THE LAST ROMAN EMPEROR TOPOS
IN THE BYZANTINE APOCALYPTIC TRADITION

The Arab conquest of the seventh century and continued Arab rule over
the Near East gave rise to a wave of apocalyptic writings across confes-
sional and denominational borders. In the context of this apocalyptic Zeit-
geist, Christian circles promoted a new ideological figure which became
one of the most influential literary topoi in medieval history, namely, the
Last Roman Emperor. This Last Roman Emperor was said to be coming at
a moment of great distress and to liberate Christians from the yoke of the
Arabs, pacify the world, and establish the pax Christiana that would endure
until the emperor’s abdication at the end of times.

The Last Roman Emperor topos is first attested in a late seventh-century
Syriac composition that is known today as the Apocalypse of Pseudo-
Methodius. Within years of its composition it was adapted into at least two
Syriac apocalyptic narratives and was subsequently translated first into
Greek and then into Latin. Old Church Slavonic, Armenian and Coptic. Throughout the medieval period, the impact of the Apocalypse of Pseudo-
Methodius and its apocalyptic topos was tremendous, inspiring both the
famed legends surrounding Frederich II of Hohenstaufen and the idio-
syncratic policies of Isaac II Angelos. At times it also determined public

provides here the oldest version of the second Latin recension, which he tentatively dates to
the year 732.

2 F. J. THOMSON, The Slavonic Translations of Pseudo-Methodius of Olympus’ Apoka-
preparing the much awaited critical edition of the Armenian Apocalypse of Pseudo-Method-
ius. F. J. MARTINEZ, The King of Rūm and the King of Ethiopia in Medieval Apocalyptic Texts
1990, n. 37).

3 See S. FRANK, Frederich II as the Last Emperor, in German History, 19, no. 3 (2001),

4 See Niketas Choniates’ account of Isaac II, who believed in the Pseudo-Methodian
prophecy and ordered the Xylokerkos gate in Constantinople to be walled up in order to
prevent crusading Germans from entering the city, see J. L. VAN DIETEN (ed.), Nicetae Choniatae Historia (CFHB, 11, vol. 1), Berlin - New York, 1975, p. 404 (lines 6-7). See further
C. MANGO, Byzantium, the Empire of New Rome, London, 1980, p. 212 and especially
behavior, such as on May 29, 1453 when the Constantinopolitans sought their final rescue at the column of Constantine.\(^5\) Out of this long-standing and wide-ranging tradition the present article treats the notion of the Last Roman Emperor in the earlier Byzantine apocalyptic tradition. My primary concern lies with the reconstruction and mapping of the Last Roman Emperor motif, starting with the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* in the late seventh century and going down to the (possibly) thirteenth-century *Last Daniel*. The overall purpose of this study is to better appreciate the complexity of this apocalyptic motif, whose ubiquitous influence is frequently noted but rarely looked at in detail.\(^6\)

**Methodology and Sources**

Generally, apocalyptic literature is expressive and symbolic in character rather than referential and factual.\(^7\) Further, apocalyptic language is evocative, elusive and often equivocal in meaning. A purely referential or historical understanding would not do justice to the literary nature of apocalyptic writing. Consequently, I consider the Last Emperor motif to be, first and foremost, a literary design which can be subjected to topical analysis. More to the point, the idea is to appreciate apocalyptic texts and their *topoi* as generic literary devices that interpret history by positing it within an eschatological framework. In so doing, apocalyptic texts write the history of the future and thereby construct a theology of history that bestows meaning upon the present.

Traditionally, apocalyptic texts have been appreciated as historical sources. Notwithstanding the difficulty of dating and the use of obscure and vague language, apocalypses have been studied in order to gain new historical information.\(^8\) Without denying the historical value of apocalypses,
I concentrate on the adaptation, modification, and appropriation of *topoi*, which came from a shared pool of apocalyptic themes. This pool was trans-confessional, involved various genres (apocalyptic and oracular literature, oral prophecies, liturgies, etc.), and drew its material from biblical and para-scriptural substrates. The present inquiry is devoted to the identification and mapping of the para-scriptural substrate of the Last Roman Emperor motif in the earlier Byzantine apocalyptic tradition.\(^9\)

A brief note on the terminology seems necessary. I will distinguish between two major motifs: the Last Roman Emperor and the Victorious Emperor. As will become clear, the initially unitary *topos* of a Last Roman Emperor became dissociated and fragmented into separate figures, most notably into the two related figures of the Victorious Emperor who carries out successful military campaigns and into the Last Roman Emperor who, first and foremost, abdicates at the end of time. Further, it is proper to distinguish between apocalypticism and eschatology. In fact, apocalypticism should be regarded as a subcategory of eschatology.\(^10\) Yet, in the present study I will use these terms synonymously. Since I deal exclusively with apocalyptic sources, the analyzed *topoi* are *per definitionem* also eschatological.

My analysis will be assisted by three methodological principles. First, I use the principle of *ultimum vaticinium ex eventu* for the approximate dating of the sources. This principle refers to a rule that Paul Alexander laid down years ago and according to which “every apocalypse must have been written not long after the latest event to which it alludes.”\(^11\) In other words, the last *vaticinium ex eventu*, which an apocalypse provides, indicates the estimated date of composition. The problem, of course, remains how to identify genuine *vaticinia*. As a rule of thumb I would advance – in accordance with Lorenzo DiTommaso’s observation\(^12\) – a second principle that might be called the principle of particularity, which proposes that historical descriptions tend to be more detailed than prophetic narratives. Thus, if a *topos* is particularly rich in detail, then one has good reason to assume that apocalyptic narratives as historical sources has spread also into *hadith* studies, see M. Cook, *Eschatology and the Dating of Traditions*, in *Princeton Papers in Near Eastern Studies*, 1 (1992), pp. 23-47.


it had a historical background. Third, I will make use of what I call the principle of *lectio brevior*, which I define as follows: a complex, unitary motif antedates an assembly of multiple *topoi* which portray an obvious resemblance to the complex motif. Here, I presuppose that complex literary motifs have a tendency to fragment.

The source material that I examine in the following consists of the original Syriac *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, two Syriac apocalypses that are closely related to it, its first Greek redaction, five apocalypses from the *Visions of Daniel* group and the *Andreas Salos Apocalypse*.13 This selection is determined in part by historical considerations and in part by the availability of the sources. Concerning the *Visions of Daniel* group, Lorenzo DiTommaso lists altogether thirteen Greek apocryphal Daniel apocalypses, eleven of which he considers to originate in or after the seventh century.14 Thus, eleven versions potentially contain material derived from Pseudo-Methodius. Three of these are still not edited. The five texts I have chosen are: the *Diegesis Danielis*, the *Pseudo-Chrysostomos Apocalypse*, *Daniel καὶ ἔσται*, the *Seven-Hilled Daniel*, and *Last Daniel*. Two of these, namely, the *Pseudo-Chrysostomos Apocalypse* and *Daniel καὶ ἔσται*, have been scrutinized by Alexander. His great care in dating these texts will be instrumental in proposing a hypothetical timeline, which tentatively advances a relative chronology of the sources. In order to guide the reader smoothly through the, at times, confusing textual situation, I will use as reference guides DiTommaso’s monograph on the apocryphal Daniel literature15 and David Thomas’ bibliographical compilation.16 Whenever given, I follow the respective stichometry of the editors.17

**List of Abbreviations**

*Apocalypse* [if followed by Roman numerals the reference is to the Syriac]


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13 Given the confinements of this article neither will I deal with the apocryphal Johannine tradition, nor with the *Oracles of Leo the Wise*.


15 See supra n. 12.


17 In the case of the *Visions of Daniel* I indicate a chapter number with the symbol §. For the *Edessene Apocalypse* and the *Gospels of the Twelve Apostles*, I refer to the page number(s).
The Syriac Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius presents the first unambiguous testimony to the concept of the Last Roman Emperor.\textsuperscript{18} It was composed, in all likelihood, around the year 691.\textsuperscript{19} The pseudonymous writer

\textsuperscript{18} It is still debated whether the Last Roman Emperor topos originated with Pseudo-Methodius, or whether it can be traced back to prototypes in the Sibylline literature, or derived from Messianic thought. For a brief overview of this debate, see MÖHRING, Der Weltkaiser der Endzeit, pp. 39-42, 49. See further H. SUERMANN, Der byzantinische Endkaiser bei Pseudo-Methodios, in Orients Christianus, 71 (1987), pp. 140-155 and more recently L. GREISIGER, Messias, Endkaiser, Antichrist. Politische Apokalyptik unter Juden und Christen des Nahen Ostens am Vorabend der arabischen Eroberung, Ph.D. dissertation, Halle-Wittenberg, 2011, pp. 169-178.

constructs an elaborate apocalyptic vision which follows a historical narrative that accounts for all of world history starting with creation and leading up to the late 680s CE. The historical section of this apocalypse ends with the description of the cataclysmic events of the *Second Fitna*, the “rage and raving” of the battling parties, the plague and famine of the years 686/687 CE, as well as 'Abd al-Malik’s oppressive taxation policy. At the climax of this dramatic account Pseudo-Methodius introduces a heroic literary figure who is presented as the typological equivalent of the Old Testament judge Gideon, Emperor Jovian and Alexander the Great. In essence, just as Gideon freed the Hebrews from the Midianite oppression in the fifth millennium, so will the Last Emperor defeat the descendants of the Midianites, i.e., the Ishmaelites, at the end of time. Furthermore, just as Emperor Jovian (r. 363-364) restored Christianity after his predecessor, Julian (r. 361-363), had tried to reinstate pagan cults, so will the Last Roman Emperor, too, restore Christian worship and practice to the faithful. Moreover, owing to a para-historical genealogy introduced by Pseudo-Methodius the Roman emperor is portrayed as a blood relative of Alexander the Great, thus proving that the Roman, i.e., Byzantine Empire is the last of the four Danielic kingdoms, which (in the Syriac tradition) was understood to be the kingdom of the Greeks, i.e., Byzantium. In short, Pseudo-Methodius constructs an elaborate typological scheme, in which the Roman emperor is presented as the sole legitimate representative of Christ on earth, who is the

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21 For another contemporary account of these events, see further S. BROCK, *North Mesopotamia in the Late Seventh Century: Book XV of John Bar Penkūyē’s Riš Melle*, in *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 9 (1987), pp. 51-74 (at pp. 68-71).
heir to Alexander the Great’s political-geographical realm and whose rule is, at the same time, divinely sanctioned.\textsuperscript{26}

While developing this typological framework, Pseudo-Methodius characterizes the career of the Last Roman Emperor. These characterizations, which became an integral part of the subsequent tradition, relate (1) his appearance at a moment of great distress, (2) his successful military campaign against the Arabs, together with his son, (3) the restoration of churches, and (4) the establishment of a time of peace and prosperity. Furthermore, (5) he is said to endure the arrival of Gog and Magog and (6) to move subsequently to Jerusalem where, after ten and a half years, (7) he abdicates at the arrival of the Antichrist.

\section*{II. The Edessene Apocalypse}

The Pseudo-Methodian Apocalypse was rapidly disseminated and, within years of its composition, was revised into an Edessene adaptation, from which a fragmented version has come down to us with the title and the beginning section missing.\textsuperscript{27} Concerning the date of composition Francisco Martinez argued for a late thirteenth-century origin, while Gerrit Reinink argued for a late seventh-century date.\textsuperscript{28} The greatest difficulty of the dating revolves around the peculiar mention of the year 694. The text reads: “When the said (number of) years, that week and a half, has passed, at the end of 694 years, then the king of the Greek will come forth […].”\textsuperscript{29} Reinink supposed that the anonymous author calculated the number 694 with the incarnation of Christ in mind. According to the Edessene chronology the year of the Incarnation equals 309 AG. If one adds 694 to this date

\textsuperscript{26} The divine sanction is implicit in the abdication motif of Apocalypse XIV.2-6, which is presented as a typological equivalent of Jovian’s coronation, see \textsc{Reinink, Die Syrische Apokalypse} (CSCO, 541), pp. 70-71, n. XIV.3(1, 4).

\textsuperscript{27} The text has been translated into German by H. \textsc{Suermann, Die geschichtstheologische Reaktion auf die einfallenden Muslime in der edessenischen Apokalyptik des 7. Jahrhunderts}, Frankfurt a.M., 1985, pp. 87-97 and into English by \textsc{Martinez, Eastern Christian Apocalyptic}, pp. 232-246. For an introductory study of this fragment, see G. J. \textsc{Reinink, Der edessenische “Pseudo-Methodius”}, in BZ, 83 (1990), pp. 31-45. For a comparison of the Edessene Apocalypse with the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius, see \textsc{Suermann, Die geschichtstheologische Reaktion}, pp. 162-171. For a general overview, see \textsc{Greisiger, The Edessene Apocalypse}, in BibHist, pp. 172-175.

\textsuperscript{28} For the arguments, see \textsc{Martinez, Eastern Christian Apocalyptic}, pp. 218-219 and \textsc{Reinink, Der edessenische “Pseudo-Methodius”}, pp. 34-38.

\textsuperscript{29} \textit{Edessene Apocalypse} p. 222 (f. 98v.). The translation is taken from A. \textsc{Palmer} and S. \textsc{Brock} (eds. and trs.), \textit{The Seventh Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles}, Liverpool, 1993, p. 245. For alternative translations, see \textsc{Martinez, Eastern Christian Apocalyptic}, p. 232 (f. 98v.), and \textsc{Suermann, Die geschichtstheologische Reaktion}, p. 86 (lines 18-20).
one arrives at 1003 AG, which is equivalent to 691/692 CE.\textsuperscript{30} This date fits well with the thesis about an increase of Syriac apocalypticism in the late seventh century.\textsuperscript{31} Reinink’s argument can be supported if one understands the mention of the one and a half year-weeks, i.e., ten and a half years, as an extension of the last year-week (mentioned in Pseudo-Methodius) by an additional three and a half years. Arguably, this increase was necessary because the Last Roman Emperor had yet failed to appear as prophesied by Pseudo-Methodius. Therefore, the 70-year rule of the Ishmaelites was promptly prolonged to a 73.5-year rule in order to keep the belief in an impending imperial restoration alive.\textsuperscript{32} Thus, one probable date for the \textit{Edessene Apocalypse} is the year 692 CE.\textsuperscript{33}

As for the content of the \textit{Edessene Apocalypse}, there are two important developments pertaining to the figure of the Last Roman Emperor. First, the typological connection with Constantine the Great, only implicit in the \textit{Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius}, is further elaborated. It is said that the Roman emperor moves out in order to defeat the Arabs when a horse, never ridden before, puts its head into a bridle which is made from the nails of the True Cross.\textsuperscript{34} This imagery is charged with various meanings. First, it emphasizes that the relic of the True Cross and its associated parts are in imperial hands.\textsuperscript{35} Second, it refers to the legendary \textit{inventio} of the True Cross and the nails of the crucifixion by Constantine’s mother, Helena, who


\textsuperscript{32} Edessene Apocalypse p. 222 (f. 98r.).

\textsuperscript{33} REININK, \textit{Der edessenische “Pseudo-Methodius”}, p. 38, n. 59. See also PALMER and BROCK, \textit{West-Syrian Chronicles}, p. 243. There are more possible dates to consider. See MÖHRING, \textit{Der Weltkaiser der Endzeit}, pp. 113-117.

\textsuperscript{34} Edessene Apocalypsei, pp. 222-223 (ff. 98v.-99r.).

\textsuperscript{35} Theophanes reports that Heraclius removed the True Cross from Jerusalem when he evacuated from Syria, see C. DE BOOR (ed.), \textit{Theophanis chronographia}, I, Leipzig, 1883, p. 337. Thus, Pseudo-Methodius and others could legitimately claim that the Roman emperor was in possession of the invincible Cross (cf. \textit{Apocalypse} IX.9), which he would use in his abdication (cf. \textit{Apocalypse} XIV.2-3).
had a bridle made of the recovered nails, which she sent to her son. Third, it uses the potent imagery of a never-ridden horse, which clearly refers to the colt Christ rode into Jerusalem. This allusion is designed to prefigure the imminent adventus of the Roman emperor into this very city. Thus, the motif of the bridle adds additional ideological support to the notion that the Roman emperor is divinely favored by connecting him with motifs reminiscent of Constantine the Great.

The other significant development in the Edessene Apocalypse is the tentative dissociation of the Last Roman Emperor from the emperor who would liberate the Christian commonwealth from the Arab foe driving them back into the desert. The Edessene Apocalypse foretells that a Liberator, or Victorious Emperor, would move out with his son in the year 694 and crush the Ishmaelites before ushering in a 208-year-long period of general prosperity and peace, which in turn is followed by the traditional eschatological sequence of the onslaught of the unclean peoples of the North and the appearance of the Antichrist. Only then, after the entire eschatological drama has been played out, will the Last Emperor ascend to Golgotha in order to abdicate and end all earthly power. More than 210 years will pass after the Christian reconquest of the Near East. It is unlikely that this Last Emperor is identical with the Victorious Emperor. However, the text does not expressly indicate that these rulers are not to be identified. Be that as it may, by introducing a relatively long interim period between the liberation from the Arab dominion and the arrival of the Antichrist the author negates the immediacy of the ultimate end.

36 Suermann and Reinink point out that this theme originates from the Syriac Judas Cyriacus Legend, see SUERMANN, Die geschichtstheologische Reaktion, pp. 164-165; REINKINK, Der edessenische “Pseudo-Methodius”, p. 41; IDEM, The Romance of Julian, pp. 82-83; IDEM, Syrische Apocalypse (CSCO, 541), p. xlii, n. 53. More precisely, the topos of the discovery of the True Cross and the nails belong to the Helena Legend, a tradition that started in the second half of the fourth century. The Judas Cyriacus Legend presents a fifth- or sixth-century Syriac version of this legend. See further H. J. W. DRUVERS, Helena Augusta. The Mother of Constantine the Great and the Legend of Her Finding of the True Cross, Leiden, 1992, pp. 79-180. For the motif of the bridle made of the nails of the crucifixion, see ibidem, esp. p. 80, p. 171

37 Mk 11:2-11, Lk 19:30-41. See REINKINK, Der edessenische “Pseudo-Methodius”, p. 41.

38 It is not entirely clear what the number 208 is supposed to signify. Perhaps this numeric value together with the number 694 and the “two years and eight months” (the period that the unclean peoples of the North are said to rule, see Edessene Apocalypse p. 224 (f. 101r.)) is meant to approximate the crucial number 1000.

39 It is noteworthy that the Last Roman Emperor abdicates after the appearance and death of the Antichrist. This reversal implies that the anonymous author does not agree with Pseudo-Methodius in considering the Last Emperor’s abdication to be the removal of the katechôn, i.e., a necessary precondition for the Antichrist to appear.

40 This prolongation of the eschatological narrative might be due to the difficulty of attributing Ethiopian provenance to Justinian II, the emperor who was anticipated to rule in the
III. THE GOSPEL OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES

The Gospel of the Twelve Apostles, which has been rather unanimously dated to the early eighth-century, retells the story of Christ based on the synoptic Gospels and the beginning of the Acts while supplementing it with three interrelated revelations. These three revelations are attributed to the apostles Simon Kepha (i.e., Peter), James, and John. The apocalypses incorporate numerous elements of Pseudo-Methodius, such as the motif of burdensome tribute, the fear of widespread apostasy, the blasphemous proposition that Christians have no Savior, and several references to a victorious emperor. In what follows, I will treat the last motif, which strongly resembles the Pseudo-Methodian concept of the Last Roman Emperor.

The apocalypse of Simeon Kepha assigns the tribulations of the Christian world to the Chalcedonian heresy, that is, to those who “divide our Lord.” The emphasis of this first revelation lies on the fragmented state of the Church which will be overcome at the end of times. Drijvers convincingly demonstrated that the second revelation, i.e., the apocalypse of James, presents a series of vaticinia ex eventu that narrate the deeds of Constantine the Great such as his war against Licinius in 324 CE and the issuing of the Edict of Milan. The text ends with the prophecy that a man “from his [i.e., Constantine’s] seed shall rise up in his place,” who will rule the earth in peace at the end of times. The last revelation, that is, the apocalypse year 695/696. This difficulty could arise from a literary reading of the para-historical genealogy designed by Pseudo-Methodius. See REININK, Der edessenische “Pseudo-Methodius”, p. 42. Cf. P. MAGDALINO, The Year 1000 in Byzantium, in IDEM (ed.), Byzantium in the Year 1000, Leiden, 2003, p. 253.


Twelve Apostles p. 32.


Twelve Apostles p. 34.
attributed to John the Evangelist,\textsuperscript{48} describes the Arab conquest and the subsequent hardships that Christians have to endure until divine intervention will cause internal strife among the Arab factions.\textsuperscript{49} Then a “man from the North” will rise, who defeats the Ishmaelites by exploiting their weakened cohesion. He will chase them back into the desert, where the Arabs will be met by a devastating plague.\textsuperscript{50}

There is good reason to identify the “man from the North” with the man “from the seed” of Constantine. Provided that the three short apocalypses are concerned with the same future, the prospect of final reunification of the Churches, the reference to an ultimate peaceful ruler descending from Constantine the Great and the notion of a Victorious Emperor who defeats the Arab foe all seem to converge onto the motif of a Constantine redivivus.\textsuperscript{51} Arguably, the miaphysite author considered the time of Constantine the Great a period in which the Church was still united. Moreover, Constantine was a successful general, who would be the type of character that could successfully engage the Arabs. The imagery of a Roman emperor defeating the Ishmaelites together with the various other motifs taken from Pseudo-Methodius substantiate the interpretation that the Victorious Emperor in the \textit{Gospel of the Twelve Apostles} is an adaptation of the Pseudo-Methodian Last Roman Emperor \textit{topos}. It is important to note that the use of this \textit{topos} is reduced to its military function and extended by the notion of Church reunification.\textsuperscript{52} The essential motifs of sudden appearance and abdication are missing without mitigating the divine legitimacy of the emperor.\textsuperscript{53} In sum, two out of the three apocalyptic narratives contained in the \textit{Gospel of the Twelve Apostles} promote a curtailed version of the Last Roman Emperor motif, which is reduced to its military function against the Arabs.

\textsuperscript{48} This apocalypse is attributed to John the Evangelist, who was considered to be also the author of the \textit{Revelation of John}. That is why in the opening scene one finds imagery reminiscent of the \textit{Revelation of John}. See DRIVERS, \textit{The Gospels of the Twelve Apostles}, pp. 199-200.

\textsuperscript{49} The hope that internal strife would terminate the Arab dominion was born out during the \textit{Second Fitna}. It was promoted, for instance, by John bar Penkäyē in his \textit{Rīš Mellē} or \textit{Summary of World History}, see BROCK, \textit{North Mesopotamia in the Late Seventh Century}, p. 73.

\textsuperscript{50} \textit{Twelve Apostles} pp. 38-39.

\textsuperscript{51} See DRIVERS, \textit{The Gospels of the Twelve Apostles}, p. 201 and IDEM, \textit{Christians, Jews and Muslims}, p. 73. It should be noted that while the \textit{Twelve Apostles} portray the Victorious Emperor as a second Constantine, the Pseudo-Methodian typology of a second Gideon is dropped. The same development can be observed in the \textit{Edessene Apocalypse}.

\textsuperscript{52} Although, the reunification of the Church is not explicitly addressed in Pseudo-Methodius, the Last Roman Emperor is portrayed as the emperor of all Christians regardless of their confessional adherence since Pseudo-Methodius persistently avoids to give any confessional point of reference. Further, the emphasis on his rebuilding of churches (\textit{Apocalypse} XIII.16) suggests that this emperor would establish order and concordance in ecclesiastical affairs.

\textsuperscript{53} Cf. SUERMANN, \textit{Die geschichtstheologische Reaktion}, pp. 185-186.
The first Greek redaction of the Syriac Apocalypse is on the whole a faithful translation, which must have been carried out between 700 and 710 CE. However, as any translation, this Greek redaction too, adapts the text to a different audience, thus being compelled to use paraphrases and terminological rewording. For instance, the translation systematically replaces the term “of the Greeks” (δ-yawnɔyé) with “of the Romans” (tôn R[ yöntemaiον]). In certain cases the translation simplifies the choice of words, such as rendering the term “wooden vehicle” (ṛḳ̣ḅ̣ê d-qayṣô) (V.4.13) to read “ship” (ναν̣v) ([5] 4,3). When it comes to toponyms or the names of individuals mentioned in the apocalypse, the reader is faced with honest attempts to keep the translations intelligible. To give just one example, in chapter V.6.9, the Codex Vaticanus syriacus 58 reads mwny or Mûnî, while the Beinecke Syriac 10 reads mwy or Mûyâ providing various possible interpretations, among which the Greek translator chose the reading reminiscent of the Umayyads, thus he rendered the term to read Οûmaía ([5] 6,2). It becomes clear that some of the names mentioned in the Syriac version were obscure even for the anonymous translator.

It seems significant that the Greek translator considered the close association of the Last Emperor with the term “savior” (pärũqâ) at the climax of the dramatic account (XIII.6) to be somewhat problematic. He therefore translated it with the rather abstract term ἄναρρυσι (rescue) in an attempt to reduce the association of the rising Roman Emperor with the Messiah, i.e., Christ. Other important changes are the omission of the preamble, which contains the reference to Mount Sinjâr in northern Mesopotamia, the probable place of origin of the Syriac Apocalypse, the adjustment of the numerical data correcting the ten year-weeks in the Syriac to read seven


55 See AERTS and KORTEKAAS, Die Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius, p. 16.

56 See REININK, Syrische Apokalypse (CSCO, 541), pp. 13-14, n. V.6(1).

57 For example in Apocalypse III.1.2 the Syriac has the city name Tmnwn, which is derived from the Syriac word for “eight” (tmãñe). The Greek, however, reads Thãnnôν which is reminiscent of ôòμινος (bush). Thus, the Greek does not reflect the originally intended meaning. See AERTS, Zu einer neuen Ausgabe der “Revelationes”, p. 125.
year-weeks in the Greek, and a general expansion of biblical citations designed to provide further clarification.

Most important, though, are three interpolations that can be found in the first Greek recension. First, in [10] 4.1-9 the translator rephrases the Syriac narration of the destruction of the second Jewish temple by providing a text which corresponds almost verbatim with a section of Anastasius of Sinai’s *Disputation against the Jews*. Second, the very last paragraphs of the apocalypse ([14] 11-14) are inflated by the motif of Enoch and Elijah refuting the Antichrist and subsequently being slain by him, as well as by a concise doxology. Thirdly, and most importantly, in chapter [13] 7-10 one finds a lengthy addition recounting the Arab advance on Constantinople and the ensuing siege, probably the siege of 717/718.

This interpolation is inserted at the dramatic peak of the Apocalypse. Following the blasphemous Arab exclamation that Christians have no rescue (ἀνύρρυστος), and prior to the awakening of the Roman emperor, it tells about three Arab armies that advance through Anatolia and converge onto the imperial capital. They lay siege on Constantinople and penetrate the land walls at the Xylokerkos gate, north of the Golden Gate. The Arabs fight their way through the streets until they reach the Forum of the Ox located along the Mese, the primary thoroughfare through the city. There the Ishmaelites are being beaten back by divine intervention. The Arabs are


60 Anastasius Sinaita, *Disputation adversus Iudaos*, PG 89, 1212B. Michael Knosko speculates about the possible encounter of Anastasius with Pseudo-Methodius at Saint Catherine’s monastery, therefore explaining the textual resemblance with direct personal contact and the shared ideological agenda of promoting the Byzantine Kaiseridee, see M. KNOSKO, *Das Rätsel des Pseudomethodius*, in *Byz.*, 6 (1931), pp. 293-295. That being said, it is far from clear which of the two authors borrowed from the other. See further KAEGI, *Byzantium and the Early Islamic Conquests*, pp. 231-235.

61 Enoch and Elijah were traditionally understood to be the two unnamed witnesses mentioned in Rev 11:3-11. See W. BOUSSET, *Der Antichrist in der Überlieferung des Judentums, des neuen Testaments und der alten Kirche*, Göttingen, 1895, pp. 134-139 and more recently E. S. CONSTANTINOU, Andrew of Caesarea and the Apocalypse in the Ancient Church of the East: *Studies and Translation*, Ph.D. dissertation, Quebec, 2008, p. 120, n. 573. The addition of the Enoch and Elijah motif can already be found in the *Edessene Apocalypse* p. 226 (f. 103r.).

62 It is noteworthy that while the Syriac Apocalypse persistently avoids giving any confessional statement, the first Greek redaction inserts a confessional statement in *Apocalypse* [14] 11,3: ὃν ἐξηγορήσεν τῷ οἴκετι αὐτῆς (whom he (i.e., Christ) redeemed with his own blood). This statement attests a Cyrillean (i.e., Chalcedonian or Miaphysite) confession. I thank Professor István Perczel for calling my attention to this statement.

being put to flight just before the Last Roman Emperor is about to awake in the subsequent section. In all likelihood, the insertion of Deut 32:30 at the end of this interpolation is intended to redirect the emphasis onto the imminent arrival of the Last Emperor who would irrevocably defeat the Arabs.64

Concerning the date of the interpolation, internal evidence points to the siege of 717/718. The text mentions that the siege started during a cold winter, while Theophanes reports that the winter of 716/717 was exceptionally cold causing much hardship for the besieging Arabs.65 Thus, a possible terminus post quem of the interpolation is the winter of 716/717. Since the breaching of the walls did not happen, this information should be considered a genuine prophecy. In accordance with the principle of ultimum vaticinio ex eventu, one can argue that the date of the interpolation predates the outcome of the siege.66 Thus, it is plausible to propose an early eighth-century date.67 If true, this would mean that the appearance of the Last Roman Emperor became early on associated with the fate of the imperial capital. Furthermore, the interpolation demonstrates how the apocalyptic narrative of Pseudo-Methodius was adopted for the Byzantine audience, whose interest in imperial matters centered on the Queen of Cities.

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64 Cf. Diegesis Danielis §4.8-9. An interesting intertextual parallel can be found in the Jewish apocalypse of Sefer Zerubbabel — a work probably composed in the early 630s — where the same biblical allusion is used in the description of the final apocalyptic battle. See Reeves, Trajectories in Near Eastern Apocalyptic, p. 63.


67 In contrast, Aerts proposed a later date. He argues that references to later history can be found in the text such as the Arab advance into Thrace in the year 781. See AERTS and KORTEKAAS, Die Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius: Die ältesten griechischen und lateinischen Übersetzungen (CSCO, 570), Leuven, 1998, p. 48, n. [13] 7.1ff and AERTS, Zu einer neuen Ausgabe der “Revelationes”, p. 130. Cf. BRANDES, Die Belagerung Konstantinopels, p. 83. However, it is possible that the interpolation was further interpolated later on. Cf. ibidem, p. 88. Finally, the very anxiety about the possible capture of the city can best be explained if one considers the interpolation to be composed before the outcome of the siege was known.
The Visions of Daniel

Byzantine apocalyptic texts are essentially pseudonymous. A popular authority under whose name Byzantine apocalyptists chose to write was the prophet Daniel. The canonical Book of Daniel provides the scriptural foundation for bridging the intrinsic contradiction between the apocalyptic emphasis on the impermanence and eventual destruction of any earthly order and the state ideology that promoted the image of an invincible and sustaining earthly rulership. Thus, Byzantine apocalyptists readily adopted the Danielic eschatological scheme (Dan 2 and 7), which – following St. Jerome’s authoritative interpretation – was understood to have foretold that the last of the four earthly kingdoms would be the Roman Empire, which would last until the end of time. Consequently, the Byzantine Empire was considered to be temporally the closest realm to the Kingdom of Heaven. From the perspective of the eschatological focal point, i.e., the Parousia, the Kingdom of Heaven and the Byzantine Empire seemed to converge, which in turn legitimized the latter’s exceptional status in the divine providential scheme. The marked interest in integrating the empire into the historicizing eschatological framework of the Book of Daniel explains (to a large extent) why virtually all apocryphal Daniel apocalypses contain numerous vaticinia ex eventu. What is more, this focus on apocalyptic historiography, together with the emulation of the Pseudo-Methodian narrative scheme and the prevalent attribution to Daniel establish the generic quality of the Visions of Daniel corpus, five of which will be treated in the following.

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68 Pseudonymity is essential because it renders apocalyptic narratives authoritative and thus credible. The authority of a church father such as Methodius, or of a prophet such as Moses, Elijah or Daniel was unquestionable.


70 The underlying idea here is the notion of approaching the divine. Temporal and topographical proximity as well as imitation of sacred behavior were recognized means by which earthly matters could converge onto the divine. Cf. D. M. Nicol, Byzantine Political Thought, in J. H. Burns (ed.), The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought c. 350-c. 1450, Cambridge, 1988, p. 52 and Magdalino, The History of the Future, pp. 11-15.


72 Yet, as I will show below, at least one Vision of Daniel was attributed to John Chrysostom, while other versions were also attributed to Methodius of Patara – so for instance, the Diegesis Danieltis and Last Daniel.

The *Diegesis Danielis* is an apocalyptic text that has come down to us in two manuscripts. While the Montpellier manuscript (M) does not attribute the composition to anyone in particular, the Bodleian manuscript (B) attributes it to “our Bishop Methodius.” Thus, already the title shows how closely this composition was associated with its Pseudo-Methodian source.

The apocalypse opens with an attack of the Ishmaelites on the Byzantine capital. The first chapters narrate the Arab advance through Anatolia and the ensuing siege of the “Seven-Hilled” Constantinople. At a most desperate moment (5.1-2), manuscript B tells about a forlorn prayer to God. Both manuscripts continue in stating that a divine voice will intervene which intimidates the Ishmaelite enemy and wakes up a Roman emperor who was previously thought dead and useless. This Awakening emperor’s name is said to start with *kappa* (5.3-7). Together with his two sons, this Roman emperor will arrive from the east to the capital. They slaughter the Ishmaelites, expel them from the streets of Constantinople and enslave the survivors (5.10-6.6). This victory will usher in a time of great prosperity and peace. Territories are regained, cities and churches rebuilt, and military weapons will become obsolete (6.14-21). The emperor, who is called after a wild animal (M), and his sons will die after 30 prosperous years.

The next three chapters (following Berger’s stichometry) deal with the gradual decay and final destruction of the imperial city. First, a wicked man from the north is said to perpetrate various iniquities (7.1-6). He is followed by either a foreign, tall man from the south (M) or by a foreign, foul woman (B), who will reign over the capital (8.1). Next, the apocalypse warns the Seven-Hilled Babylon, i.e., Constantinople, and predicts its eventual sinking into the sea. The section closes with an enigmatic note that hereafter...

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74 According to Berger the apocalyptic text contained in *Venetus, Marcianus gr. VII 22* fols. 14-16 provides a third manuscript of the same composition, although shorter. It is noteworthy, that this is the only manuscript that attributes the work to the prophet Daniel. See BERGER, *Daniel Dieges*, pp. 8-9. However, DiTommaso considers it a witness of another Daniel apocalypse, see DiTommaso, *The Book of Daniel*, p. 131. For DiTommaso’s overview of the *Diegesis Daniels*, see ibidem, pp. 130-141, 356-359. See further P. UBERNA, *The Greek Apocalypse of Daniel*, in BibHist, pp. 414-418.

75 The title of the Montpellier, *Cod. Fac. Med.* 405, fols. 105r-115 (M) reads: Δήγησις περὶ τῶν ἡμερῶν τοῦ Ἀντιχρίστου τὸ πῶς μέλλει γενέσθαι καὶ περὶ τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος (Narrative about the Days of the Antichrist, How He will come into Being and about the End of Times). *Oxford, Bodleian Library, Codex Canonicus* 19, fols. 145-152 (B) has the inscriptio: Τοῦ ἐν ἁγίως πατρὸς ἡμῶν Μεθοδίου ἐπισκόπου λόγος περὶ τῶν ἐσχάτων ἡμερῶν καὶ περὶ τοῦ Ἀντιχρίστου (Discourse of our Holy Father Methodius about the Last Days and the Antichrist).

76 Manuscript M reads *kappa*, while manuscript B reads *éta*.
imperial power is transferred from Constantinople to Rome (9.9). The remainder of the text, which makes up almost half of the entire composition, deals with the Antichrist, the fate of the Jews, and the traditional episode of the two witnesses, Enoch and Elijah (here supplemented by the Evangelist John) being slain.

The main concern (of the first half of the composition) lies with the defeat of the besieging Arabs and the ensuing imperial recovery, which is dependent on the Victorious Emperor and his prosperous 30-year reign. After his death the empire succumbs to moral decay, which culminates in the destruction of the imperial capital. Thus, the motif of the Pseudo-Methodian Last Roman Emperor is reduced to its military and governing function. The abdicating function is altogether omitted. Finally, it is unclear what the *translatio imperii* from the destroyed Constantinople to Rome is supposed to suggest and whether it relates to the removal of the *katechôn*.

Berger identifies the Victorious Emperor who has the name of a beast with Leo III (r. 717-741). Indeed, Leo the Isaurian does fit the other two characteristics given in the text: he arrived from the Eastern provinces and his baptismal name starts with a *kappa*, i.e., Konon. In addition, Cyril Mango conjectures that originally the Victorious Emperor was intended to be Theodosius III (r. 715-717). He argues on the basis of manuscript M, which reads that the initial letter of the liberator emperor is *éta* (5.7). The numeric value of this letter is eight, which (if retranslated according to the alphabetical sequence) might refer to the eighth Greek letter, i.e., *theta*, which is the initial of Theodosius. Furthermore, manuscript M does not call the emperor a wild animal. Thus, Mango argues, manuscript M assigns the role of the Victorious Emperor to Theodosius III, while manuscript B reassigns it to his immediate successor, Leo III. Be that as it may, the expectations pertaining to the Victorious Emperor did not materialize, thus the last historical fact provided in the apocalypse is the start of a siege of Constantinople, arguably the siege of 717/718. Therefore, similarly to the lengthy interpolation of the first Greek redaction of Pseudo-Methodius, the

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77 For a possible interpretation, see the early-seventh century commentary on the *Revelation of John* by Andrew of Caesarea (d. 614), where one encounters the consideration that “the ancient honor would again return to her [i.e., Rome].” J. SCHMID (ed.), *Studien zur Geschichte des griechischen Apokalypse-Texts*, I, *Der Apokalypse-Kommentar des Andreas von Kaisareia* (Münchener Theologische Studien, 1), Munich, 1955, p. 181.

78 BERGER, Daniel Diegese, pp. 32-33.


80 MANGO, *Saint Andrew the Fool Reconsidered*, p. 312.
Diegesis Danielis can be dated tentatively to the time of the second Arab siege.\(^81\)

The characterization of the Victorious Emperor as having been considered “dead and utterly useless” (νεκρόν ὁντα καὶ εἰς οὐδὲν χρησιμεύοντα) needs to be understood as belonging to the topical repertoire taken from Pseudo-Methodius.\(^82\) It is furthermore important to note that if Mango’s proposed dating to the winter of 716/717 is correct then this means that the wicked man from the north and the foul and foreign woman (B) are not historical characters.\(^83\) Although the temptation is great to identify the foul woman with Empress Irene (r. 797-802), I would caution against this identification for two reasons.\(^84\) First, I explained above the principle of particularity which proposes that historical reviews are usually more detailed than prophetic visions. The mention of the foul woman does not amount to more than two short sentences which contain little specification about her reign or character.\(^85\) Thus, the scarcity of information about this figure possibly indicates that this is a mere literary motif. Second, the mention of the foul woman is immediately followed by a characterization of Constantinople that closely follows the description of the Seven-Hilled Babylon in the Revelation of John.\(^86\) The choice of words, the colors and ornaments clearly reflect the imagery used by John of Patmos. Therefore, I argue that the brief mention of the foul woman in chapter eight of the Diegesis Danielis introduces the theme of Babylon as the great harlot. The foul woman might easily be a personification of the sinfulness of the imperial capital, just as the Revelation of John uses the harlot metaphor in reference to Babylon.

\(^{81}\) Ibidem, p. 313, HOYLAND, Seeing Islam, pp. 298-299. BRANDES, Die Belagerung Konstantinopels, p. 86. Pace Berger, who reads the obscure note about the translatio imperii from Constantinople to Rome as a vaticinium ex eventu referring to Charlemagne’s coronation in the year 800. BERGER, Daniel Diegese, pp. 33-37.

\(^{82}\) See the verbatim correspondence between Diegesis Danielis §5.5 and Apocalypse [13] 11. This borrowing, already observed by HOYLAND, Seeing Islam, p. 299, n. 127, rectifies Mango’s puzzlement (MANGO, Saint Andrew the Fool Reconsidered, p. 312) of how these epithets could have been attributed to Leo III. The same observation also explains why the Victorious Emperor appears together with his two sons, although Leo III had only one son. Cf. Diegesis Danielis §5.10 with Apocalypse [13] 11.

\(^{83}\) Cf. MANGO, Saint Andrew the Fool Reconsidered, p. 311.


\(^{85}\) Diegesis Danielis §8.1-2(B): καὶ ὁπίσω αὐτοῦ βασιλεύει γυνὴ ἐπὶ τὴν Ἑπτάλοφον μιμάτι καὶ ἄλλοφυλος. καὶ συγκαθάστηκεν ἐπὶ τῶν πλευρῶν τοῦ νότου τῆς Ἑπταλόφου. For a speculative interpretation of the characteristics μιμάτι καὶ ἄλλοφυλος as referring to Irene, see DITOMMASO, The Book of Daniel, p. 139.

\(^{86}\) Cf. Daniel Diegese §9.1-3 with Rev 17:3-4, 17:9, 18:10 and 18:19 and Diegesis Diegese §8.2(B) with Rev 17:3.
(i.e., Rome). Consequently, the woman’s figure should not be read as a historical person but as a literary motif. The same case can be made concerning the respective passages in Last Daniel and in the Andreas Salos Apocalypse.

VI. PSEUDO-CHRYSOSTOMOS APOCALYPSE

The Pseudo-Chrysostomos Apocalypse counts among the Visions of Daniel because its title explicitly refers to the authority of Daniel and because it presents a close adaptation of the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius. DiTommaso might be correct in conjecturing that originally this apocalypse circulated under the name of Methodius before being later revised and re-attributed to John Chrysostom. Alexander discerned four parts in the text. The first section (§§1-3) reproduces various Pseudo-Methodian accounts concerning Alexander the Great’s para-historical genealogy and deeds, the common claim that the Roman Empire is the last legitimate earthly realm and the political significance of the life-giving (ξωοποιός) True Cross. The second section of the apocalypse (§4) presents the only original part of the apocalypse. It tells about the capture of Constantinople by the Ishmaelites and their advance to

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87 See Schmid, Apokalypse-Kommentar des Andreas von Kaisareia, p. 181. At the same time, concerning the origin of the foul woman motif, one should not forget about possible Sibylline influence, see P. Alexander, The Oracle of Baalbek. The Tiburtine Sibyl in Greek Dress, Washington, DC, 1967, p. 21 (lines 200-204), which contains an obscure reference to a woman at the end of times who can not find a man (καὶ οὐ μὴ ἔχῃ [ἐνθρόνοι])]. See infra n. 138. Cf. Andreas Salos Apocalypse 864A (line 162). Furthermore, the chronicler Malalas recorded an incident in 541, when a woman in Constantinople prophesied the sinking of the city, see I. Thurn (ed.), Ioannis Malalae Chronographia (CFHB, 35), Berlin - New York, 2000, pp. 406-407 (book 18, section 90).

88 However, I do concede the possibility that the foul women motif is a later interpolation into ms. B. If this were so then the potent imagery of the imperial capital as the adulterous harlot of Rev 17 would have provided the topical framework into which a later scribe easily integrated an obscure reference to the first female autocrat who came to rule over the “Seven-Hilled” city.


Attalia in Pamphylia (ἐως Ἄτταλὸν). Alexander understands this passage as a crucial *vaticinium ex eventu* which enables him to date this apocalypse. His argument rests on the notion that al-Muṭasim (r. 833-842), after taking Amorium in 838, intended to move onto Constantinople. He dispatched an armada from Syria which was to advance on the Byzantine capital. Alexander speculates that the Muslim fleet would have needed to take the naval base of Attalia in order to safely advance up the Aegean. Thus, Alexander concludes: “Small wonder that when in 842 Apodinar’s [i.e., the Muslim naval commander] squadron captured Attalia, an anonymous Byzantine apocalyptist … should have seen in this event a threat to the capital itself.” Although there is no evidence supporting the claim that the Arab fleet actually took Attalia, the text supports Alexander’s assumption for it uses the aorist saying that “Ishmael [already] came as far as Attalia,” while a few lines above the apocalyptist uses the future tense prophesizing that “they [i.e., the Ishmaelites] will enter the Seven-Hilled City.” Thus, I agree with Alexander on dating the composition around the year 842. The second section closes with the blasphemous Arab insult that the Romans have no rescue (ἀναρρυσις), which presents another (almost verbatim) borrowing from the Greek redaction of Pseudo-Methodius.

Alexander suggests that the third section of the apocalypse (§5) reproduces elements from the (now lost) Greek original of the *Slavonic Daniel*. In essence, he persuasively argues that the *Slavonic Daniel* is based on a Greek original that was composed in Sicily between 827 and 829. From this composition, Pseudo-Chrysostomos appropriated, for instance, the expression “the so-called Rebel City.” It is in this city that an emperor of humble origin will be revealed, whom everyone had considered useless or even dead. His name is said to start with the letter lambda.

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93 Pseudo-Chrysostomos Apocalypse §4.5.
98 DiTommaso refers to this work as the Slavonic Vision of the Prophet Daniel on the Emperors. For his treatment of this apocalypse, see DiTOMMASO, The Book of Daniel, pp. 145-151, 504-507.
99 ALEXANDER, Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition, pp. 62-64.
100 Pseudo-Chrysostomos Apocalypse §5.1: ἡ πόλις ἐκείνη ἡ καιλομένη τυραννίς. According to Alexander, the “Rebel City” is Syracuse, see ALEXANDER, Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition, pp. 72-73.
After his anointing as emperor\textsuperscript{101} this man will defeat the Arabs first alone and, then, with the alliance of the “blond races” (ξανθὰ ἔθνη).\textsuperscript{102} After their final defeat he will enter Rome, where he will open up a treasure and distribute its wealth to the people. After having consolidated his rule this Victorious Emperor will move to Constantinople and chase away its ruler.

The fourth and last section (§6) recounts the coming of the Antichrist, the death of Enoch and Elijah, and the final Parousia. Again, the language and themes used here are direct borrowings from the Greek redaction of Pseudo-Methodius.

In sum, one can say that the Pseudo-Chrysostomos Apocalypse is an abbreviated version of the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius with a few emendations such as the vaticinium ex eventu about the fall of Attalia. That being said, it is significant to note that Pseudo-Chrysostomos leaves out the emperor’s abdication scene. Here, as in the Diegesis Danielis, the Byzantine emperor’s function is reduced to defeating the Arabs and restoring imperial power. By not mentioning the abdication it seems that the apocalypse tries to postpone the ultimate end to the unspecified future.\textsuperscript{103}

Finally, one important element of the apocalypse needs to be emphasized, namely, the characterization of the Victorious Emperor, who is said to have a name that “was inferior in the world.”\textsuperscript{104} This can be understood as referring to the humble origin of the rising emperor. The humility or poverty of the Victorious Emperor is a permanent feature in the later Byzantine apocalyptic tradition and if the dating of the Pseudo-Chrysostomos Apocalypse is correct then this text presents an early mention of this motif.\textsuperscript{105}

\textsuperscript{101} The text reads: κόκει χρίσουςιν αὐτὸν εἰς βασιλέα where χρίσω clearly means “to anoint.” There is no clear evidence to argue for Byzantine anointing ceremonies prior to 1204. However, Byzantine authors often used this term in a metaphorical sense. That being said, it is also possible that this term portrays a hint of Latin influence on the apocalypse especially if one considers its probable Sicilian origin. Regarding Byzantine coronation customs, see G. DaGRoN, Empereur et prêtre: Étude sur le “césaropapisme” byzantin (Bibliothèque des histoires), Paris, 1996, pp. 281-287 and J. L. NELSON, Symbols in Context: Ruler’s Inauguration Rituals in Byzantium and the West in the Early Middle Ages, in EADEM, Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe, London, 1986, pp. 259-281.

\textsuperscript{102} On the motif of the “blond races,” see A. Pertusi, Fine di Bisanzio e fine del mondo. Significato e ruolo storico delle profezie sulla caduta di Costantinopoli in Oriente e in Occidente, posthumous edition by E. Morini (Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo. Nuovi Studi Storici, 3), Rome, 1988, pp. 44-62.

\textsuperscript{103} If Pseudo-Chrysostomos agrees that the Byzantine Empire is the katechôn, then the Antichrist’s arrival is conditional on its removal or destruction. Thus, not mentioning the abdication points either to the author’s reluctance to speculate about the katechôn or to his disagreement that the Last Emperor’s abdication represents the cessation of the Byzantine Empire. The same argument can be made for the Diegesis Danielis.

\textsuperscript{104} Pseudo-Chrysostomos Apocalypse § 5.1: οὔτινες τῷ ὅνωμα ἐν ἔλαττον ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ.

\textsuperscript{105} The motif of poverty or humility cannot be found in the Slavonic Daniel, from which (as noted above) Pseudo-Chrysostomos borrowed certain elements. For Alexander’s English
VII. Daniel kai έσται

The Vision of Daniel on the Last Times and the End of the World, or Daniel kai έσται for short, is another brief apocalypse that belongs to the Vision of Daniel genre. It is characterized by a marked eclecticism giving “the impression of a mosaic built from often minute pebbles.”

Alexander’s comprehensive analysis divides the text into five historical (§1) and five eschatological sections (§§2-4): (1) The Arab attack on Rome and the sack of St. Peter’s in 846, (2) the conquest of the Iberian Peninsula, (3) the internal strife among southern Italian principalities in the mid-ninth century, and (4) the murder of Michael III in 867. Based on this last identification Alexander dates the apocalypse to the year 867 or 869, that is, to the period shortly after Basil I had killed his benefactor Michael III or the time of the devastating Constantinopolitan earthquake of 869. The last (5) historical episode refers to Sicilian events in 852/853.

The five eschatological sections are: (6) The arrival of the Victorious Emperor among the inhabitants of the “Rebel City” (i.e., Syracuse). This emperor is portrayed as “having signs inscribed on his finger, a sweet voice, a crooked nose, and a curtailed stature,” and his name is said to start with the letter lambda. He will defeat the Ishmaelites and together

translation of the Slavonic Daniel, see Alexander, Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition, pp. 65-72. Another important difference is that the Slavonic Daniel does contain the emperor’s abdication scene.

106 For an overview of the content and the manuscript situation, see D’Tommaso, The Book of Daniel, pp. 158-162, 364-365.

107 Alexander, Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition, p. 77.

108 Ibidem, pp. 77-83. Alexander engages in ambitious speculations arguing that this section (Daniel kai έσται §1.10-11) is a propagandist attempt to justify Basil I’s murder of Michael III by comparing the former with Phinehas, the Jewish high priest, who is reported to have justly killed the Israelite prince Zimri together with his Midianite concubine for their blasphemy against the God of Israel (Num 25:1-8). If true, this typological interpretation would exemplify the active role apocalyptic literature played (or at least attempted to play) in shaping the public image of emperors by placing political events into an eschatological framework.

109 Alexander, Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition, pp. 87, 94-95.


111 Daniel kai έσται §2.1-2: σημεία ἔχων τίτλων έπι τῶν δάκτυλων αὐτοῦ. ἢ λαλία αὐτοῦ ἡδία, ἢ ρίς αὐτοῦ ἐπίκυρος, κολοβός τῇ στάσει. Alexander recognizes that usually physiognomic descriptions in apocalyptic literature are restricted to the Antichrist, see Alexander, Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition, p. 88, n. 35. For typical characterizations of the Antichrist, see Boussert, Der Antichrist, pp. 100-101, 132-134. It is significant to note that Andrew of Caesarea in his commentary on the Revelation of John repeatedly identifies the Antichrist with the Byzantine emperor, see Schmid, Apokalypse-Kommentar des Andreas von Kaisareia, pp. 136-137, 189. Thus, the physiognomic characterizations of the Antichrist were easily applicable onto the Last Emperor topos. Provided that Alexander’s dating of the apocalypse is correct, this text possibly contains the oldest example (which has come down
with the “blond races” pursue them to Akra.112 (7-8) The Victorious Emperor then smashes a bronze idol in Rome and after consolidating his reign by giving out money to the people he proceeds to enter Constantinople, chasing away the sovereign ruling there. The emperor predicts the ultimate destruction of the Seven-Hilled City through a great deluge. After a rule of 32 prosperous and peaceful years, the Victorious Emperor dies naturally. (9) Following the gradual moral decay of the Byzantines God punishes mankind by releasing the unclean peoples of the North, who are in turn annihilated by an angelic figure. (10) Finally, the Last Roman Emperor moves to Jerusalem and abdicates on Golgotha at the advent of the Antichrist. The remainder of the text recapitulates the classical eschatological sequence including the characterization of the son of perdition, the killing of Enoch and Elijah and, finally, the Parousia.

For our purpose it is important to consider how the figure of the Roman emperor is portrayed. First of all, it is not clear how many emperors are being referred to in the apocalypse. While Alexander counts at least five successive emperors, I count only two. I identify one continuous protagonist, the Victorious Emperor, who fulfills the functions of appearing after being thought dead, of defeating the Arabs, of restoring the empire to wealth, prosperity, and peace, and of ruling for the symbolic number of 32 years.113 In support of this reading stands the fact that in all the other Visions of Daniel surveyed here114 as well as the Andreas Salos Apocalypse the Victorious Emperor is said to rule for 32 (or 30) years.115 At the same time, this emperor is certainly not identical with the Last Roman Emperor who has to fulfill his obligation of abdicating to God at the arrival of the Antichrist.116 That is, here one finds a clear distinction between two emperors who are associated with the eschatological functions of the Last Roman to us) of a detailed physiognomic portray of the Victorious Emperor. For a later instance, see Last Daniel §47.

112 Alexander considers Akra to stand for a city district of Jerusalem, which functioned as a fortified quarter under Seleucid rule, see ALEXANDER, Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition, p. 90.

113 Daniel καὶ ἄνευ Οὐκατέρχεται §2.1-5, §2.15, §2.27, §3.6, §3.12-20.

114 I.e., Diegesis Danielis, Seven-Hilled Apocalypse, Last Daniel except for Pseudo-Chrysostomos, which does not mention the duration of the Victorious Emperor’s reign.

115 The 32-year motif refers to Alexander the Great’s lifespan or alternatively to the time-span of Constantine the Great’s rule. The other numeral value that is closely associated with the Last Emperor motif is the number 12, which refers to the time-span of Alexander the Great’s rule. For the application of the “twelve-year rule” motif, see Last Daniel §60, Seven-Hilled Daniel §12.22, Andreas Salos Apocalypse 860B (line 109). Cf. Apocalypse [13] 21,3-6. On the meaning of these numerical values, see, BOUSSET, Beiträge, p. 285, J. WORTLEY, The Warrior-Emperor of the Andrew Salos Apocalypse, in AB, 88 (1970), pp. 55-56, DTOMMASO, The Book of Daniel, p. 162.

116 Daniel καὶ ἄνευ Οὐκατέρχεται §4.7-9.
Emperor *topos*. This division in imperial responsibility earlier was either only implied (as in the *Edessene Apocalypse*), or ignored (as in the *Diegesis Danielis* and the *Seven-Hilled Daniel*). Apart from this notable distinction *Daniel καὶ ἔστιν* closely follows the sequence of the Pseudo-Methodian eschatological events.

VIII. **SEVEN-HILLED DANIEL**

The *Vision of Daniel on the Seven-Hilled City*, or the *Seven-Hilled Daniel* for short, is possibly the most obscure apocalypse dealt with in this paper.¹¹⁷ Virtually nothing can be stated for certain about the date and provenance of this short narrative.

The apocalypse begins (§1) with a warning to the city of Constantinople, prophesying that it will fall to an unspecified lad (μετράκτων),¹¹⁸ who will occupy the city for some three weeks (probably meaning 21 years). Then, the people are said to revolt, for which they are severely punished.¹¹⁹ At that point, a sleeping snake (κοιμώμενος δρικς) appears who chases the Ishmaelites permanently out of the city.¹²⁰ After the expulsion of the Arabs a bloody Byzantine civil war ensues, which causes much carnage in the streets of Constantinople (§2). A subsequent earthquake wakes a “poor lion” (λέων πτεραχός) of great age, whom two angels crown emperor and order him to wage war on his enemies (§2.5-9). Together with his four sons the aged emperor rebuilds the City, erects churches, and defeats the Ishmaelites. His 30-year rule is marked by great benefits for the people. He

¹¹⁷ For its complex manuscript and textual situation, see DiTOMMASO, *The Book of Daniel*, pp. 126-130, 354-356.


¹¹⁹ The text employs here the *topos* of a tripartite division: one third of the people are killed by the sword, one third are enslaved, and one third hide or run away. This motif also appears in *Apocalypse* [13] 7.3-5, *Diegesis Danielis* §2.3-9, and *Last Daniel* §53-54.

¹²⁰ Here, the text provides an exact date for the expulsion of the Ishmaelites, namely the year 6981. If one considers this year to adhere to Annianus’ era (i.e., 1 AM = 25 March 5493 BCE), one would arrive at the year 1489 CE. Similarly, if one uses the Byzantine calendar (i.e., 1 AM = 1 September 5510 BCE), one arrives at the year 1472 CE. Both years are remarkably close to the notorious year of 1492, which was widely believed to be the date the world would end. Thus, I wonder whether this date is not a later interpolation that read the apocalypse as a prophecy which foretold the Ottoman taking of the city as well as its eventual recapture. Concerning eschatological sentiments around the year 1492 CE, see A. A. VASILIJEV, *Medieval Ideas of the End of the World: West and East*, in *Byz*, 16 (1942-1943), pp. 497-500 and MAGDALINO, *The History of the Future*, pp. 27-28.
hands out money and ensures prosperity and peace until (after twelve years) he moves to Jerusalem in order to abdicate his dominion to God. Upon his departure his four sons quarrel and start fighting with each other. Nonetheless, this emperor surrenders his imperial dignity on Golgotha amidst a huge crowd of witnesses (§2.10-29). The last lines of the apocalypse briefly refer to the arrival of the unclean peoples, to the advent of the Antichrist and to the ultimate event, the Parousia (§2.30-33).

This Seven-Hilled Daniel follows closely Pseudo-Methodius’ narrative structure. All essential elements are present: the awakening of a liberating emperor, his victory over the Arabs, the subsequent restoration of imperial power, the ensuing peace, and his final abdication on Golgotha. Furthermore, the unity of the Victorious or Liberator Emperor and the abdicating Last Roman Emperor is retained. At the same time, the pseudonymous author integrates later elements into this framework, such as the notion of the emperor’s poverty, his angelic coronation, and the civil war erupting among his sons. A major change is observable in the reversal of his abdication and the arrival of the peoples of the North. The Seven-Hilled Daniel shares this inverted sequence with the Andreas Salos Apocalypse.121

Concerning the date of the apocalypse, to the best of my knowledge, no strong argument has yet been made. While Schmoldt neglects to deal with the dating, DiTommaso tentatively proposes an eighth- or ninth-century date.122 For now, I am inclined to accept a late ninth-century date. Anything earlier than this would be challenged to account for the motif of the angelic coronation, which became a standard imperial theme only with the Macedonian dynasty (867-1056).123

IX. LAST DANIEL

The Last Vision of the Prophet Daniel, or Last Daniel for short, is preserved in a great number of manuscripts. In his dissertation Schmoldt met the need for a critical edition, which he based on nineteen manuscripts.124 Some of these manuscripts attribute the apocalypse to Methodius of Patara, thus showing again how closely the Visions of Daniel were associated with

121 Cf. Seven-Hilled Apocalypse §2.22-30 with Andreas Salos Apocalypse 860C-869A (lines 114-276).
this seventh-century pseudonymous authority.\footnote{Namely, \textit{Venetus, Marcianus II} 125, fols. 6-11, \textit{Vindobonensis, juridicus gr.} 6, fols. 201-202, \textit{Holkham gr.} 26, fols. 237-239 and \textit{Vindobonensis, Supplementum gr.} 101, fols. 133r-135v. For the respective titles of the apocalypses, see the critical apparatus in \textit{SCHMOLDT}, \textit{Die Schrift “Vom jungen Daniel”}, p. 122.} Also, the apocalypse shows the typical eclectic character of the \textit{Visions of Daniel} genre. It parallels numerous passages from earlier apocalypses, such as the \textit{Diegesis Danielis}, \textit{Daniel καὶ ἔστω}, and the \textit{Seven-Hilled Daniel}.\footnote{For close textual comparison, see \textit{ibidem}, pp. 167-172.}

The text opens with a divine voice ordering three angels, each to devastate one part of the Roman \textit{oikoumenē}, including Constantinople (§§1-18).\footnote{This opening section follows the motif from the first Greek recension of Pseudo-Methodius, where three Muslim armies approach Constantinople and lay waste to various parts of Anatolia, see \textit{Apocalypse [13]} 7,3-5.} The Byzantine capital is said to be conquered by a lad (\textit{μειράκιον}), who in turn will be defeated by a sleeping snake (\textit{ὁ ὀφίς ὁ κοιμώμενος}) (§§19-28).\footnote{This passage closely follows a section from the \textit{Seven-Hilled Daniel} §1.17.} Following the apparent reconquest of Constantinople from the Arabs, the “blond race” occupies the city for “six or five years” (§29).

What seems important in this context is the continuous strife with the Muslim foe, against whom various factions (including one under a certain “Philip the Great”) gather in the Seven-Hilled City and end up fighting each other (§§30-46). The carnage is stopped by divine intervention, which reveals a man standing on two pillars in the northern part of Constantinople. According to his physiognomy this man is “grey-haired, just, compassionate, dressed in poor clothes, rough in appearance, but gentle in character and very mature. He carries a nail in the right leg, in the middle of the shinbone.”\footnote{This passage closely follows a section from the \textit{Seven-Hilled Daniel} §1.17.} After his discovery angels will crown him emperor and order him to defeat his enemies. The Victorious Emperor not only defeats the Arabs, but also the Ethiopians, the Franks and the Tatars (§§48-54). Then he ushers in a 32-year period of great prosperity and peace, distributing much wealth among the people (§§55-59). After his death his successor rules for another twelve years before abdicating in Jerusalem. Thus, this latter ruler is technically the Last Roman Emperor (§§60-61). Next, an internecine civil war breaks out among the Last Roman Emperor’s four sons, in which finally all perish. Then a foul woman rules the Seven-Hilled City, whose haughtiness causes the submergence of the capital. Shortly afterwards, other cities share the same fate (§§62-73). Ultimately, the Last Judgment is preceded by the arrival of the Antichrist, the rebuilding of the Jewish temple and ubiquitous calamities (§§74-85).
It is apparent that this text reuses various elements from earlier apocalypses. For our purpose it is important to appreciate the adaptation of the following motifs. Adhering to the traditional *topos*, the Victorious Emperor is revealed at a moment of great struggle and hardship. The motifs of angelic coronation and monetary benefactions to the people are already known from the *Seven-Hilled Daniel*. The emperor’s physiognomy stresses his poor origin and mature age, while supplementing this common characterization by an obscure note of him having a nail (§\(\lambda|\alpha\zeta\)) in his right leg.\(^{130}\)

Further, it is interesting that the Victorious Emperor defeats not only the Arabs but other foreign nations as well, including the Franks and the Tatars. Again, adhering to the tradition of the *topos*, the emperor’s reign lasts for 32 years, while his successor rules for twelve years before abdicating. This is another example for a clear distinction between the Victorious and the Last Roman Emperor. Following the imperial abdication the fate of the empire irreversibly deteriorates. A great civil war and the successive destruction of imperial cities signify the gradual disintegration of the last Danielic Empire giving way to the arrival of the Antichrist.

DiTommaso proposes an eleventh- or twelfth-century provenance for *Last Daniel*. More specifically, he considers the mention of a Great Philip to refer to Philip I of France (r. 1060-1108), thus placing the text at the time of the First Crusade.\(^{131}\) Alternatively, John Wortley considers the apocalypse to have reached its final shape in the thirteenth century, although earlier elements can clearly be identified.\(^{132}\) Indeed, the mention of the Tatars (\(\tau|\tau|\alpha|\rho|\omicron\)) and the notion of the continuous occupation of Constantinople by the “blond race” indicate thirteenth-century events since these descriptions go beyond the traditional *topoi* of vaguely alluding to the unclean peoples of the North and the eventual temporary loss of the capital to the Ishmaelites. Thus, a thirteenth-century date of the final redaction seems most probable.\(^{133}\)

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\(^{130}\) Probably a reference to the nails of Christ’s crucifixion. As noted above, already the *Edessene Apocalypse* pp. 222-223 (ff. 98v.-99r.) associates the Victorious Emperor with the nails of the True Cross. Also, the nails play a role in *Andreas Salos Apocalypse* 868B (line 249), where they are said to be situated under the column of Constantine.


X. **ANDREAS SALOS APOCALYPSE**

The presumably fictional *Vita of St. Andreas Salos*, written by a certain Nikephoros in Constantinople, contains an eschatological section in which Andrew the Fool explains to his friend Epiphanios how the world will come to an end. The text is remarkable because it lists more than five consecutive imperial rulers, some of whom share the characteristics of the Pseudo-Methodian Last Roman Emperor.

The apocalyptic passage opens with the prophecy that the New Jerusalem, i.e., Constantinople, will never fall to invaders. Then, Andrew foretells that “God will raise up an emperor from poverty,” who will bring prosperity and peace to the Romans before moving on to “humble the sons of Hagar.” Then, he is said to restore imperial frontiers on land as well as at sea. He will rebuild churches and subdue transgressors and magnates, while upholding a strict orthodoxy that results in the persecution of Jews and a ban on musical instruments.

The 32-year reign of this Victorious Emperor is followed by four subsequent rulers. The next two despots are wicked emperors, whose reigns are marked by punitive natural catastrophes. Then follows a good Christian emperor from Ethiopia who, during his twelve-year reign, repairs the churches that his predecessors have destroyed. His rule is characterized by widespread joy. Next, an Arab ruler briefly ascends to the throne. It is he who abdicates in Jerusalem after having erected and previously assembled the True Cross from its numerous fragments. Thereafter, three young men are said to plunge into a devastating civil war in which the male Byzantine population is so reduced that a woman assumes the government. Her reign is depicted in the apocalyptic imagery of harlotry, killing of relatives, playing music, and haughtiness. As a result of

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134 *Andreas Salos Apocalypse* 853B (line 23). The English translations given here are taken from Rydén.

135 *Andreas Salos Apocalypse* 856A (lines 31-32).


137 *Andreas Salos Apocalypse* 860C (lines 114-121).

138 The explanation for the rise of a woman to power due to male depopulation can be found already in the early sixth-century Alexander, *The Oracle of Baalbek*, p. 21 (lines 200-202). This parallel can be seen as a further argument in favor of the thesis that the foul woman described in apocalyptic texts was originally a literary motif which had its roots (at least in part) in the Sibylline tradition.

139 Cf. Rev 17:5.


her abominations, Constantinople is destroyed by a huge flood.\textsuperscript{142} The imperial government is said to be transferred to various cities, which, however, are unable to stop the rapid disintegration of imperial power. Andrew’s prophecy closes with the traditional topics concerning the fate of the Jews, the coming of the peoples of the North, and the advent of the Antichrist.

The \textit{Andreas Salos Apocalypse} is a rare example of an apocalyptic text which comes down (at least partially) in early manuscripts. The earliest witness, contained in the Monacensis gr. 443, might date to the second half of the tenth century, which provides the \textit{terminus ante quem} of the text.\textsuperscript{143} Rydén dates the \textit{Vita} of Andreas Salos to this period,\textsuperscript{144} while Mango proposes a much earlier date, namely, the second half of the seventh century.\textsuperscript{145} When considering its date of composition it is important to realize that the \textit{Andreas Salos Apocalypse} presents an amalgamation of \textit{topoi} taken from the \textit{Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius} on the one hand, and the \textit{Diegesis Danielis} on the other. From the latter it took the marked concern for the imperial capital and its eventual destruction by a great flood. At the same time, the motifs of the abdication scene, the importance of an Ethiopian dynastic connection, and the arrival of the peoples of the North are \textit{topoi} taken from the \textit{Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius}.\textsuperscript{146} As seen above, both these narratives have a \textit{terminus post quem} of the early eight century.

The \textit{Andreas Salos Apocalypse} is remarkably uninterested in its contemporary political environment.\textsuperscript{147} No \textit{vaticinium ex eventu} can be discerned. What is more, it contains an exceptional reversal in the narrative. God does not awake the Victorious Emperor in the heat of a desperate struggle with Islam; rather, the emperor rises and initiates a period of peace and prosperity, during which “they [i.e., the Romans] will beat the blades of their swords into sickles, and their spearshafts and spears they will make into farming implements […].”\textsuperscript{148} At this peaceful time, the Victorious Emperor will move out in order to punish the Ishmaelites for their blasphemy. Thus, the \textit{Andreas Salos Apocalypse} does not portray any immediate Arab threat,

\textsuperscript{142} This passage (\textit{Andreas Salos Apocalypse} 864D-865A (lines 192-203)) closely parallels Rev 18:21.

\textsuperscript{143} \textsc{Rydén}, \textit{The Andreas Salos Apocalypse}, p. 199. Cf. \textsc{Brandes}, \textit{Die Belagerung Konstantinopels}, pp. 86-87, n. 16 and \textsc{Wortley}, \textit{The Literature of Catastrophe}, p. 4.

\textsuperscript{144} \textsc{Rydén}, \textit{The Andreas Salos Apocalypse}, pp. 199, 260. For Rydén’s argumentation, see \textsc{Iodem}, \textit{The Date of the ‘Life of Andreas Salos’}, in \textit{DOP}, 32 (1978), pp. 127-155.

\textsuperscript{145} \textsc{Mango}, \textit{Saint Andrew the Fool Reconsidered}, pp. 297-313 (esp. pp. 299-308).

\textsuperscript{146} For further textual comparisons between the \textit{Andreas Salos Apocalypse} and various \textit{Visions of Daniel}, \textsc{Rydén}, \textit{The Andreas Salos Apocalypse}, pp. 232-237.

\textsuperscript{147} Cf. \textit{ibidem}, pp. 226, 239, 260.

\textsuperscript{148} \textit{Andreas Salos Apocalypse} 853C (lines 29-31). Cf. Isa 2:4.
which is an essential notion, particularly in the apocalypses of the early eighth century but also in ninth-century texts (Daniel καὶ ἔσται, the Pseudo-Chrysostomos Apocalypse, the Seven-Hilled Daniel). Therefore, I agree with Robert Hoyland in proposing the safe terminus post quem of 740 while assuming a tentative date of the ninth-tenth centuries, when the Muslim threat was less imminent.\footnote{HOYLAND, Seeing Islam, pp. 305-307. Wortley dates the apocalyptic section to the late ninth century, see WORTLEY, The Literature of Catastrophe, p. 3. Alexander dates it to the early tenth century, see ALEXANDER, Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition, pp. 123, 130, and Magdalino endorses a mid-tenth-century date, see MAGDALINO, The Year 1000, pp. 245, 256.}

In terms of content, various attempts have been made to identify the first of the five emperors. Vasiliev considered him to be Michael III,\footnote{A. A. VASILEV, The Emperor Michael III in Apocryphal Literature, in Byzantina et Metabyzantina, 1 (1946), 237-248.} while Wortley connected the textual descriptions with Basil I.\footnote{WORTLEY, The Warrior-Emperor, pp. 45-59.} It would be surprising, however, if a text which apparently has no interest in the political or historical narrative of the Byzantine Empire integrated a factual emperor at an unspecified moment. For this reason I would rather agree with Rydén, who does not recognize any reference to contemporary historical figures in the apocalypse. Rather, the five emperors listed provide an encyclopedic account of the history of the Roman Empire from Constantine to Jovian.\footnote{RYDÉN, The Andreas Salos Apocalypse, pp. 238-247. See also ALEXANDER, Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition, pp. 125-128. Rydén’s argumentation is particularly laudable for appreciating the topical nature of the poverty attributed to the Victorious Emperor. On the contrary, Wortley’s strongest argument for identifying the Victorious Emperor with Basil I is the latter’s rise “from poverty” (ἀπὸ πενίας), see WORTLEY, The Literature of Catastrophe, p. 44, passim. Realizing that the emperor’s poverty was a standardized eschatological topos raises the crucial question of whether Basil I’s poverty was emphasized due to the need to meet the expectation of the eschatological motif. See RYDÉN, The Andreas Salos Apocalypse, pp. 239-240.} Accordingly, the five emperors signify: (1) the Victorious Emperor: Constantine the Great, (2) the wicked emperor: Constantius II, (3) the pagan emperor: Julian, (4) the good Ethiopian emperor: Alexander the Great,\footnote{The intrusion of Alexander the Great into this historical sequence is certainly striking. Yet, the motifs of a twelve-year reign, Ethiopian descent, and the fact that this ruler precedes three evil young men, who possibly allude to the diadochi, point to an association with Alexander the Great. See RYDÉN, The Andreas Salos Apocalypse, p. 245.} and (5) the good Arab emperor: Jovian.

This interpretation has the benefit of appreciating the fragmentation of the various typological elements that the Pseudo-Methodian Last Emperor motif carries. As reconstructed above, the Pseudo-Methodian Last Roman Emperor combines in one single character the functions of (1) a second Gideon or, later, a New Constantine who delivers the Christians from...
oppression and restores imperial supremacy, (2) a Second Alexander, who is, on the one hand, of Ethiopian descent, and, on the other hand, is responsible for the reconquest of imperial lands, so that “the love of the Lord will spread over the whole world”154 and, finally, (3) a second Jovian, who returns his imperium to its divine source by abdicating on Mount Golgotha. Nikephoros, the author of the Vita of St. Andreas Salos, divides these three essential functions and distributes them among three distinct emperors, who gradually fulfill the duties of the eschatological work list that Pseudo-Methodius drew up.

In order to understand why Nikephoros changed the Pseudo-Methodian scheme one needs to realize that the Andreas Salos Apocalypse actually lists seven consecutive rulerships. The abdicating Arab emperor is followed by three young men, who (together with the majority of the male population) perish in a fierce civil war. Subsequently, a foul woman from Pontus rules the imperial capital. This seven-ruler scheme seems to follow Rev 17:9-11, where seven consecutive rulers are divided into five plus two. Among the five rulers Nikephoros distributes the duties of the Pseudo-Methodian eschatological work list culminating in the abdication of the Arab emperor. I propose that Nikephoros combines here the reading of the two most authoritative apocalyptic authors, namely, John of Patmos and Pseudo-Methodius. Nikephoros appreciated the typological framework and the eschatological functions of the Last Roman Emperor motif and remodeled them onto the seven-ruler scheme found in the Revelations of John. He did so in order to present encyclopedic material about the history of the Roman Empire,155 which elucidates the typological parallels between the emperors of the first Christian century under imperial benefaction, i.e., of the fourth century CE, and the eschatological duties of the last emperor(s).156

It is worth noting that following the Arab emperor’s abdication imperial business continues. A foul woman rules in Constantinople until its submergence by the sea. Even then, imperial power perseveres and is transferred to Rome, Thessaloniki, and Sylaion.157 Only with the arrival

154 Andreas Salos Apocalypse 860B-C (lines 112-113).
155 RYDÉN, The Andreas Salos Apocalypse, p. 238.
156 It is interesting that Andrew of Caesarea interpreted the seven rulers from Rev 17:9-10 as to refer to seven founders of various empires with Constantine the Great being the seventh, see SCHMID, Apokalypse-Kommentar des Andreas von Kaisareia, p. 188. See further DAGRON, Constantinople imaginaire. Etudes sur le recueil des ‘Patria’, Paris, 1984, p. 324.
157 The choice of these three cities is prefigured in the civil war episode (Andreas Salos Apocalypse 860D-861D) preceding the rise of the foul woman. During this war the “three younger men” (τρεῖς νέοι τριτυχίοις who fight for imperial power exalt the cities of Rome, Thessaloniki and Sylaion (861A-861B). On the question of why Nikephoros chose these cities,
of the eschatological peoples of the North does imperial power ultimately come to an end. Rydén explained this phenomenon by maintaining that there is a shift in quality after the ceremonial abdication. Accordingly, no good or pious Byzantine ruler follows the abdication.\textsuperscript{158} What is more, any imperial restoration will be utterly impossible. My understanding would be that the abdication marks the point, following which there is no chance left to reverse or even to halt the gradual and ultimate decline of the empire. Thus, the abdication motif becomes associated with imperial termination rather than with the \textit{katechōn,} who holds off the Antichrist. Consequently, an important shift is observable: while originally the motif of the abdication signified the abrupt end of the Byzantine Empire, the later tradition reinterpreted this motif so that it merely inaugurated a progressive decline. Both interpretations agree on the notion that the last earthly dominion is the Byzantine Empire, yet they differ in their appreciation of a swift and immediate end of the world.

On the basis of the preceding analysis of the source material, here I am presenting a table in which I have compiled the most important motifs associated with the Last Roman Emperor \textit{topos.} The motifs are ordered according to the eschatological narrative scheme, which all authors fairly follow. The apocalypses are arranged in the order of the hypothetical timeline established in the present study, starting with the original Syriac \textit{Apocalypse} and ending with \textit{Last Daniel}.\textsuperscript{159}

Rydén proposes an etymological consideration: Rome is associated with ἴση (might), Thessaloniki with νίκη (victory), and Sylaion with οὐ συλληφθήσεται (will not be sacked) (Rydén emends the text here reading οὐ συλληφθήσεται instead of συλληφθήσεται), see L. Rydén, \textit{Zum Aufbau der Andreas Salos-Apokalypse}, in \textit{Eranos}, 66 (1968), p. 116. For an overview of the historical sources pertaining to Sylaion, see V. Ruggieri and F. Ethercott, \textit{The Metropolitan City of Syllion and its Churches}, in \textit{JOB}, 36 (1986), pp. 133-156 (esp. pp. 134-144). There is a textual parallel to the motif of imperial transfer from Constantinople to three other cities (including Thessaloniki) in \textit{Last Daniel} §72-73. For an analysis of this tripartite division, see Dagon, \textit{Constantinople imaginaire}, p. 328.

\textsuperscript{158} Rydén, \textit{The Andreas Salos Apocalypse}, p. 235.

\textsuperscript{159} The chronological sequence of the apocalypses can be disputed. For the sake of brevity, however, I do not present an argumentation here but refer to the discussions above which treat the dating of each apocalypse.
### Structural comparison of motifs associated with the Last Roman Emperor *topos*

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<td>Arab siege of C/ple</td>
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<td>Second Gideon</td>
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<td><strong>Mode of appearance</strong></td>
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<td>He defeats the Arabs chasing them back into the desert</td>
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<td>His sons attack from the West annihilating the Arabs, who remained in Palestine</td>
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<td>The surviving Arabs are enslaved</td>
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<td>Prosperity</td>
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<td>– Gog/Magog etc. released and annihilated by an angel at Mecca</td>
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<td>Abdication</td>
<td>– The Last Roman Emperor enters Jerusalem and rules from it for 10 1/2 years</td>
<td>– Reversal of order:</td>
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<td>– Following the first signs of the Antichrist he erects the True Cross on Golgotha and abdicates by placing his crown on top of it</td>
<td>– The Antichrist appears and debauches all nations (except Edessa)</td>
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<td>– The Last Roman Emperor enters Jerusalem and rules from it for 10 1/2 years</td>
<td>– He is slain by Enoch and Elijah</td>
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<td>– Following the first signs of the Antichrist he erects the True Cross on Golgotha and abdicates by placing his crown on top of it</td>
<td>– The Last Roman Emperor (King of the Greeks) mounts Golgotha and abdicates as a Second Jovian</td>
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<td>– The Antichrist appears and rules in Jerusalem until Christ throws him into Gehenna</td>
<td>– The Antichrist appears and kills Enoch and Elijah</td>
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<td>– He has the name of an animal</td>
<td>– Christ kills the Antichrist</td>
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<td></td>
<td>– He has two sons</td>
<td>– Every living thing perishes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– He has two sons</td>
<td>– The Antichrist appears and kills Enoch and Elijah</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– God awakes him who was believed dead</td>
<td>– The Antichrist appears and kills Enoch and Elijah</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– He appears from the east [i.e., Persia or Syria] to C/ple</td>
<td>– The Antichrist appears and kills Enoch and Elijah</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– He appears from the east [i.e., Persia or Syria] to C/ple</td>
<td>– The Antichrist appears and kills Enoch and Elijah</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– He appears after being thought dead</td>
<td>– The Antichrist appears and kills Enoch and Elijah</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– He is anointed as emperor</td>
<td>– The Antichrist appears and kills Enoch and Elijah</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– He appears after being thought dead</td>
<td>– The Antichrist appears and kills Enoch and Elijah</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– He mounts a chariot and is anointed as emperor</td>
<td>– The Antichrist appears and kills Enoch and Elijah</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Diegesis Daniellis**

- Blasphemous Roman (!) proposition during an Arab siege of C/ple

**Pseudo-Chrysostomos**

- Blasphemous Ishmaelite proposition

**Daniel και ἔστω**

- Arabs are called in to support a local fight for the “Rebel city”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity and characteristics</th>
<th>Victorious Emperor</th>
<th>Victorious Emperor</th>
<th>Victorious Emperor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– His initial is kappa</td>
<td>– Descendent of Kūshyat</td>
<td>– His initial is lambda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– He has two sons</td>
<td>– A man of “inferior name”</td>
<td>– His initial is lambda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– He has the name of an animal</td>
<td>– Physiognomy: crooked nose</td>
<td>– His initial is lambda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– God awakes him who was believed dead</td>
<td>– sweet voice</td>
<td>– His initial is lambda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– He appears from the east [i.e., Persia or Syria] to C/ple</td>
<td>– signs inscribed on his finger</td>
<td>– His initial is lambda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– He appears after being thought dead</td>
<td>– curtailed stature</td>
<td>– His initial is lambda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– He is anointed as emperor</td>
<td>– He appears after being thought dead</td>
<td>– His initial is lambda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– He mounts a chariot and is anointed as emperor</td>
<td>– He appears after being thought dead</td>
<td>– His initial is lambda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of appearance</td>
<td>– He is found due to divine revelation in the “Rebel city” (Syracuse?)</td>
<td>– He is found due to divine revelation in the “Rebel city” (Syracuse?)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement with and destruction of the Ishmaelites</td>
<td>– He leads a great exit from C/ple and defeats the Arabs (Deut 32:30)</td>
<td>– He defeats the Arabs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Enslavement of the surviving Arabs</td>
<td>– He pursues the Arabs in a joint campaign with the “blond races”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aftermath</td>
<td>– Church building</td>
<td>– The Victorious Emperor goes to Rome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Military equipment used as agricultural tools</td>
<td>– Benefactions to the people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Prosperity, peace</td>
<td>– He proceeds to C/ple chasing away the c/plitan emperor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– The Victorious Emperor dies peacefully after a 30 year rule</td>
<td>– The Victorious Emperor consolidates his power in Rome</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– The Arabs are pursued until Akra</td>
<td>– Benefactions to the people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– The c/plitan emperor and “another emperor” are slain</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– The Victorious Emperor enters C/ple</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– Peace, Prosperity, church building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– He dies a natural death after a 32-year rule</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsequent emperors</td>
<td>– A man of the North rules lawlessly</td>
<td>– An emperor rules peacefully</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– A tall, foreign man (M) or a foul, foreign woman (B) rules in C/ple</td>
<td>– Gradual moral decay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Prophecy of the flooding of C/ple</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peoples of the North</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>– Gog/Magog etc. arrive and are annihilated by an angel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/</td>
<td>– Prophecy about the flooding of C/ple</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abduction</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>– Earthquakes, famines, wars</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>/</td>
<td>– Upon the first sign of the Antichrist the Last Roman Emperor mounts Golgotha and abdicates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antichrist</td>
<td>– On the arrival, characteristics and rule of the Antichrist</td>
<td>– The Antichrist appears and rules in Jerusalem</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Jewish reign</td>
<td>– Enoch and Elijah are slain</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Three holy men are slain</td>
<td>– Christ kills the Antichrist</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>– The Antichrist appears</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– Enoch and Elijah are slain</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– Christ kills the Antichrist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Judgment</td>
<td>– Last Judgment</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE LAST ROMAN EMPEROR TOPOS IN THE BYZANTINE APOCALYPTIC TRADITION
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Seven-Hilled</th>
<th>Andreas Salos Apocalypse</th>
<th>Last Daniel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Narrative Context</strong></td>
<td>A Roman civil war is fought out in the streets of C/ple</td>
<td>Following the statement that C/ple will never fall to invaders</td>
<td>Various foreign factions fight in the streets of C/ple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Last Roman Emperor</strong></td>
<td>- A lion, whose name is John</td>
<td>- Victorious Emperor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- He is poor, old and thought dead</td>
<td><strong>Physiognomy:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- grey-haired, compassionate, just, dressed in poor clothes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- rough by appearance, gentle in character</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- having a nail in his right leg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identity and characteristics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mode of appearance</strong></td>
<td>- He awakes from sleep through an earthquake</td>
<td>- God raises him from poverty</td>
<td>He is announced by divine revelation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Angelic coronation</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Angelic coronation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Place of appearance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>He is found in the north of C/ple standing on two pillars</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engagement with and destruction of the Ishmaelites</strong></td>
<td>He defeats the Arabs and pursues them (Deut 32:30)</td>
<td>- Peace and prosperity</td>
<td>He defeats all foreign factions including the Franks, the Tatars and the Arabs, the latter being divided into three parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Military equipment used as agricultural tools</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Then, he defeats the Arabs and achieves great victories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aftermath</strong></td>
<td>- He rebuilds churches with the support of his four sons</td>
<td>- He rules for 32 years</td>
<td>Treasuries are opened and distributed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Treasuries are opened and distributed</td>
<td>- He grants tax exemptions</td>
<td>- Prosperity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Prosperity and peace</td>
<td>- Church building</td>
<td>- Military equipment used as agricultural tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- All Christians have one emperor</td>
<td>- Benefactions to the people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- He rules for 30 years</td>
<td>- He persecutes the Jews and upholds orthodoxy</td>
<td>- The Victorious Emperor dies a natural death after a 32-year rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsequent emperors</td>
<td>Abduction</td>
<td>Peoples of the North</td>
<td>Antichrist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>After 12 years the Last Roman Emperor goes to Jerusalem</td>
<td>The Last Roman Emperor abdicates: surrounded by many witnesses he erects the True Cross on Golgotha, then angels descend to lift up his crown into heaven</td>
<td>Gog/Magog etc. arrive</td>
<td>The Antichrist appears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>His four sons wage a devastating civil war</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gog/Magog etc. arrive</td>
<td>Enoch and Elijah denounce the Antichrist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No Gog/Magog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONCLUSIONS

Based on the material surveyed here, the following conclusions regarding the development of the Last Roman Emperor motif can be drawn. First of all, it is intriguing to see how differently the Syriac and the Greek apocalypses approach the *topos* of the Last Roman Emperor. The Syriac sources particularly address the typological functions of the Last Emperor in so far as he is portrayed as a second Gideon, a second Constantine, a second Jovian, and a second Alexander. The Greek apocalypses, on the other hand, pay special attention to the more concrete personality, physiognomy, and individual characteristics of the Pseudo-Methodian Roman emperor. All the *Visions of Daniel* dealt with here show a marked interest in characterizing the Victorious Emperor. One gets the impression that the Syriac texts are preoccupied with legitimating the Byzantine emperorship *per se* as the liberating agent of divine providence, while the Greek texts meet the interest of their respective audiences for learning about the specifics of the emperor who would initiate the eschatological end drama.

This observation can be explained in part by a reference to proximity. Syrian authors were far removed from the emperor’s residence and, therefore, unable to witness his appearance during triumphal processions or public celebrations. The Constantinopolitan populace, on the other hand, was accustomed to see the emperor in ritualized performances, such as his presence in the *kathisma*, or in liturgical processions through the capital city.

Furthermore, the Syriac apocalypses, provided their dating to the very late seventh century is correct, were composed in a climate of heightened ideological polemics against the Muslim hegemony and, consequently, replied in rather abstract terms promoting an ideal Last Roman Emperor without specifying his individual characteristics. The Greek tradition, on the other hand, was persistently interested in the personal attributes of the Last Roman Emperor because these attributes were understood as the factors that determined his fitness to rule. I understand the later additions that emphasize the mature age, the humble origin, and benevolent character of the emperor as attempts to ensure the eschatological ruler’s moral aptitude to receive the divine grace that ensures victory and success. Wisdom, humility, and benevolence were qualities that a Byzantine emperor had to possess in order to be considered the legitimate incumbent of the throne.\(^{160}\)

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\(^{160}\) See S. Dieffenbach, *Frömmigkeit und Kaiserakzeptanz im frühen Byzanz*, in *Saeulum*, 47 (1996), pp. 35-66 (esp. pp. 58-60), who focuses on the aspect of piety and identifies it as a crucial component for legitimately holding the office of emperor. Dieffenbach does not neglect to mention that the emperor’s philanthropy and benevolence are also much-needed qualities.
Such a marked interest in the moral characteristics of the Last Emperor and the suggestion of proximity to the imperial court indicate that the main audience of the Greek apocalyptic narratives examined here was the imperial capital.\footnote{161}{Cf. DAGRON, Constantinople imaginaire, p. 328, who considers Byzantine apocalypses to have become a “Constantinopolitan genre.” Dagron’s observation needs to be qualified insofar as that there were also ‘provincial’ apocalyptic narratives. For instance, see J. BAUN, Tales From Another Byzantium: Celestial Journey and Local Community in the Medieval Greek Apocrypha, Cambridge - New York, 2007.}

It has become clear that Byzantine apocalypses increasingly specified attributes which they assigned primarily to the Victorious Emperor figure.\footnote{162}{These characterizations are first and foremost: his arrival through divine revelation, the initial of his name, his poor origin, his physiognomy, his victory over the Arabs and his prosperous 32-year rule.} While some of these attributes were certainly taken from related traditions, others were inspired by historical facts. As in the case of the Diegesis Danielis there was a tendency to historicize the Victorious Emperor by identifying this literary topos with a historical character such as Leo III. This development warranted the veracity of the attributes (e.g., initial letter of the name, arrival from the east, etc.) while attainmenting authority through descriptions that functioned as vaticinia ex eventu. It is extremely difficult to judge when a new attribute is based on real historical fact and when on purely literary innovation. This is true not only for attributes but also for characters. However, we might be helped by the exegetical principle of particularity: the richer the motif’s description, the higher the probability that it refers to a historical reality. In fact, the only specific characterizations of any eschatological figure in the Visions of Daniel pertain to the Victorious Emperor. Thus, in the case of the Diegesis Danielis there is good reason to consider that the respective descriptions refer to Leo III (or in the case of manuscript M to Theodosius III). At the same time, the subsequent figures, such as the foul woman or the abdicating Last Roman Emperor, are far less detailed and, therefore, not likely to represent historical characters.

It can be observed that the eschatological work list of the Pseudo-Methodian Last Roman Emperor was gradually redistributed among various successive emperors. In the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius the duties of appearing at a moment of great distress, defeating the Arabs, ushering in a period of great prosperity and peace, resisting the onslaught of the unclean peoples of the North and, ultimately, abdicating after a ten-and-a-half-year rule in Jerusalem, are all assigned to one unspecified Byzantine emperor.\footnote{163}{The Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius does not indicate anywhere that there is a succession of emperors.} It appears that the dissociation of these functions happened gradually. The
Edessene Apocalypse does not explicitly dissociate the Victorious Emperor from the abdicating Last Roman Emperor, while the Diegesis Danielis and the Pseudo-Chrysostomos Apocalypse both keep silent about the abdication scene. That is, these last two texts avoid speculating about the relationship between the Last Emperor’s abdication and the ultimate eschatological end drama revolving around the unclean peoples of the North and the Anti-christ. What matters for these pseudonymous authors is, first and foremost, liberation from the Arab threat. One finds an unambiguous dissociation of the liberating from the abdicating function in Daniel καὶ ἐσται. This division became part of the subsequent tradition, as can be seen in the cases of Last Daniel and the Andreas Salos Apocalypse.164 The Seven-Hilled Daniel presents an exemption from this development.

The trend of dissociation might be explained with the authors’ intent to prolong the Byzantine Empire’s existence. That is, by distinguishing the Victorious Emperor from the abdicating Last Roman Emperor, the apocalypticists might have attempted to rewrite the history of the future: in contrast to the Pseudo-Methodian scheme, the liberating emperor who is about to arrive differs from the last Byzantine sovereign who will terminate the last earthly kingdom and introduce the very last chapters of the eschatological drama. That is, behind the fragmentation of the Last Roman Emperor motif might lie a reluctance to see the world end just yet. It is worth remarking that an attempt to rewrite the history of the future appears less paradoxical if one considers the divine omnipotence which could, in theory, intervene and change the cosmic plan in accordance with the petitioner’s plea to delay the ultimate imperial act of abdication.165

Reverses of order in the eschatological timeline occur frequently. For instance, the Edessene Apocalypse places the imperial abdication after the advent and defeat of the Antichrist. Furthermore, both, the Seven-Hilled Daniel and the Apocalypse of Andreas Salos, share the inverted sequence of first mentioning the abdication and then the arrival of Gog and Magog.

164 In this respect the Andreas Salos Apocalypse presents a remarkable text because it enumerates no less than seven consecutive imperial rulerships: three good emperors, who divide among each other the eschatological functions of the Pseudo-Methodian scheme, two interim wicked emperors, one triumvirate of quarreling despots and, finally, a foul empress. Due to the difficulty of dating this apocalypse it is impossible to say whether it presents a later stage in the dissociation of the various eschatological functions, or it stands at the beginning of this development and is the text that has provided the inspiration for this process. The principle of lectio brevior would suggest that the division into seven discrete parts is a later development that follows a simpler division into less numerous parts, as can be seen, for instance, in Daniel καὶ ἐσται. Be that as it may, it seems clear that the scheme of a sevenfold division is derived from the Rev 17:9-11.

More significantly, though, the eschatological section of *Andreas Salos* and *Last Daniel* continue their political narrative despite the fact that the Last Roman Emperor has already abdicated. That is, the abdication appears to be increasingly less instrumental for the advent of the Antichrist and is rather perceived as an event which marks the watershed, after which imperial restoration becomes utterly impossible. In other words, the abdication came to lose its direct association with the *katechôn* and began to signify the gradual but final disintegration of imperial power. Again, the gradual decline of the empire should be seen as an attempt to delay the ultimate end.

Several apocalypses show an increasing concern about civil war. While initially, the Victorious Emperor appears in a war-torn imperial capital (*Diegesis Danielis*, *Seven-Hilled Daniel*, *Last Daniel*), later narratives such as *Daniel καὶ ἔσται* and the *Pseudo-Chrysostomos Apocalypse* portray internal strife between the Victorious Emperor and the emperor presiding in Constantinople. Finally, the *Andreas Salos Apocalypse* as well as *Last Daniel* particularly emphasize the internal strife that follows the imperial abdication. Arguably, this development to introduce an ultimate civil war further supports the notion of irreversible and gradual deterioration.

The motif of the Victorious Emperor’s sons deserves a brief mention. In the Greek *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, in the *Edessene Apocalypse*, in the *Diegesis Danielis*, and in the *Seven-Hilled Daniel* the liberating Roman emperor is said to be supported by his son(s). In the case of *Daniel καὶ ἔσται* and the *Pseudo-Chrysostomos Apocalypse*, the sons of the liberating Roman emperor are not mentioned. However, in their stead the “blond races” are said to assist the Roman emperor in defeating the Arabs. Thus, it can be observed that a tradition existed which replaced the Victorious Emperor’s sons with the “blond races.” Thus, it seems that an alliance with Latin factions, which predates the era of the Crusades, developed out of the motif of the Last Roman Emperor’s sons. It is telling that apocalypses of

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166 This is despite the fact that the abdication scene in *Daniel καὶ ἔσται* §4.9, *Seven-Hilled Daniel* §2.22, and *Last Daniel* §61 all employ the phrasing of 1 Cor 15:24 saying: παραδόσει στα παραδόσει τῆς βασιλείας (αὐτοῦ) τῷ θεῷ. Also, the phrasing in the *Andreas Salos Apocalypse* 860C (lines 120-1) is clearly referring to this biblical passage. On the significance of this Pauline verse, see Kmísko, Rätsel, pp. 285-286; Alexander, *Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition*, p. 165, Reinink, *Die Syrische Apokalypse* (CSCO, 541), pp. 29-31, n. IX,7(3, 7).


169 See *Daniel καὶ ἔσται* §2.13-14 and *Pseudo-Chrysostomos Apocalypse* §5.7-10.
Sicilian origin promote the notion of a military alliance with Latin factions.\textsuperscript{170}

In another development the notion of the sons contributed to the theme of internal strife. Already in the \textit{Seven-Hilled Daniel}, but also in \textit{Last Daniel} and the \textit{Andreas Salos Apocalypse} the descendants of the Victorious Emperor quarrel among themselves, which results in a devastating civil war. Behind this development might lie the notion of Alexander the Great’s four generals (or sons).\textsuperscript{171} The \textit{diadochi} were renowned for quarreling over the remains of Alexander’s empire. Also, one might suppose here an allusion to the pre-Constantinian tetrarchy, which was similarly notorious for producing crises.\textsuperscript{172} It becomes clear that the cohesion and integrity of the empire of Alexander the Great or that of Constantine the Great was preceded or followed by quarrelsome internal strife. If Constantine established order and unity by putting an end to the tetrarchy, then the final disintegration of the empire would be due to a tetrarchial arrangement. All this suggests that the process of imperial decline came to be understood as a reversal of the imperial rise. In this respect, one can see that the Last Roman Emperor \textit{topos} was continuously considered to be the eschatological antitype of the victorious Constantine and Alexander the Great.

Originally, Constantine the Great was only implicitly present in the \textit{Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius}. It was in the \textit{Edessene Apocalypse} and in the \textit{Gospels of the Twelve Apostles} that the association of the Last Roman Emperor \textit{topos} with the image of the first Christian emperor was worked out. The motif of the bridle, the reference to a (re)united Church, and the emphasis on effective military leadership shifted the typological focus away from Gideon and replaced it with Constantine the Great. The association of the Last Emperor with a second Gideon was subsequently lost.

The apocalyptic texts examined here clearly show an increasing tendency to introduce elements from the \textit{Revelation of John} into the Pseudo-Methodian scheme. The introduction of the two (or at times three) witnesses from Rev 11:3-13 can already be seen in the \textit{Edessene Apocalypse} and the first Greek redaction. The motif of the foul woman, the division of the Last Roman Emperor \textit{topos} into seven consecutive rulers, and the notion of the sinking of the Seven-Hilled Constantinople provide further instances of this tendency. The \textit{Diegesis Danielis, Daniel καὶ ἔσται, Last Daniel}, and the \textit{Andreas Salos Apocalypse} all mention the city’s ultimate submergence

\textsuperscript{170} See \textit{supra} n. 101, 110.

\textsuperscript{171} \textit{Apocalypse} [9] 1. The Greek speaks about Alexander’s four sons (οἱ τέσσαρες πατὶδος αὐτοῦ), who inherit his rule. The Syriac (\textit{Apocalypse IX.1}), on the other hand, mentions Alexander’s four general (i.e., the \textit{diadochi}).

\textsuperscript{172} \textit{DAGRON, Constantinople imaginaire}, p. 328.
into the sea. This motif was, in all likelihood, motivated by Rev 18:21, which describes the eventual sinking of Seven-Hilled Babylon. Due to the fact that Constantinople was gradually identified with the Seven-Hilled (‘Ἐπτάλοφος) City, this biblical prophecy came to be understood as a testimony about the capital’s ultimate destiny.

It is important to realize that the Greek apocalypses show a marked interest in the fate of the capital. While the Syriac Apocalypse does not concentrate on Constantinople but rather on Jerusalem and the Near East, all Byzantine apocalypses surveyed here focus on events that would eventually come about in the imperial capital. The lengthy interpolation of first Greek redaction of Pseudo-Methodius relates the siege of Constantinople and predicts that the Ishmaelites would enter through the Xylokerkos gate and advance as far as the Forum of the Ox, where they would be beaten back by divine intervention. As a result, various locations in the capital became eschatologically charged, which – as Albrecht Berger and Wolfram

174 See SCHMID, Apokalypse-Kommentar des Andreas von Kaisareia, pp. 201-202. See further W. Brandes, Sieben Hügel. Die imaginäre Topographie Konstantinopels zwischen apokalyptischem Denken und moderner Wissenschaft, in Rechtsgeschichte, 2 (2003), pp. 58-71. Additionally, in the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius there are three cataclysmic events in world history: the Great Flood, the invasion of the Midianites, and finally the Ishmaelite conquest. Seen in the Pseudo-Methodian typological framework one can easily speculate that just as the Muslim Arabs are the eschatological repetition of the Old Testament Midianites, so too is the submergence of the Byzantine capital the typological antitype of the Great Flood. At the same time, one should not forget about the possible influence of oracular traditions which prophesy the sinking of various cities and islands. For examples, see W. Brandes, Das “Meer” als Motiv in der byzantinischen apokalyptischen Literatur, in E. K. CHRYSOS, D. LETTISOS, H. A. RICHTER, R. STUPPERICH (eds.), Griechenland und das Meer, Beiträge eines Symposiums in Frankfurt im Dezember 1996, Mannheim - Möhnesee, 1999, pp. 127-128.
175 The apocalypses that are presumably of Sicilian origin (i.e., Daniel καὶ ἕστατα and the Pseudo-Chrysostomos Apocalypse) pay only moderate attention to Constantinople. This indicates, as one might expect, that provincial apocalypses were slightly less interested in the fate of the imperial capital. It also suggests that the apocalypses that devote much attention to the Seven-Hilled City were composed with a Constantinopolitan audience in mind. Cf. MANGO, Byzantium, the Empire of New Rome, pp. 207-208.
176 In the Syriac Apocalypse (and in its Greek redaction) there are references to “Rome” (Apocalypse V.8) and “Great Rome” (V.4). These mentions are adjacent to references to Thessalonica, Illyria, and the Black Sea, which indicate that what is meant here is the New Rome, i.e., Constantinople. However, Constantinople plays no part in the eschatological end drama. On the importance of Jerusalem in the Syriac Apocalypses, see G. J. REININK, Alexandre et le dernier empereur du monde: les développements du concept de la royauté chrétienne dans les sources syriaques du septième siècle, in L. HARF-LANCNER, C. KAPPLER, F. SUARD (eds.), Alexandre le Grand dans les littératures occidentales et proche-orientales: Actes du Colloque de Paris, 27-29 novembre 1999, Nanterre, 1999, pp. 149-159.
Brandes have properly observed – came to determine the city’s urban planning throughout Byzantine history and beyond.\textsuperscript{178}

Arguably, the central role that Constantinople came to play in the Byzantine apocalyptic tradition was amplified by the Arab expeditions against Constantinople in the seventh and eighth centuries.\textsuperscript{179} In fact, Muslim eschatology focused on the eventual capture of the Byzantine capital and considered the end of the world being dependent on its fall into Muslim hands.\textsuperscript{180} Consequently, Constantinople became the new focal point of eschatological expectations of both Christians and Muslims. As a result, the fate of the capital and the actions of the Last Roman Emperor became increasingly linked. First, the emperor was said to arrive from the east to the capital (\textit{Diegesis Danielis} §5.5-8) in order to fend off the besieging Ishmaelites, then he was said to be crowned emperor in Constantinople (\textit{Seven-Hilled Daniel} §2.7, \textit{Last Daniel} §49), and, in at least one apocalypse, he would even be revealed within the city itself (\textit{Last Daniel} §47). That is, the Victorious Emperor’s function became increasingly centered on the defense of the capital and on imperial restoration.\textsuperscript{181} At the same time, the function of representing the Byzantine Empire became more and more associated with Constantinople. As a result, the Last Roman Emperor could abdicate without the immediate evaporation of imperial power. In the case of the \textit{Andreas Salos Apocalypse} and \textit{Last Daniel} the Seven-Hilled City outlived its Last Roman Emperor.

In sum, it can be asserted that the apocalyptic texts studied here show a tendency to fragment the Last Roman Emperor motif and delay the ultimate end of the world by prolonging the eschatological decline of the Byzantine Empire. What mattered most after the imperial restoration by the Victorious Emperor was the protraction of imperial order.\textsuperscript{182} In the attempt to work out conceptual models to prolong the Christian empire, Byzantine apocalyptists used and reused specific eschatological schemes and motifs that belonged

\textsuperscript{179} Of course, Constantinople appeared in earlier apocalypses as well. For instance, in the ALEXANDER, \textit{The Oracle of Baalbek}, p. 14 (lines 94-95). See further MANGO, \textit{Byzantium, the Empire of New Rome}, p. 203. However, it was not in the focus of earlier apocalyptic narratives.
\textsuperscript{181} On the notion of imperial restoration, see P. ALEXANDER, \textit{The Strength of Empire and Capital as Seen Through Byzantine Eyes}, in Speculum, 37 (1962), pp. 349-354.
\textsuperscript{182} Cf. PODSKALSKY, \textit{Byzantinische Reichseschatologie}, p. 102 and BRANDES, \textit{Endzeitvorstellungen und Lebenstrost}, p. 58.
to a fairly well-defined repertoire of apocalyptic imagery. The persistent use of such motifs led to the perpetuation of the expectations and sentiments they evoked. Put differently, the continued application of the Pseudo-Methodian Last Roman Emperor *topos* contributed to the perpetuation of the seventh-century apocalyptic sentiment, which was characterized by an eschatological struggle with Islam. That is to say, by becoming a vital and indispensable theme of the apocalyptic tradition the Last Roman Emperor motif promoted “politico-religious irredentism”\(^\text{183}\) that conditioned Byzantine eschatological thought for centuries. As Paul Magdalino put it: “In a word, Byzantium never really got over the fact that the world did not end with the Arab conquest.”\(^\text{184}\) That being said, the *topos* of a Last Roman Emperor did undergo gradual development and was continuously reinterpreted in order to accommodate the particular hopes and needs of the day.

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**SUMMARY**

Christian apocalyptic sentiments of the late seventh century produced the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, a Syriac composition which proposes the immediate downfall of the Arab dominion at the hands of a last Roman emperor. This notion of the Last Roman Emperor who – after having defeated the Arabs – would usher in a time of prosperity, face the eschatological people of the North, and ultimately abdicate to God at the end of times developed into an apocalyptic motif of ubiquitous influence. Out of its long-standing and wide-ranging tradition the present article deals with the afterlife of the Pseudo-Methodian Last Roman Emperor motif in the earlier Byzantine apocalyptic tradition.

By means of conceptual comparison I map the use and the adaptations of this literary *topos*, thereby learning how this motif was accommodated to the Byzantine audience and how it became one of the most prominent motifs of Byzantine apocalyptic thought. My source material comprises the original Syriac *Apocalypse*, two Syriac apocalypses that are closely related to it, its first Greek redaction, five apocalypses from the *Visions of Daniel* group, and the *Andreas Salos Apocalypse*. Among others, I conclude that these apocalyptic texts show a tendency to fragment the Last Roman Emperor motif and delay the ultimate end of the world by prolonging the eschatological decline of the Roman Empire.