evidence from extant manuscripts, he points out that both secular and monastic clergy performed these offices; he then argues that the texts likely used by secular clerics have more additions—including feminine forms—for the liturgy of baptism in their scribal annotations. Dyson moves on to a discussion of the rituals for the sick and dying, offering an explanation for why monastic houses were perhaps sought out or entered into by elderly elite nobles at the end of their lives. A similar, more in-depth discussion of the slightly different baptismal forms between monastic and secular clergy or a clearer voicing of Dyson's thoughts on the differences would not have been out of place and actually would have served to balance this particular discussion better.

Dyson's work expands our knowledge of secular priests in tenth- and eleventh-century England. While his manuscript analysis is informative to experts, his approach is clear and illuminating enough to introduce the topic to novices as well. This monograph would be a good edition to any library and is accessible enough for advanced undergraduates. It serves as a good example of how to approach an early medieval topic that must be carefully pieced together; it also represents a way to incorporate manuscript analysis into a book where these documents are not the only focus. Dyson has provided a thought-provoking look at pre-Conquest priests through the books they would have used in pastoral care and pressed for a reevaluation of how early English secular priests should be considered within their wider social and religious milieus.

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The Apocalypse of Empire: Imperial Eschatology in Late Antiquity and Early Islam. By **Stephen J. Shoemaker**. Divinations: Rereading Late Ancient Religion. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018. 272 pp. $59.95 hardcover.

Stephen J. Shoemaker introduces *The Apocalypse of Empire* as a follow-up to his 2011 *The Death of a Prophet*. In this earlier book, Shoemaker sought to reconstruct Muhammad's biography exclusively from non-Islamic sources, suggesting that he was an eschatological prophet who lived to lead his followers in capturing Jerusalem. *Apocalypse of Empire* responds to a common critique of his previous monograph, namely that Muhammad and his followers could not have been committed simultaneously to world conquest and a belief that the world would soon end. Shoemaker asserts that conquest and apocalypse could go hand in hand for Islam because late Roman Christians, Sasanian Zoroastrians, and late antique Jews all sought to use empire to build a kingdom of heaven on earth. The Islamic conquests, he suggests, can be understood as a similar eschatological project.

In chapter 1, Shoemaker argues against the increasingly common view that apocalypticism was an inherently anti-imperial genre. Shoemaker is at his best and most incisive in this chapter. He shows that scholars of Second Temple Judaism and early Christianity have overlooked apocalyptic sources from late antiquity, which are not intrinsically anti-imperial. The apocalyptic genre, Shoemaker convincingly argues,

can be used just as much to uphold the hegemonic claims of empires as to undermine them.

In chapter 2, Shoemaker seeks to show how the anti-imperialist inclinations of Jewish and early Christian apocalypticism were coopted by Roman imperialism and transformed into "imperial eschatology," eschatology that glorified empire. When Constantine converted to Christianity, he suggests, Christians quickly assimilated Roman imperial triumphalism into their eschatology. Shoemaker makes Eusebius of Caesarea a central figure in this change because Eusebius "equates Constantine with Christ, and likewise, the [Roman] empire with Christ's heavenly kingdom" (40). Yet his portrayal of Eusebius relies on outdated scholarship. He casts Eusebius as a spokesman for Constantine, a view debunked by Timothy Barnes already in 1981. Shoemaker also overlooks the work of Frank Thielman, Michael Hollerich, and Aaron Johnson, among others, who have emphasized that the church, not the empire, remained the focus of Eusebius's eschatological hopes and raised doubts that Eusebius was the enthusiastic advocate for Rome's empire described in earlier scholarship.

Another major piece of evidence Shoemaker cites for imperial coopting of Christian eschatology in the time of Constantine is the so-called "Legend of the Last Emperor," which predicted that a Christian Roman emperor would defeat the enemies of the faith and usher in the last days by surrendering his crown to God. However, several scholars (myself included), place the origin of the Last Emperor legend in the seventh century, when the survival of the Christian Empire was most in doubt and its supporters compelled to place their hopes in miraculous aid. In response, Shoemaker devotes much of chapter 2 to arguing that the Last Emperor legend in fact originated in the fourth century. He reiterates a case he has made elsewhere, updating it slightly to address recent objections. It is a major weakness that much of his argument throughout the book rests on his controversial dating of the Last Emperor legend.

In chapter 3, Shoemaker continues to argue for his notion of Roman imperial eschatology through the seventh century. Chapter 4 similarly argues that eschatology played an important role in Jewish and Zoroastrian political visions in this period. These chapters represent an impressive synthesis of material on late antique eschatology. Yet in his eagerness to establish a connection between empire building and eschatology, Shoemaker uncritically accepts some speculative arguments adduced by other scholars to the exclusion of other possible interpretations. He also continues to rely on his contention that the Last Emperor legend was widespread through late antiquity. He even suggests that Eastern Roman emperors, such as Justinian, conceived of themselves as this eschatological ruler (70–71). When Shoemaker presents evidence, he often has to wring an eschatological interpretation from his sources. For example, he suggests that the return of the True Cross to Jerusalem by Emperor Heraclius in 630 was intended as an eschatological event, citing Heraclius's court poet as evidence: "In his poem on the restoration of the cross, George [of Pisidia] styles Heraclius a messiah by describing his arrival in Jerusalem with language reminiscent of Palm Sunday, and he links this restoration with the renewal of the world, the resurrection of the dead, and the Final Judgment" (79). However, in the poem, George simply noted that news of Heraclius's entry into Jerusalem fittingly reached Constantinople on Lazarus Saturday (celebrating Christ's raising of Lazarus), the day before Palm Sunday, when Christ entered Jerusalem. Nothing here suggests that Heraclius's restoration of the cross meant that history was "on the verge of the Second Coming and the Kingdom of God" (79).

Chapters 5 and 6 explore the possible eschatological motivations behind Muhammad's preaching and the Islamic conquests. Shoemaker situates himself as intellectual heir to late nineteenth-/early twentieth-century scholars of Islam. He makes a convincing case that more recent liberal Western scholars have sought to sanitize Muhammad by presenting him as a social reformer instead of a preacher of apocalyptic jihad. However, Shoemaker's point is marred by drawing parallels with the modern terrorist group ISIS (117, 182). Moreover, his understanding of early Islam depends on Fred Donner's concept of a community of Believers, namely that Islam began as a movement not only of Muslims but of Christians, Jews, and others bent on propagating a radical monotheistic message. "The early Believers' movement was fueled by a powerful ideology of imperial eschatology" (178), Shoemaker contends, so they attacked existing empires in the expectation that "their submission to the Believers' divinely elected empire would bring about the end of time" (172). However, Donner's views are not universally accepted. Shoemaker's understanding of Islam's eschatological character is incompatible, for example, with the model proposed by Jack Tannous of early Muslims as "simple believers," wherein the justification for conquest was formulated post hoc.

Throughout, Shoemaker makes the excellent point that apocalyptic literature is not necessarily anti-imperial. Hopefully, this contribution will be assimilated within the study of Jewish and Christian eschatology. Still, he overemphasizes the prevalence of imperial ideology in late antique eschatology. Even if Shoemaker is correct that Islam began as an eschatological movement, it need not follow that the "Believers" sought the creation of a new empire. True, Muslim writers often talked of waging war against the impious empires of the Persians and Byzantines, but the political institutions with which the conquerors replaced them seem to have been improvised and contentious. Shoemaker fails to consider whether the early followers of Muhammad simply sought the destruction of earthly empire and that the creation of their own empire was an unintended result of the fact that the world did not end when they had expected.

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The Making of the Medieval Middle East: Religion, Society, and Simple Believers. By **Jack Tannous**. Princeton: Princeton University Press. xiv + 664 pp. $39.95 cloth.

In this volume, Jack Tannous provides a remarkable synthesis of the literary evidence concerning the transition from late antiquity to the medieval era in the Near East, showing a mastery of the relevant materials that is heretofore unequalled. The study focuses largely on Christian sources—which is in line with one of its primary aims—and even more specifically on sources from the Miaphysite communities of Syro-Palestine and Iraq. Tannous identifies two main goals for his book: "First, to argue against adopting a heavily theological understanding of the Christian communities in the post-Chalcedonian Middle East as well as against a strongly doctrinally focused understanding of Christian-Muslim interactions. And second, to decenter