

‘HEC EST QUEDAM PROFETIA QUE FUIT INVENTA’:
A PROPHECY IN CAMBRIDGE,
CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, MS 372¹

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The majority of MS 372 in the Parker Library consists of a copy of Martin of Troppau’s *Chronicon pontificum et imperatorum*.² The *Chronicon*, produced by Martin in three recensions between 1268 and his death in 1278,³ was a highly influential and common text in the later Middle Ages, and is known to survive in 484 European manuscripts, including eighty-three of English provenance.⁴ According to von den Brincken’s classificatory scheme of *Chronicon* manuscripts, MS 372 belongs to class III, as it retains Martin’s original system of facing sides devoted respectively to popes and emperors, but dispenses with his tabular page layout in which lines were employed to

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² Cambridge, Corpus Christi College (hereafter abbreviated as CCCC), MS 372, fos. 1^r–57^v; online [<https://parker.stanford.edu/parker/catalog/fq966py8351>, accessed 3 August 2020]. The manuscript is described in M. R. James, *Descriptive catalogue of the manuscripts in the library of Corpus Christi College Cambridge*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1909–12), ii, 214–15 (no. 372).

³ A. D. von den Brincken, ‘Zu Herkunft und Gestalt der Martins-Chroniken’, *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* (hereafter *DA*), 37 (1981), 714.

⁴ These figures are given in W.V. Ikaš, *Martin von Troppau (Martinus Polonus), O.P. († 1278) in England: überlieferungs- und wirkungsgeschichtliche Studien zu dessen Papst- und Kaiserchronik* (Wiesbaden, 2002), 18–19; English manuscripts are listed on 33–51. For catalogues of manuscripts containing this text, see: von den Brincken, ‘Studien zur Überlieferung der Chronik des Martin von Troppau (Erfahrungen mit einem massenhaft überlieferten historischen Text)’, *DA*, 41 (1985), 460–531; von den Brincken, ‘Studien zur Überlieferung der Chronik Martins von Troppau: zweiter Teil’, *DA*, 45 (1989), 551–91; von den Brincken, ‘Studien zur Überlieferung der Chronik des Martin von Troppau: erste Nachträge’, *DA*, 50 (1994), 611–14; Ikaš, ‘Neue Handschriftenfunde zum *Chronicon pontificum et imperatorum* des Martin von Troppau’, *DA*, 58 (2002), 521–37.

represent years.⁵ For the majority of the chronicle following the preface, the papal chronicle is on verso and the imperial on recto, though scribal error causes this to reverse after folio 45^v, a mistake which also results in the partial or complete omission of entries on three emperors.⁶

On the basis of its Anglicana formata script, MS 372's first booklet (containing the *Chronicon* copy and a list of dioceses in Christendom) can be dated approximately to the last quarter of the fourteenth century.⁷ At some point, this first booklet was also bound with a second booklet containing fifteenth-century copies of Suffolk tax registers, though it is unclear when this happened.⁸ Further information on MS 372 has also come through Ikas's systematic textual comparison of English copies of the *Chronicon*. Based on their common continuations and textual nuances, Ikas located MS 372 within a group of four other manuscripts, and specifically as having been copied from the manuscript now classified as MS B.II.35 in the Durham Cathedral Library collection.⁹ He suggests that all of the manuscripts of this group, and the larger family of which it is a part, originated in southeast England, including MS B.II.35, which only arrived in Durham after 1395.¹⁰ Given the lack of any colophon or statement of ownership within the manuscript itself, this is likely the closest we can come to determining MS 372's origin.

Previously unnoticed in any catalogue description or discussion of MS 372 is a short political prophecy found on fo. 9^r. The prophecy is inserted under the final paragraph of Martin's preface and occupies fifteen of the seventeen remaining lines at the bottom of the page.¹¹ It was written by

⁵ Von den Brincken, 'Studien zur Überlieferung', 471, 482–6, 524.

⁶ CCCC, MS 372, fos. 45^v–46^v. Cf. Martin of Troppau, 'Chronicon pontificum et imperatorum', ed. L. Weiland, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica scriptores* (hereafter *MGHSS*), 22 (Hannover, 1872), 433, 466. Examples of similar copying errors in manuscripts of the *Chronicon* include: London, British Library (hereafter BL), Royal MS 10 C XI, fos. 147^r–161^v; BL Royal MS 13 CVI, fos. 31^r–35^v.

⁷ The list of dioceses can be found in CCCC, MS 372, fos. 58^r–63^v.

⁸ *Ibid.*, fos. 64^r–84^v.

⁹ Ikas, *Martin von Troppau*, 112–15. Cf. Durham, Cathedral Library (hereafter DCL), MS B.II.35, fos. 156^r–187^r; online [<https://iiif.durham.ac.uk/index.html?manifest=t1mth83kz326>, accessed 3 August 2020]. In Ikas's scheme, MS 372 in designated 'P₆' while the Durham exemplar is designated 'O₆'. I have been unable to view the other manuscripts contained within this family.

¹⁰ W.V. Ikas, *Martin von Troppau*, 120–1.

the same hand as the rest of booklet I, and the main annotating hand has supplied both corrections and a marginal *nota* ('prophetiam mirabilem'). The prophecy was not usually a part of Martin of Troppau's preface, and does not occur in Weiland's 1872 critical edition.¹² Nor is it found at the corresponding point of the Durham exemplar from which MS 372 was copied.¹³ It is difficult to say with any certainty whether or not the prophecy is found in other copies of the *Chronicon*; seeing as none of the catalogues of MS 372 note the presence of this prophecy, it is possible that it is unnoticed in other manuscripts. Nevertheless, none of the discussions of Martin of Troppau manuscripts which I have consulted mention such a prophecy.¹⁴

The fact that this prophecy was copied into Martin's text, apparently independently of the prototype, raises questions of how the scribe (or commissioner) of MS 372 intended for this copy of the *Chronicon* to be interpreted. That Martin's text was subject to a range of reinterpretations in the later Middle Ages has long been recognized. Matthews, for example, attributed the *Chronicon*'s popularity among subsequent British chroniclers to its 'clear design and precisely stated facts', which 'formed a reassuring framework for what livelier details and fancies they might wish to load upon it'.¹⁵ Scholars have also acknowledged an interaction between the *Chronicon* and prophetic material; Kneupper's study of political prophecy in

¹¹ James, *Descriptive catalogue*, ii. 214–15 (no. 372); von den Brincken, 'Studien zur Überlieferung', 524; Ikas, *Martin von Troppau*, 44.

¹² Martin of Troppau, 'Chronicon', 407–8.

¹³ DCL, MS B.II.35, fo. 160^r.

¹⁴ See above, n. 4.

¹⁵ W. Matthews, 'Martinus Polonus and some later chroniclers', in D. A. Pearsall and R. A. Waldron (eds.), *Medieval literature and civilization: studies in memory of G. N. Garmonsway* (London, 1969), 275–6 (here 276). The effect of the visual layout on Martin's popularity is also discussed in: von den Brincken, 'Studien zur Überlieferung', 461–2; von den Brincken, 'In una pagina ponendo pontifices, in alia pagina imperatores: das Kopieren der tabellarischen Papst-Kaiser-Chronik des Martin von Troppau († 1278)', *Revue d'histoire des textes*, 18 (1988), 111–14. Discussions of specific aspects of Martin's reception can also be found in: M. Menzel, *Predigt und Geschichte: historische Exempel in der geistlichen Rhetorik des Mittelalters* (Cologne, 1998), 256–7; Ikas, 'Martinus Polonus' chronicle of the popes and emperors: a medieval best-seller and its neglected influence on English medieval chroniclers', *English Historical Review*, 116:466 (2001), 327–41; H. J. Mierau, 'Das Reich, politische Theorien und die Heilsgeschichte: zur Ausbildung eines Reichsbewußtseins durch die Papst-Kaiser-Chroniken des Spätmittelalters', *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung*, 32 (2005), 563–70.

late medieval Germany has noted how prophecies were sometimes found in manuscripts of the *Chronicon* and other universal chronicles featuring imperial history, due to their ‘overlapping agendas’.¹⁶ Von den Brincken mentioned that copies of the *Chronicon* were commonly bound with other texts, not least those containing miraculous or prophetic material.¹⁷ An example of this is MS 59 in the Parker Library, in which Martin’s imperial chronicle is bound with a copy of Pseudo-Methodius.¹⁸

A contextual discussion of MS 372 therefore provides the opportunity to study a specific instance of Martin of Troppau interacting with prophetic ideas. This is especially important because studies of individual manuscript copies of Martin of Troppau remain few in number. A notable exception to this comes in Ikas’s discussion of MS 449/330 in the library of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, which sheds light on a specifically English interpretation of the *Chronicon*. In this copy the scribe sought to elevate the importance of the English monarchy relative to the popes and emperors by including a third column with details on English kings up to Edward III.¹⁹ MS 372 is by no means as striking, but does represent a case of interaction with prophetic material distinct to that mentioned by von den Brincken, in that here the prophecy is actually inserted into the *Chronicon* rather than being bound with it. The following discussion will therefore focus on what this says about the interpretation of Martin’s work offered in this manuscript, with reference both to the literature on Martin of Troppau’s reception and that on prophecy in late medieval Western Europe. Before coming to the specific relationship with the *Chronicon*, however, it is necessary to provide a transcription of the prophetic passage and to analyse its contents.

In the following transcription, each part of the prophecy has been designated with a number in brackets, which will provide points of reference for the subsequent analysis. The passage reads:

¹⁶ F. C. Kneupper, *The Empire at the end of time: identity and reform in late medieval German prophecy* (New York, 2016), 32–3.

¹⁷ Von den Brincken, ‘Studien zur Überlieferung’, 474–6, 484, 492.

¹⁸ CCCC, MS 59, fos. 99^r–140^v, 141^r–146^v; online [<https://parker.stanford.edu/parker/catalog/xj416ct0118>, accessed 3 August 2020].

¹⁹ Ikas, ‘Martinus Polonus’ chronicle’, 332. A more detailed discussion of this manuscript is found in Ikas, *Martin von Troppau*, 207–26.

(A1) Hec est quedam profetia que fuit inventa sculpta Rome in quodam | lapide
 marmoreo subtus terram dum ad quandam domum edifican | dam foderetur
 invento. (A2) Post celestinum regnabit papa superbus. post | superbum catholicus.
 Post catholicum Hereticus. Post hereticum | Nullus. |
 (B1) Tunc leo resurgens stabulabit tigribus²⁰ agros²¹ |
 (B2) Tunc sponsa christi mut\u/o componet honorem |
 (B3) Cui lapides multi condent diadema decori |
 (B4) Orbem sub octavo revolvens lumine sorte |
 (B5) Corruet eternum sanctum volente suprema |
 (B6) At terrenus²² erit quod non procul a\u/rgu\r/or esse. |
 (B7) Costantinus cadet\s/²³ et equi de marmore facti |
 (B8) Et lapis erectus et multa pallacia Rome |
 (B9) Papa cito moritur cesar regnabit ubique |
 (B10) Sub quo tunc vana cessabit gloria cleri. |²⁴

The specific form of this prophecy is comparatively rare. A search for documented examples of the prophecy in this form has revealed just one: Pietro Villola's *Cronaca*, written in Bologna in the mid-fourteenth century, which includes the whole prophecy, minus A1, along with several other short prophecies near its beginning.²⁵ The *Cronaca Villola*, which survives in just one manuscript,²⁶ appears to be the only documented example of lines B1–5, though the literature on the prophecies copied by Villola has

²⁰ According to usual practices of abbreviation, this would be transcribed as 'tergibus'. However, the transcription 'tigribus' is justified based on three factors: 'tergibus' is not a Latin word; the *Cronaca Villola* (below, n. 25) also says 'tigribus' at this point; and a sixteenth-century annotation, while not necessarily correct (below, n. 21), has also interpreted this as 'tigribus'.

²¹ There is an argument for interpreting this to say 'agnos' rather than 'agros', as the sixteenth-century annotation above line B1 has. While this would arguably make more sense, the manuscript unambiguously reads as 'agros'.

²² In other transcriptions this typically reads as 'terremotus'; see O. Holder-Egger, 'Italienische Prophetieen des 13. Jahrhunderts: III', *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde*, 33 (1908), 126.

²³ Here the line was originally written as 'cadet', and there appears to have been an attempt to amend it to 'cades' through the addition of a stroke below the line. In other versions of the prophecy the line is typically 'cades'; see loc. cit.

²⁴ CCCC, MS 372, fo. 9^r.

²⁵ *Corpus chroniconum bononiensium*, ed. A. Sorbelli, *Rerum Italicarum scriptores serie II*, 18:1, 4 vols. (Città di Castello, 1906–39), i. 16–17.

²⁶ L. Sinisi, 'Villola, Pietro and Floriano', in R. G. Dunphy (ed.), *The encyclopaedia of the medieval chronicle*, 2 vols. (Leiden, 2010), ii. 1480.

not given any clue as to the origin of these specific lines.²⁷ In addition, searching through various lists of English manuscripts containing prophetic material has not unearthed any reference either to MS 372 as containing this prophecy, nor of lines B1–5.²⁸ These lines aside, however, the passage does contain parts of other prophecies documented in English manuscripts, which provide a useful starting point for discussion of this passage.

The passage contains aspects of two prophecies which typically circulated separately, but which had both originated against the background of the papal-imperial controversies of the second half of the thirteenth century. Line A2 belongs to a prophecy commonly entitled *Post Celestinum*, which appears to have emerged in the 1260s among northern Italian supporters of the Ghibelline cause.²⁹ It was unknown in an English manuscript before a version was discovered by Robert Lerner in Cotton MS Cleopatra C.x in the British Library,³⁰ where it is inserted

²⁷ Works which discuss the prophecies in the *Cronaca Villola* include: Holder-Egger, 'Italienische Prophetieen des 13. Jahrhunderts: II', *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde*, 30 (1905), 352–3, 358–66, 378; L. Sighinolfi, 'La cronaca dei Villola nella "Stazione dell'università degli artisti"', *Atti e memorie della R. Deputazione di Storia Patria per le provincie di Romagna, serie 4*, 12 (1922), 262–3; Sorbelli, 'Ancora la Cronaca Villola', *Atti e memorie della R. Deputazione di Storia Patria per l'Emilia e la Romagna, serie 5*, 3 (1938), 148–9; R. E. Lerner, *The powers of prophecy: the Cedar of Lebanon vision from the Mongol onslaught to the dawn of the Enlightenment* (Berkeley, 1983), 89–90.

²⁸ See the lists in: M. Reeves, *The influence of prophecy in the later Middle Ages: a study in Joachimism* (Oxford, 1969), 525–33, 547–9; L. A. Coote, *Prophecy and public affairs in later medieval England* (Woodbridge, 2000), 239–80; K. Kerby-Fulton, *Books under suspicion: censorship and tolerance of revolutionary writing in late medieval England* (Notre Dame, 2006), 533–5; Kerby-Fulton 'English Joachimism and its codicological context: a list of Joachite manuscripts of English origin or provenance before 1600', in J. E. Wannenmacher (ed.), *Joachim of Fiore and the influence of inspiration: essays in memory of Marjorie E. Reeves (1905–2003)* (Farnham, 2013), 197–230.

²⁹ L. Tondelli, 'Profezia Gioachimita del Sec. XIII delle regioni venete', *Studi e documenti: R. Deputazione di Storia Patria per l'Emilia e la Romagna, sezione di Modena*, 4 (1940), 3–9; B. McGinn, *Visions of the end: apocalyptic traditions in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1979), 172. On this prophecy see also Kerby-Fulton, 'The voice of honest indignation: a study of reformist apocalypticism in relation to Piers Plowman' (Ph.D dissertation, University of York, 1985), 466–8.

³⁰ Lerner, *Powers of prophecy*, 90 n. 10.

with slightly different wording in three lines following the end of a larger prophecy, commonly called *Columbinus*.³¹

Lines B6–10, meanwhile, are usually associated with *Gallorum levitas*, a prophecy whose transmission in the late Middle Ages has been called ‘so numerous as to be virtually beyond surveying’.³² Like *Post Celestinum*, *Gallorum levitas* seems to have emerged among Italian Ghibellines in the thirteenth century as an expression of hostility towards growing French influence over the papacy and Italian peninsula during the imperial interregnum (1245–1312).³³ Holder–Egger’s 1908 analysis of this prophecy’s transmission across Italian, German, and English manuscripts suggests that line A1 also belongs with lines B6–10, rather than with *Post Celestinum* (A2). Evidence of this comes from the fact that several English chroniclers in the late thirteenth century, including Bartholomew Cotton and Peter Langtoft, copied down *Gallorum levitas* together with similar narratives concerning the prophecy’s discovery. These lines vary, but share the idea of the prophecy being discovered in a hitherto secret location (typically a stone or grave) in Rome.³⁴

Though MS 372 shares significant textual overlap with *Gallorum levitas*, the fact that it lacks most of the lines of the larger prophecy, including the eponymous incipit and any reference to the French, means that it is not merely another copy of this prophecy.³⁵ Nevertheless, there is evidence aside

³¹ ‘Versus. Papa cedet et ei succedet papa superbus, humilis, hereticus, sanctus et postea nullus’; transcribed in K. Kerby-Fulton and E. Randolph Daniel, ‘English Joachimism, 1300–1500: the *Columbinus* prophecy’, in G. L. Potestà, *Il profetismo gioachimita tra Quattrocento e Cinquecento: atti del III Congresso Internazionale di Studi Gioachimiti S. Giovanni in Fiore, 17–21 settembre 1989* (Genoa, 1991), 335. Cf. BL Cotton MS Cleopatra C.x, fo. 158’.

³² Lerner, *Powers of prophecy*, 191 n. 11. Also noted in Kneupper, *Empire at the end of time*, 149. The most common form of *Gallorum levitas* is transcribed in Holder–Egger, ‘Italienische Prophetieen III’, 125–6.

³³ B. Töpfer, *Das kommende Reich des Friedens: zur Entwicklung chiliastischer Zukunftshoffnungen im Hochmittelalter* (Berlin, 1964), 185–6; Reeves, *Influence of prophecy*, 312.

³⁴ Holder–Egger, ‘Italienische Prophetieen III’, 119–20; also discussed in Kerby-Fulton, ‘Voice of honest indignation’, 466–7. Cf. Bartholomew Cotton, ‘Historia anglicana’, ed. F. Liebermann, *MGHSS*, 28 (Hannover, 1888), 606–7; Peter Langtoft, *The chronicle of Pierre de Langtoft, in French verse, from the earliest period to the death of King Edward I*, ed. T. Wright, *Rolls series*, 47, 2 vols. (London, 1866–8), ii. 450.

³⁵ For variations of *Gallorum levitas*, see Holder–Egger, ‘Italienische Prophetieen III’, 118–29. Though Holder–Egger did make note of the partial copy found in Villola (listed as ‘b’ on 120), he did not discuss lines B1–5 as a variation of *Gallorum levitas*.

from Villola that lines B7–10 circulated in combination with prophecies other than *Gallorum levitas*. This is shown, for example, by their presence in a verse on the death of Adolf of Nassau (d. 1298) in a Berlin manuscript, which among other items contains a copy of Martin of Troppau.³⁶ There is no evidence that this copy of the *Chronicon* is related in any way to MS 372, since the verses are different, and in the Berlin manuscript the prophecy was copied into the back cover rather than Martin's text.³⁷ The best explanation of the MS 372 prophecy is therefore that it was part of a broader family of prophecies transmitted throughout Western Europe in the fourteenth century, of which one particular variation happened to be copied both by Villola in Italy and the MS 372 scribe in England. Having established the broad provenance of the prophetic lines, it is now possible to turn to the question of what motivation a scribe may have had in copying them into MS 372, and what relationship they bear to Martin of Troppau's text.

Though there is an obvious thematic concordance between a universal papal-imperial history and a prophecy stating that 'the pope soon dies [and] Caesar will rule everywhere', several issues obstruct any attempt to establish a direct link between the two texts.³⁸ The scribe does not himself give any indication as to how the prophecy is supposed to be interpreted, or why it was positioned in the manuscript following the preface. It is perhaps possible to infer certain connections, albeit speculative ones, between the text of Martin's preface and that of the prophecy. It is notable, for example, that both the preface and two lines of the prophecy contain references to the architecture of Rome. Part of Martin's preface is dedicated to the construction of the city, including its gates, palaces, and temples.³⁹ Line A1 of the prophecy, meanwhile, claims that the text was discovered carved on a marble stone under a house in Rome,⁴⁰ and lines B7–8 allude to the

³⁶ Noted in *Corpus chronicorum bononiensium*, i. 17 n. 19, and *ibid.*, 122. A transcription of this verse can be found in Martin of Troppau, 'Chronicon', 388–90.

³⁷ The manuscript (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz, MS Lat. Quart. 291) is described in R. Schipke, *Die lateinischen Handschriften in Quarto der Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin Preussischer Kulturbesitz* (Wiesbaden, 2007), 328–332 (here 332).

³⁸ Above, line B9. A translation of lines B7–10 can be found in Kerby-Fulton, 'Voice of honest indignation', 466.

³⁹ Martin of Troppau, 'Chronicon', 399–402. Cf. CCCC, MS 372, fos. 2^v–4^r.

⁴⁰ On this line, see above, n. 34.

destruction of Roman statues and palaces.⁴¹ It is certainly possible that the scribe inserted the prophecy here as a means of connecting these lines, seemingly foretelling the destruction of Rome, with Martin's own prefatory words on the city's construction. This being said, it is equally likely that the positioning of the prophecy was a reflection of practical or aesthetic considerations; this is because the facing layout of the papal and imperial chronicles meant that the scribe could only begin the papal chronicle on folio 9^v, and thus that the seventeen lines at the bottom of folio 9^r into which the prophecy was transcribed would have otherwise been left blank.

An equally significant obstacle to understanding the relation between the prophecy and the papal-imperial scheme found in the main section of the *Chronicon* comes from the chronological discrepancy between the emergence of these texts and the production of MS 372. As noted above, at least half of the prophetic lines emerged in the context of pro-imperial movements in Italy during the imperial interregnum. The interregnum also provided the background for the emergence of the *Chronicon*, and Martin himself has been interpreted as arguing through his text and its layout for the equivalency between pope and emperor, albeit in a far less partisan fashion than those who circulated prophetic material advocating the destruction of the papacy.⁴² Yet it is illogical to suppose that a scribe working in late-fourteenth-century England would have understood either the lines of the prophecy or the *Chronicon* in the context of political events which had taken place a century beforehand. Sure enough, there is nothing provided by the scribe in MS 372 to suggest any prophetic view of the imperial interregnum. Glosses are not hugely helpful here, since they were not necessarily supplied by the scribe; in addition, they decrease markedly in number after the layout change, and there are none on either Frederick II or the imperial interregnum.⁴³ The only visible alteration after Frederick II's deposition is the fact that the running titles above the imperial chronicle change from 'imperatores' to 'vacante imperio'; this tells

⁴¹ The allusion to the destruction of Rome in lines B6–8 is discussed in Coote, *Prophecy and public affairs*, 76. The reference to an earthquake typically found in copies of line B6 is missing in MS 372; see above, n. 22.

⁴² See especially Mierau, 'Das Reich', 559–63. The importance of the facing layout to this argument is also noted in von den Brincken, 'Zu Herkunft und Gestalt', 713–14.

⁴³ See CCCC, MS 372, fos. 52^v–57^v.

us very little, since the running titles in the Durham manuscript do the same thing.⁴⁴

A partial remedy to this problem can be found in previous discussions of *Post Celestinum*, whose contemporary references are more specific than other instances of political prophecy. At the time of its initial creation, this prophecy appears to have depicted Celestine IV (r. 1241) as the eponymous pope whose three successors would be the last popes.⁴⁵ While it was later applied to Celestine V (r. 1294), Lerner noted how this prophecy continued to be copied, for example by Villola, after this interpretation had been ‘discredited by the course of events’.⁴⁶ Similarly, the MS 372 scribe gives no indication of having regarded any specific pope in a prophetic manner. At least regarding the antipapal content in MS 372, it is therefore sensible to adopt the view of Kerby-Fulton that ‘outdated prophecies never seemed to prove problematic to medieval scribes and collectors’, and that prophecies such as *Post Celestinum* remained common in fourteenth-century England as a manifestation of ‘radical prophetic criticism of the papacy and clergy’.⁴⁷

Though this provides a satisfactory explanation of the anticlerical aspect in the MS 372 prophecy, it does not explain the figure referred to in line B1 as the ‘resurgent lion’. Here it is useful to look at the end of the imperial chronicle. The specific continuation with which MS 372’s copy of the imperial chronicle ends is the *Continuatio imperatorum anglica brevis*.⁴⁸ In eighteen lines, this continuation briefly discusses the murder of Henry of Almain in Viterbo in 1271, who is described as the son of the ‘elected emperor of the Romans’, before discussing Prince Edward’s return from the Holy Land and his coronation as Edward I of England in Westminster Abbey in 1274.⁴⁹ We should not overlook the potential significance of the imperial chronicle beginning with Augustus and ending with an English king, and the fact that the Durham manuscript also has this continuation

⁴⁴ Ibid., fos. 54^v–57^v. Cf. DCL, MS B.II.35, fos. 186^r–187^r.

⁴⁵ Tondelli, ‘Profezia Gioachimita’, 7; McGinn, *Visions of the end*, 172.

⁴⁶ Lerner, *Powers of prophecy*, 90.

⁴⁷ Kerby-Fulton, ‘Voice of honest indignation’, 467–8.

⁴⁸ For the content and transmission of this continuation, see Ikas, *Martin von Troppau*, 172–6.

⁴⁹ ‘ac domino henrico filio quondam comitis Cornubie electi in imperatore (sic.) romanorum’; CCCC, MS 372, fo. 57^v. Cf. ‘Continuatio imperatorum anglica brevis’, ed. Holder-Egger, *MGHSS*, 30 (Hannover, 1896), 713.

does not mean that the *Chronicon* was interpreted in the same way by both scribes.⁵⁰ This raises the possibility that the redeeming figure referred not to a German emperor, but rather Edward I, or more broadly an English king.

Such a possibility is by no means implausible. To begin with, Ika's aforementioned analysis of the Gonville and Caius copy of the *Chronicon* illustrates how scribal augmentations could serve as a means of elevating the status of English kings.⁵¹ More importantly, the practice of applying imperial-themed prophecies to English kings in the later Middle Ages has been documented extensively by historians. For example, Coote has argued that the popularity of prophecies such as *Gallorum levitas* in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century England served as a reflection of the common belief that 'the halo of the Roman empire had fallen upon the king of England, his country, his people and his capital city'.⁵² Certainly, Lerner has sounded a note of caution against the dangers of overconfidence and generalization when interpreting political prophecies found across numerous manuscripts.⁵³ However, historians have also drawn attention to specific instances of such prophecy referring to English kings. An example is the version of *Gallorum levitas* found in the so-called *Verses of Gildas* prophecy collection in BL, Arundel MS 57, which has been read as an unambiguous application of prophetic ideas to Edward II (r. 1307–27) in the context of English wars with Scotland and France.⁵⁴

The hypothesis that the MS 372 was intended as a comment on an English king also becomes more likely when we consider that the manuscript was, based on palaeographic evidence, most likely produced during the reign of Richard II (r. 1377–99), whom scholars have identified as a particularly common subject of prophetic literature. In particular,

⁵⁰ DCL, MS B.II.35, fo. 192r.

⁵¹ Above, n. 19.

⁵² Coote, *Prophecy and public affairs*, 75–8 (here 76); see also 148–50.

⁵³ Lerner, 'Reviews of books: *Prophecy and public affairs in later medieval England*, Lesley A. Coote', *American Historical Review*, 108:1 (2003), 243.

⁵⁴ J. R. S. Phillips, 'Edward II and the prophets', in W. M. Ormrod (ed.), *England in the fourteenth century: proceedings of the 1985 Harlaxton Symposium* (Woodbridge, 1986), 191–5; V. Flood, *Prophecy, politics and place in medieval England: from Geoffrey of Monmouth to Thomas of Erceeldoune* (Cambridge, 2016), 133–4. Cf. BL Arundel MS 57, fos. 4^v–5^r; online [http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Arundel_MS_57, accessed 3 August 2020].

Bennett has attributed prophetic expectation surrounding Richard II to the apparent prospect in the 1390s of his becoming Holy Roman Emperor. He has also argued, based on comments by contemporary chroniclers, that Richard was himself interested in ‘prophecies which cast him in the role of emperor of the world’, and that his diplomatic overtures in the 1390s to the papal curia and Germany may have been an attempt to act on such notions and procure his own election as emperor.⁵⁵ Flood has similarly noted how the link between Richard II and ‘imperial prophetic paradigms’ in the latter years of his reign was in part a consequence of his marital connections to the imperial house of Luxemburg, as his marriage to Anne of Bohemia made him son-in-law of Emperor Charles IV and brother-in-law of Wenceslas IV. Expectations of his election therefore fuelled contemporary perceptions of him as ‘a genuine focus for the reconciliation of Christendom’ and ‘a future emperor’.⁵⁶ Certainly, none of this is found explicitly in MS 372, and so we should exercise caution before assuming that the prophecy was written with Richard II in mind. Nevertheless, the idea that the prophecy copied at the end of the preface could combine with the continuation of the imperial chronicle to portray at least a king of England as a redeeming figure seems, against this background, a highly plausible one.

This brief survey is sufficient to explain the nature of the prophecy and its relationship with the *Chronicon*. MS 372 demonstrates clearly how a scribe interpreted both a short prophetic passage and the *Chronicon* itself in a manner somewhat different to the contexts in which these texts had originally emerged in the preceding century. In placing an antipapal

⁵⁵ M. J. Bennett, ‘Prophecy, providence and the revolution of 1399’, in N. Morgan (ed.), *Prophecy, apocalypse and the day of doom: proceedings of the 2000 Harlaxton Symposium* (Donington, 2004), 6–11 (here 7–8).

⁵⁶ Flood, ‘Exile and return: the development of political prophecy on the borders of England, c. 1136–1450s’, (Ph.D dissertation, University of York, 2013), 151. See also Flood, *Prophecy, politics and place*, 144–9.

prophecy directly before the beginning of a papal-imperial chronicle, and in ending that chronicle with the coronation of Edward I, the scribe was arguably adapting the *Chronicon* to make it a prophetic comment on the kings of England. MS 372 thus illustrates the variability of Martin of Troppau's reception and adds to what has already been said about his popularity in the later Middle Ages. A more comprehensive survey of the interactions between prophetic literature and the *Chronicon* would be highly desirable. As mentioned above, given the lack of previous mention of this prophecy in catalogue descriptions, it is by no means unlikely that other copies of Martin's text contain similarly unnoticed instances of prophetic literature. Lines B1–5 would also benefit from analysis beyond what has been attempted here, since documentations of these lines remain comparatively sparse. Nevertheless, it is clear that MS 372 should find a place both within the study of Martin of Troppau, and of prophecy and its transmission in fourteenth-century Europe.

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