the scribe. These appear as inter-
lineal glosses explaining various words and concepts that might be unclear to the
reader, and give the entire manuscript the appearance of a codex that was partially
used for teaching purposes.

It is this second type of gloss that appears in the reworked prologue on fols. 1r–
2v. They are written in a hand that looks remarkably similar to that of the main text,

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59 Generally, see Teeuwen, "Voices from the Edge."

60 Eg. Paris, BN lat. 4886, fols. 3r–4v.

61 Kettemann, *Subsidia Anianensia*, 494–496, and Claszen and Kats, *Chronicon Moissiacense Maius*
I, 30, note that some marginalia are shared between Paris BN lat. 4886 and Paris BN lat. 5941,
indicating a common origin.

62 In addition to the many "regular" glosses, these "boxed" marginalia in the *CM* are visible on
fols. 5r; 7r; 10r; 12r (elaborate); 13v; 14r; 16v; 17r; 18r; 25v; 26r; 27r; 28v; 29v; 30v; 31rv; 33r; 35v; 36v;
37r; 38rv; 42v; 44v; 45rv; 47r; 50v; 51r; 53r. On fol. 37v, an elaborately interlocked group of four
circles containing the name Benedictus is also visible.

which leads to the assumption that they were added during the initial composition or very shortly afterwards – although it is very likely that, unlike the rubricated boxes, these were added rather than copied by the scribe.[63] Mostly, they clarify potentially difficult subjects, such as when *metropolis Iherusalem* is explained as "that which is the head and like a mother to the cities subordinate to it", or when *decrepita* is glossed with "very old".[64] Nevertheless, given that even such seemingly minute elucidations steer the reader's gaze towards a certain reading of the main text, it is worthwhile to take them into account when looking at this adaptation of Bede's Six Age-model.

The differences between both approaches become clear immediately when comparing the First Ages. Superficially similar, it is striking that Bede, in *DTR* 10, only comments that "the giants were born" and that evil crept into this world when night was separated from day, the *CM* actually gives agency to the "Sons of God", who "took daughters of men as wives, and monstrous men were born to them". Also, Bede's God destroys "the world" out of regret, whereas the *CM* emphasises that it was the "human race" which became the subject of God's ire. This subtle shift in focus shows how the author of the *CM* aimed to offset Bede's fatalistic yet ambivalent approach to the passing of time and God's will with a more admonitory message about purity, faith and responsibility. This point is driven home in one of the glosses, which is added to the phrase *nati fuerunt monstruosi homines*. It reads "that is, with deformed members or about which we are said to be warned in the future".[65] In a single turn of phrase, the gloss downplays the "giants" mentioned by Bede and instead focuses on the grotesque nature of these children, the offspring of divine and human creatures. The second part of the gloss then gives a moral reading, in that it warns the readers that they, too, can turn into such monsters "in the future". As a warning in the context of this apocalyptic introduction, it warns about the monstrosity of the soul and the dangers it can do for the body during the Resurrection.[66] The addition of this phrase as a gloss almost makes it insist upon itself: crammed at

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63 As indicated by the shape of the g; the curious ct-ligatures; and the fact that they appear to have been written in ink that is the same as – or similar to – the ink used for the main text. Many thanks to Anna Dorofeeva, Jesse Keskiaho and Bernhard Zeller for helping me make sense of these glosses.
64 The first is on fol. 2r: *dicitur eo quod caput et quasi mater sit ceterarum sibi sub iacensium civitatum*; the other on 1v: *valde senile*.
65 Fol. 1v: *deformatis membris sive monstra dicuntur quod nos in futurum monere*. There is a thin but clear line under this gloss, indicating to which line and word it belonged.
66 This focus on the "monstrous" might be reflective of a more general trend among the Carolingian intellectual elites to define those outside of their Christian, ecclesiastical community as Others which threatened the fabric of the Church. Of particular interest in this regard is the highly influential *Apocalypse* by the seventh-century Syriac intellectual Pseudo-Methodius, *The Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, ed. and trans. Garstad. On this text, the strategies of distinction it employs, and its influence on the Christian West, see Palmer, *The Apocalypse in the Early Middle Ages*, 107–129; Gantner, "Hoffnung in der Apokalypse?," as well as Grifoni and Gantner, "The Third Latin Recension of the *Revelationes* of Pseudo-Methodius."

the end of a line, it draws the reader's eye in a way that the regular text might not have been able to accomplish. It was a whispered warning to remain pure and faithful – but an effective one.

The Second Age is again subtly but markedly different between Bede and the *CM*. In Bede's version from *DTR*, the Age begins with the rescue of the Ark, and ends with the Tower of Babel and the subsequent divine punishment of henceforth having multiple languages. The *CM* again places the focus on mankind. First, it repeats God's blessing to "increase and multiply" after Noah's safe landing, and mentions their devotion to His service. Then, rather than pointing out the Tower of Babel as the birth of multilingualism and as a root cause for the existence of multiple peoples, it actually and uncharacteristically ends on a hopeful note when this version sees the first appearance of the chosen people of Abraham, the one who stayed loyal while the rest fell to idolatry and demon worship once again. Curiously, this is the beginning of Bede's Third Age, which, in this version, ends when Saul is crowned the first king of Israel, and immediately proceeds to kill the priests and the prophets before being killed by "foreigners" himself. The *CM* adds much more detail here in a few brush strokes. It starts with a small vignette on the construction of the Temple, the virtues of the patriarchs, and, significantly, the remark that "for many of the *gentes*, salvation was provided through Joseph". This is interesting, in that it draws attention to the multiplicity of the *gentes* first, and the ability of Joseph (a prefiguration of Christ) to save those outside of the Chosen People, the *populus*.[67] In fact, the *CM* continues, it is this *populus* who cast off its responsibilities by demanding a king to be placed as an intermediary between them and God. In a dire warning about bad kingship, the *CM*'s third age ends with Saul, the first king, dead at the hands of the Philistines, together with "a large part of [his] people".

Saul's mistakes are rectified by the next two generations of kings, David and Salomon. The latter's construction of the Temple even inaugurated something of a golden era, which would only end when the *populus* once again falls from grace and is led into the Babylonian Captivity while Jerusalem, "together with the Temple" was burned to the ground.[68] They commit these sins, the *CM* notes, "together with their king".[69] Bede, meanwhile, continued to look for outside causes for the misery of the *populus*, pointing out that the Chaldeans demolished the Temple and exiled the people, but leaving open the question whether or not they had

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67 See, for instance, Caesarius of Arles, *Sermo* 89.2, trans. Müller, 39–40, who draws this connection quite explicitly. This text might have been known to the author of this version of the CM, given that two eleventh-century manuscripts of Caesarius' sermons from the same region are extant.

68 On the importance of the Temple in the world of Bede and under the Carolingians, see Darby, "Bede, Iconoclasm and the Temple of Solomon;" Pippal, "Relations of Time and Space;" Spatafora, *From the "Temple of God" to God as the Temple*.

69 On the importance of the good behaviour of kings for the well-being of their people, see Meens, "Politics, Mirrors of Princes and the Bible."

themselves to blame. To him, the fact that this was allowed to happen was lesson enough, without adding the moralising point about royal authority.

The emphasis on agency is significant, especially in connection with the role of Jerusalem in this passage and the fact that the *CM* signals how the Fourth Age ended with the destruction of the Temple – the construction of which had heralded the heyday of kingship in Israel. Bad leadership had inadvertently caused this destruction. The author seems to want to admonish rulers at the time of writing that their bad behaviour could lead their people into sin and thereby provoke the ire of God. An eschatological layer of meaning is then added by the inclusion of a small gloss on the word *metropolis*, reading "a metropolis is called that which is the head, and like a mother to the cities subordinate to it". It is a gloss dense with meaning, as it invokes both the Pauline image of the Church as a body with a head that ought to remain healthy, and the etymology of Jerusalem as the "mother city" of the Chosen People. This latter idea is visible in Paul's letter to the Galatians, for instance, but also in the works of the Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria, who in turn influenced many early Christian thinkers through Augustine's adaptation of his ideas.[70] Augustine is perhaps the clearest in giving this an eschatological bent, by stating in one of his sermons that human life, according to the letters of Paul, is essentially an exile from the Heavenly Jerusalem.[71] It is a journey through the earthly city to the "Jerusalem above, 'which is the mother of us all' (Gal. 4:25–26). [Paul] calls her a mother, like a metropolis; metropolis, you see, means mother city. So that is the one to which we must be hurrying along, knowing that we are still away, abroad, and on the way".[72] Combined with Bede's general idea of the Temple as a model for the unity of the Christians, the implication that bad rulership was the cause for the Babylonian captivity, and the image of the Heavenly Jerusalem invoked through the appended gloss, the author of the manuscript here shows the multitude of ideas present in the *CM*.[73] Following the clues given in this passage, it should be clear to the audience that the burning of the Temple signalled division in the Church. This was perhaps a reflection of concerns held by the author at the time, but, through the imagery of the *caput*, also a warning that personal piety and faith were as important as the agency of the collective. The appeal to purity implicit in the gloss on the First Age, on the marriages between the Sons of God and the Daughters of Men, seems poignant still.

"Cyrus, first [king] of the Persians, reigned 30 years. In order that the word of the Lord from the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, in the first year of his reign he loosed the captivity of the Hebrews. He caused about 50,000 people to return to Judaea, and restored to them 5,400 gold and silver vessels from the Temple of the

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70 Ben-Eliyahu, *Identity and Territory*, 69–73. On Philo's influence on Augustinian cosmology, see van Oort, *Jerusalem and Babylon*, 235–253.

71 Markus, *Saeculum*, 82–83.

72 Augustinus, *Sermo 346B: On our Journey through this Life*, trans. Hill, 80.

73 O'Brien, *Bede's Temple*, esp. 129–155.

Lord".[74] So Bede described the end of the Babylonian captivity in his *Chronica Maiora*, and the *CM* adds to this several passages from Orosius and Josephus, as well as the "original" insertion that Cyrus even "dissolved Babylon in the 20th year of his reign".[75] Chapter 10 Bede's *DTR* is less specific but does prefigure the upcoming split between the Jews and the Christians, stating only that "the people of Israel multiplied in Chaldea [and] some of them sought out Jerusalem, fledged in the plumage of heavenly yearning, and others abode amongst the rivers of Babylon, lacking all powers of flight".[76] The *CM* makes this ecclesiological reading more explicit: the "people of God" are freed, and received permission to rebuild the Temple. By implication, this permission had been granted by Cyrus, destroyer of Babylon and, according to Jerome's *Commentary on Jeremiah*, a possible prefiguration of Christ.[77] Once again, the author of the *CM* weaves together many different theological and exegetical threads in such a way that it shows they were aware of the tradition of treating history and the passing of time as proof of a divinely ordained plan. In that sense, it is interesting that the *CM* reverses the narrative agency presented in Bede's Fifth Age. To Bede, the Fifth Age ends when "the Jewish people was made tributary to the Romans because of the magnitude of their wicked deeds, and moreover was oppressed by foreign-born kings".[78] The *CM*, on the other hand, this time leaves out the sinfulness of the *populus* and instead states that it was "in accordance with the prophecy of the patriarch" that the foreigner Herodes became the ruler of Jerusalem, and commits many misdeeds. A gloss over this final phrase again recalls the "monsters" of the First Age, as it explains Herodes' "dishonouring" (*maculare*) with "deforming" (*deformare*), the word used to warn the readers about the consequences of mingling with those outside of the *populus*.[79] In both narratives, however, the rebuilding of the Temple is linked to the rise of the Romans as well: in the same year that Cyrus allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem, the dynasty of Tarquinius is expelled from Rome, and the Republic is proclaimed.[80]

The proposition that the Roman Empire provided the necessary preconditions for Christ – and consequently, Christianity – to be born is a trope throughout early medieval exegesis, and Bede and the *CM* are no exception.[81] In the narrative of the *Chronica Maiora* proper, the birth of Christ is prefaced with a short "state of the empire", ending with the remark that this was "the year in which the movements of all the peoples throughout the world were held in check, and by God's decree Caesar

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74 *DTR*, c. 66 (a. 3423), trans. Wallis, 182.

75 *CM*, ed. Claszen and Kats, 32–33.

76 *DTR*, c. 10, trans. Wallis, 40.

77 Jerome, *Commentary on Jeremiah*, 16:14–15, trans. Graves, 102.

78 *DTR*, c. 10, trans. Wallis, 40.

79 On fol. 2r, over the word *maculasset*, a scribe has added *id est deformasset et inquinasset* ("that is, he would deform and pollute [them]").

80 *CM*, ed. Claszen and Kats, 28–30; *DTR*, c. 66 (a. 3423), trans. Wallis, 182.

81 See Shoemaker, *The Apocalypse of Empire*, 38–63.

established genuine and unshakeable peace".[82] According to Bede, who was quoting Orosius here, the peace needed for God to descend to Earth was created through the activities of the Roman Empire – and indeed the importance of the emperors is one of the general themes retained by the author of the *CM* as well.[83] This political angle is absent in Chapter 10 of *DTR*, however: the condensation of the entire age prompted Bede to highlight the "recreation" of mankind in Christ's image and the creation of the Church instead. The *CM* emphasises this final point above all, drawing not just on the Crucifixion but also Pentecost – the typological reversal of the Tower of Babel – into the "morning" of the Sixth Age.[84] Not the "baptism" of the Church in Christ's blood marks the beginning of the end, but the moment when the Apostles are being sent out to preach salvation to the *gentes*.[85] It seems an obvious choice to include this here: the remainder of the *CM* is, after all, the story of the Franks as the successors of Rome and the latest standard-bearers of the Church. To their audience, the apostolic mission bringing the Word of God to them was an integral part of their story.

If the reworked prologue was part of the ninth-century text of the *CM*, the changes in emphasis and the additions made to Bede's short overview of the Six Ages speak volumes about the intentions of the author and the context in which he wrote. Bede used his eschatological model to present a series of certainties, to show in inexorable march of time. His *DTR* was intended to be didactic, but also functioned as a tool to understand how the passage of time was part of God's creation – and how calculating it would thus reveal greater truths about the world. While the author of the *CM* took this message on board, their writing goals were much more overtly apocalyptic and admonitory. They were not concerned with revealing the certainties of time and history, but with showing how the awe-inspiring immensity of Creation should lay bare the uncertainties about everybody's individual salvation and how that pertained to the development of the (Roman) Empire.[86] This becomes nowhere clearer than in the final part of the prologue to the *CM*, which tells of the coming of the Antichrist and the fate of mankind during the Seventh and Eighth Age.

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82 *DTR*, c. 66 (a. 3952), trans. Wallis, 195.
83 Kramer, "A Crowning Achievement."
84 See Friedman, *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought*, 64.
85 Cardó, *The Cross and the Eucharist in Early Christianity*, 24–34; see also Chazelle, *The Crucified God in the Carolingian Era*, 14–74.
86 Palmer, *The Apocalypse in the Early Middle Ages*, 130–159.

4 Additive Rhythms

In Bede's overview, the end of the Sixth Age is treated relatively briefly. "The evening of this Age, darker than all the others, will come in Antichrist's persecution", he wrote in Chapter 10, whereas the prologue to the *Chronica Maiora* tersely states that "like old age, this [Age] will come to an end in the death of the whole world".[87] This choice may be explained, firstly, because to Bede the primary use of this model was to explain "the reckoning of time" (which only comes in useful when humanity is still around), and secondly because *DTR* features several separate chapters on what happens after the end of the world. Two of these chapters, on "The Remainder of the Sixth Age" (c. 67) and "Three Opinions of the Faithful as to When the Lord Will Come" (c. 68) are actually featured directly after the *CM* in this manuscript as well.[88] However, in the context of the *CM* they serve to amplify the apocalyptic message made visible in the opening – especially given that a brief passage from the pseudo-Alcuinian *Liber de divinis officiis* touching on similar themes has been added after these chapters on the final page of the quire, albeit probably at a later point in time.[89]

Between the two of them, Chapters 67 and 68 of *DTR* combine a brief *apologia* for writing about the "course of the past", with an explanation that uncertainty about the Second Coming was an intrinsic and necessary part of being a good Christian. In fact, knowledge of history and the length of the preceding five ages would not confer unto the readers an indication of when the End might be. Bede explains that the Seventh Age had already begun when Abel, "Christ's first martyr", was slain, which, among others, means that the duration of each age varies enormously.[90] The Sabbath, the Day of Rest, thus runs simultaneously with the course of history, and the Eighth Age would only start after the Final Judgment.

The ideas contained in these two chapters are also prefigured in the final part of the prologue to the *CM*. As such, the certainty of the End of the World is combined with the uncertainty of its arrival, and the bulk of the "evening" of the Sixth Age is taken up not by musings about how to determine the end, but rather with emphasising the fear of the Antichrist and the Judgment that will follow his reign. The manuscript even betrays some lingering confusion about the exact nature of the Antichrist: originally, on fol. 2r, the text foretold the persecutions "before Christ" (*ante Christ*), but this was later corrected in accordance with Isidore's explanation that the Anti-Christ "is not, as certain simpletons suppose, called the An-

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87 *DTR*, c. 10, trans. Wallis, 40–41.

88 *DTR*, cc. 67–68, trans. Wallis, 239–241.

89 Pseudo-Alcuin, *Liber de divinis officiis*, 38–39, PL, cols. 1258–1246. See also Ryan, "Pseudo-Alcuin's *Liber de divinis officiis*;" Andrieu, "L'Ordo romanus antiquus et le Liber de divinis officiis du Pseudo-Alcuin."

90 Darby, *Bede and the End of Time*, 71–72; Cf. Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead Do Such Great Things?* 206.

tichrist because he is to come before (*ante*) Christ, that is, that Christ would come after him. This is not the case, but rather he is called Antichrist in Greek, which is 'against Christ' (*contrarius Christo*) in Latin, for ANTI in Greek means 'against' in Latin."[91] Nevertheless, through the vocabulary chosen, the author does imply parallels between the sack of Jerusalem, the cruelty of Herodes and the Antichrist, and the subsequent liberation of the faithful afterwards. This leads to the *CM*'s vision of the End: the moment when the machinery of the world breaks down and is given to flames – but not before some of the elect would have made it to heaven already. The point it is not the certainty of the End Times, but to make the audience realise that all they have to decide is what to do with the time that is given.

The final part of the *CM* mostly follows Bede's eschatological model, explaining how Abel was the first to go directly to heaven, thereby kickstarting the Seventh Age. Abel "the Just" would also be responsible for guiding the remaining righteous to heaven, while the rest had to wait for the incarnation of Christ to even be given a chance to attain salvation, and even then only after God would have ended the Seventh Age. This would be a divine act, not a naturally occurring phenomenon like the passing of night and day. More importantly, it would mark the reunification of body and soul, lead to the Eighth Age which exists outside of time and space.

The final paragraph of the prologue to the *CM* consists mainly of two biblical quotations. The first of these is a heavily adapted version of Proverbs 31:21 ("no servant of hers but is warmly clad"), which occurs in a series of aphorisms on the qualities of a good wife. In the *CM*, the focus shifts from the wife to the "king", who is made responsible for clothing his loyal subjects. As becomes clear from the second quotation, from Revelation 6:10–11, what is meant here is a metaphor about the "white robes" the elect will receive upon the beginning of the Eighth Age, when their sins have been washed away and their bodies resurrected. A "predetermined number" (*prefinitus electorum numerus*) will reach heaven already during the Seventh Age, receive a single robe, and have to wait until their numbers are filled and the Final Judgment can begin. In a passage reminiscent of one of Bede's *Homilies on the Gospel*, it is further explained that a second robe is given then, to signal not just the purity of the soul but also the (renewed) sinlessness of the body.[92] It is a passage rife with baptismal imagery, and is clearly meant to give hope to the readers, and to admonish them to strive for a level of purity that will entitle them to be clad in white. In the context of the chronicle that follows, it also functions, once again, as a reminder that the passage of time and the series of unfortunate events that takes place during the Six Ages need not mean that people should forget that salvation is theirs to attain in spite of (or: because of) these hardships.

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91 Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*, 8.11.20, ed. Lindsay; *Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, trans. Barney et al., 84.
92 Bede the Venerable, *Homily*, 2.12, trans. Martin and Hurst.

This brief exposition on apocalyptic clothing is interesting not only because it allows the author to unite the cosmological (i.e. the end of the world) with the personal (i.e. the clothes one will wear), but also because it gives us two more tantalising glimpses at the intentions behind the *CM* and the manuscript. Firstly, the word for robe, *stola*, has been glossed with "that which we call dalmatic" (*id est stole quod nos vocamus dalmaticas*).[93] More than a simple robe, a dalmatic is a liturgical vestment marking out members of the clergy. This may off course be a simple descriptor, explaining an archaic word with a more common one, occurring mostly – though not exclusively – in a liturgical or clerical context.[94] By emphasising that this is what "we" call this particular piece of clothing, it draws the audience in even closer while simultaneously creating a sense of election among the readers. Whoever would use that word is part of the in-group. And this in-group would consist of members of the clerical hierarchy, tasked, among others, with pastoral and liturgical functions meant to enable their flocks to attain salvation alongside them.[95] If the *CM* is indeed historiography with a pastoral function, this little gloss is one of the tools used by the author to emphasise that point.

Secondly, this final passage ties in to the final text in this section of the manuscript. After the *CM* and *DTR* chapters 67 and 68, the scribe has also added, on the bottom half of fol. 55v, several excerpts from Pseudo-Alcuin's *Liber de divinis officiis*, an early tenth-century liturgical treatise drawing on the work of Remigius of Auxerre and the controversial commentator Amalarius of Metz.[96] This part of the manuscript is badly damaged, and it falls well beyond the scope of this article to parse out the various bits taken from this work, but what is clear is that the excerpts all deal with the meaning of white clothes and their connection to the Resurrection, as a kind of addendum to the prologue. Equally interesting is what the inclusion of this passage tells us about the composition of BN lat. 4886. The *Liber de divinis officiis* clearly postdates the earliest possible moment the *CM* might have been composed. Nevertheless, the fact that it appears to have been added to fol. 55v as an afterthought makes it appear as if the entire first part, that is Bede's prologues, the additional prologue, the *CM* and *DTR* chapters 67–68 were intended as a single unit, or, more likely given the origin story of the *CM*, were copied as such. After the final line of Bede's text, the writing gets more cramped, the layout is not as neat

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93 Paris BN lat. 4886, fol. 2v. The editors, on page 4, n. v, have erroneously read *dagmaticas* here.
94 An interesting instance is a poem by Theodulf of Orléans, in which the *dalmatica* becomes part of the purifying ritual of bishops before the service: *Carmen* 2, ed. Dümmler, 453; for a broader context, see Collins, *The Carolingian Debate over Sacred Space*, 91–120. Cf. also Garipzanov, *Symbolic Language of Authority in the Carolingian World*, 251, who draws attention to the Byzantine imperial associations connected to (among others) that particular article of clothing.
95 Miller, "Reform, Clerical Culture, and Politics," esp. 313–314.
96 On Amalarius of Metz and his view of the past, see Ward, "The Order of History" on the influence of Augustinian modes of thinking on Remigius of Auxerre, see Pollmann, "Von der Aporie zum Code."

anymore, and it is obvious that the scribe had to fit these excerpts on this final page because a next quire would start with a new – planned – text.[97] To the extent that these pseudo-Alcuinian reflections on white clothing were thus not part of the original project, this strengthens the assumption that the preceding text of the *CM*, with its neat layout, organised glosses and elegant, almost archaising writing, went back to an earlier exemplar. Either way, the scribe clearly did not want to waste any space in this manuscript, even in a narrative dealing with the end of time.

5 After Bede

Following the *CM*, the manuscript contains a wealth of shorter texts that are as enigmatic as they are revealing. Most of these deal with matters of exegesis or edification, and many of the smaller treatises in the manuscript remain unedited to this day, and a fuller analysis of the entire codex would greatly enhance our understanding of ecclesiastical culture in late eleventh century Aquitaine.[98] What seems clear, however, is that these texts were not chosen haphazardly or for reasons of mere antiquarianism, but that they formed an archive for a local intellectual who was deeply interested in questions of time, space and personhood, and who had gathered many texts around that topic to help them teach, or to help them think.

While it does seem likely that the prologue to the *CM* in this text was part of the original text, and that the glosses were added by the same hand during the composition of the manuscript or shortly afterwards, it is difficult if not impossible to say if the glosses should be understood in a ninth- or eleventh-century context. Given the timeless quality of Bede's text, however, a case could be made for both options – or at least, that the scribe of Paris BN lat. 4886 felt the glosses would remain a useful guide for the readers towards a more moral interpretation of the narrative. The Book of Revelation was of enduring interest for intellectuals in the Carolingian Empire. This mentality was combined with the heightened emotional state of the intellectual elites in the entourage of Louis the Pious – many of whom hailed from the southern reaches of the Empire – who took a more proactive stance towards Church "reform" and applied the religious idealism formulated by previous generation to engender a veritable "penitential state of mind" at his court.[99] Awareness of one's personal sinful state and its impact on the world had become part and parcel

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97 Unfortunately, the next quire appears to have been damaged so we do not know exactly what the next part would have looked like.

98 But see the (as yet unpublished) dissertation by Bellarbre, *Composer avec le passé*.

99 On the optimism prevalent at the Carolingian court in the first decades of the ninth century, see Kramer, *Rethinking Authority in the Carolingian Empire*, 31–58; the idea of the "penitential state" is based on Mayke de Jong's analysis of the mentality at the Carolingian court in the first half of the ninth century: *Penitential State*.

of the political discourse of the early ninth century, when the *CM* was composed. This mentality is definitely visible in the prologue to the narrative, with its emphasis on Jerusalem and the Temple, as well as on the rulers of the people.

For a monastic writer in late eleventh-century Southern France, the outlook would be vastly different even if the message stayed essentially the same. The political fluctuations of the era, combined with the increasing independence of the emerging Duchy of Aquitaine, would make author and audience alike sensitive to the vicissitudes of power and the wages of kingship. In such a context, a narrative ending with the Carolingian heyday could convey a sense of nostalgia and give an example of a political structure to which one could aspire, while also providing an "anchor" to which a communal identity might be fastened. At a time when monastic communities were still subject to an ongoing and almost unchecked reforming process, creating the illusion of a stable and centralised empire might help individuals make sense of the world around them.[100] At the same time, the apocalyptic imagery contained within the framing of the *CM* would serve as a reminder that whatever political or religious dynamics were in the end no match for the Divine Judgment that would inevitably follow.[101]

Again, a more thorough analysis of the manuscript in its entirety is needed to shed more light on this issue. In either case, the adaptation of Bede's Augustinian influences helped give the *CM* in its entirety a moralistic, apocalyptic slant. This would have made perfect sense to audiences both in the ninth and the eleventh century, given their familiarity with this eschatological mode of thinking about history. To those readers who had read and reflected upon these opening pages, the happenings that marked the passage of time became laden with meaning – decisions by powerful people became a statement of why it was worthwhile to follow in their footsteps, and members of the Church were collectively made responsible for maintaining the purity of their faith. By adapting, continuing, and re-interpreting Bede's use of the Six Ages of the World, those involved in making Paris BN lat. 4886 showed what they thought mattered, in the end.

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100 Generally, see Remensnyder, *Remembering Kings Past*.

101 In this context, the legacy of Charlemagne's memory loomed large over subsequent framings of apocalyptic narratives: Latowsky, *Emperor of the World*. While it requires further study to see to what extent the specific framing of the Empire in the *CM* inadvertently became relevant again in the wake of the Crusades from the eleventh century onwards, the Carolingian Empire, its leaders and leading intellectuals definitely served as an inspiration to this new endeavour – for better, but certainly also for worse: Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory*, esp. 97–128, and most recently Rubenstein, *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream*, esp. 35–49 and 123–164.

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Abbreviations

CCSL   Corpus Christianorum Series Latina. Turnhout: Brepols, 1953–.
CSEL   Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1866–.
MGH Poetae   Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Poetae Latini Medii Aevi
MGH QQ zur Geistesgesch. Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Quellen zur Geistesgeschichte des Mittelalters
MGH SS   Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores in Folio
PL   Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina. Edited by Jacques-Paul Migne, Paris: Imprimerie Catholique, 1844–1855, 1862–1865.

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