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Arguing for Improvement: The Last Judgment, Time and the Future in Dhuoda's *Liber manualis*

*The role of eschatology and the Apocalypse as part of theological discourse in the Carolingian age (c. 750–950 CE), has been widely studied. Nevertheless, the complicated temporal structure of biblical revelation of which the Apocalypse is only one of many parts and its impact on the discourse of the Carolingian endeavor to correct Christian society has hardly been looked into. As a consequence, the development of ideas of futurity expressed in argumentative patterns associated with ideas of revelation and the Last Judgment, is rather underresearched. This oversight is a serious one, because it obscures a specific approach to time, as well as a conglomeration of ideas about the Christian way of life. This article explores the discursive techniques that formed an extensive matrix of moral norms connected to temporal patterns, rooted in the interpretation of the Bible. It focuses on Dhuoda's *Liber manualis* as just one voice in a much broader and diverse Carolingian discourse.*

The centrality of an eschatological world-view in the Middle Ages and the influence of apocalyptic thought on medieval life have often been emphasised.¹ For the early Middle Ages, discussion has mainly revolved around the question of whether there was a heightened apocalyptic fear around 800 that drove society to look for signs of the apocalypse, and stimulated the development of computistic, astrological and cosmological ideas.² While these discussions have centred on the role of the Apocalypse as a driving force of change in matters of time measurement, James Palmer has recently argued that the Apocalypse was not central to innovations in that field.

1 For approaches that stress a linear sequence of time and the significance of the future in the Middle Ages, see for example Schmitt, "Appropriating the Future;" Boyle, "Forming the Future for Individuals and Institutions in Medieval Ireland."

2 Fried, "Endzeiterwartung um die Jahrtausendwende," and Fried, *Apokalyptisches Denken und die Entstehung der modernen Naturwissenschaft im Mittelalter*; de Jong, "Charlemagne's Church," 105; Palmer, "Calculating Time and the End of Time in the Carolingian World," and Palmer, "The Ordering of Time." With a wider scope on the End of Time: Palmer, *The Apocalypse in the Early Middle Ages*. For the pull of the future: Schmieder, *Mittelalterliche Zukunftsgestaltung im Angesicht des Weltendes*.

Note: I am deeply indebted to Charles West, who made many valuable suggestions on the manuscript and kindly helped my English along.

Editors' note: While finishing these volumes, we learned that our dear friend and colleague Miriam Czock sadly and unexpectedly passed away. We will always remember her, as a brilliant scholar, but most of all as a cheerful, generous and warm-hearted person.

Instead, he suggested that the Last Judgment might have played a significant role in the Carolingian movement of *correctio*.³

Other scholars have approached Carolingian thinkers' interest in the Apocalypse by considering the role of eschatology and the Apocalypse in theological discourse. Research on the Carolingian exegetical oeuvre on the Apocalypse has sometimes commented on the deep entwinement of temporal patterns and biblical exegesis.⁴ Up to now, biblical exegesis has either been analysed as an interpretational mode to help understand the biblical past or as a meditation on eschatology. Thus, research understood exegesis as an interpretational strategy that either brought the Old Testament into correspondence with the New or centred on the End Times as foreseen in the Book of the Apocalypse. Exegesis can be seen as a theological exploration of the future, in which the anticipated coming of Christ and the Apocalypse are the subjects of interpretation. However, the role of the future in medieval exegesis was much more multifaceted, as future and foreknowledge shape the epistemological mode of exegesis as an act of interpretation. From that point of view, the future becomes an interpretative tool and exegesis ultimately a technique that reads the history of salvation as one revelation after the other, always in the context of the whole of biblical revelation. The future is not therefore limited to the Revelation of John, the apocalyptic book of the bible, but also penetrates the Old and the New Testament.

Nevertheless, the complicated temporal structure of biblical revelation, of which the apocalypse described in the Apocalypse of John is only one part, and its impact on the discourse of *correctio* has hardly been looked into.⁵ As a consequence, the Carolingian development of ideas of the future connected to modes of biblical exegesis continues to be under-researched, and argumentative patterns as-

3 Palmer, "Calculating Time and the End of Time in the Carolingian World," and Palmer, "To Be Found Prepared." Historians have not yet reached agreement on how to label the cultural endeavour undertaken during the eighth and ninth centuries/during the reign of Charlemagne and his successors. For an introduction to the phenomena and further reading, see McKitterick, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms*; Brown, "Introduction: The Carolingian Renaissance;" Depreux, "Réformes culturelles à l'époque carolingienne." On pastoral care, cult and reform, see for example Staubach, "'Cultus divinus' und karolingische Reform," and Staubach, "Aspekte der karolingischen Pastoralreform;" de Jong, "Charlemagne's Church," and "Ecclesia and the Early Medieval Polity."

4 Matter, "Pseudo-Alcuinian 'De septem sigillis,'" 134, underlines the fact that there is "nothing chiliastic about *De septem sigillis*; rather, it links the Old and New Testament". See also Matter, "The Apocalypse in Early Medieval Exegesis;" Heil, "'Nos Nescientes de Hoc Velle Manere' – 'We Wish to Remain Ignorant about This'"; Mackay, "Apocalypse Comments by Primasius, Bede, and Alcuin."

5 Exegesis as a rhetorical tool has not yet been fully explored. However, there were different ways of reading the Bible, and with it different kinds of exegesis as well as temporal concepts. For different approaches to exegesis and the conceptualisations of time, see Collins, *The Carolingian Debate over Sacred Space*, 39–65; Czock, "Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft," and Czock, "Creating Futures through the Lens of Revelation in the Rhetoric of Carolingian Reform."

sociated with ideas of revelation and the Last Judgment remain opaque. This oversight is a serious one, because it obscures something that inspired a specific approach to time, as well as a cluster of related concepts about the Christian way of life. Therefore, this study explores the discursive techniques that formed an extensive matrix of moral norms connected to temporal patterns, rooted in the interpretation of the Bible. It concentrates on just one voice in the broad and diverse Carolingian discourse,⁶ taking Dhuoda's *Liber manualis*⁷ as an example of how argumentative patterns and exhortations could be modelled on a time frame derived from biblical exegesis. It looks closely at how admonitions associated with specific ideas of both the future within the world and the spiritual future were set out in relation to ideas about redemption and the Last Judgment.

Dhuoda's exhortations for her son have long attracted scholarly attention. Her status as a female writer and the relationship between her own familial, social and political background to the content of the *Manual* have been debated especially.⁸ Dhuoda wrote the book at a politically highly sensitive time for her and her family during the years 841–843. Dhuoda was married to a courtier of Louis the Pious named Bernhard of Septimania, who in 841 avoided participating in the battle of Fontenoy, the key moment in the fraternal wars fought by Louis the Pious' sons for supremacy within the empire.⁹ After the battle of Fontenoy, Bernhard, who had long-standing political ties to Pippin II of Aquitaine, commended his son William to Pippin's victorious adversary, Charles the Bald. Dhuoda's son thus joined the court of Charles the Bald in 841. We do not have to dwell on the details of the political turmoil in which Dhuoda and her family were involved. For the present purpose it may suffice to keep in mind that her book, although not openly political in nature and hardly referring to any of the upheavals Dhuoda's family was experiencing, was written as an attempt to give William guidance for his life at court.¹⁰ Although she focused on William, Dhuoda's book had a broader educational scope. She ex-

⁶ On this debate, see de Jong and Renswoude, eds., *Carolingian Cultures of Dialogue, Debate and Disputation*, and the entire issue.

⁷ Dhuoda, *Manuel pour mon fils*, ed. Riché; Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, ed. and trans. Thiébaux. All quotations follow Thiébaux's translation. Both Riché and Thiébaux include introductions to Dhuoda and her work in their editions. There is another English translation by Neel: Dhuoda, *Handbook for William*, trans. Neel, as well as a German one by Fels: Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, trans. Fels. For a more general overview of Dhuoda's moral programme, see Sedlmeier, *Die laienparänetischen Schriften der Karolingerzeit*.

⁸ Dronke, *Women Writers of the Middle Ages*, 36–54; Cherewatuk, "'Speculum Matris';" Claussen, "God and Man in Dhuoda's *Liber manualis*;" Stofferahn, "Liber Manualis and A Century of Scholarship;" Le Jan, "Dhuoda ou l'opportunité du discours féminin;" Sot, "Jonas d'Orléans et Dhuoda;" Le Jan, "The Multiple Identities of Dhuoda;" Nelson, "Dhuoda," and Nelson, "Dhuoda's Context;" Chandler, "Barcelona BC 569 and a Carolingian Programme on the Virtues." For the laity's overall role in the moral discourse see McKittrick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word*, 223–227; Noble, "Secular Sanctity;" Stone, "The Rise and Fall of the Lay Moral Elite in Carolingian Francia."

⁹ Nelson, "The Search for Peace in a Time of War."

¹⁰ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, Introduction, 31.

pected her son to share her advice and wisdom with others and hoped it would benefit his peers and a wider court audience.¹¹

Dhuoda herself described her approach as dealing with “what is useful in the *saeculum* (age) and pleasing to God”.¹² It was Janet Nelson who pointed out that Dhuoda thus took up a dual theme, counselling her son both regarding the *temporalia*, meaning his worldly office, as well as regarding his soul.¹³ Dhuoda therefore constructed her discourse around two futures, one within the world, the other salvational. Moreover, her use of temporal signifiers (*temporalia*, *saeculum*, etc.) to describe her tenets for William’s behaviour raises the question about the role that time itself, as well as past, present and future, played in constructing and framing her arguments.

It is not the first time that the special significance of time to Dhuoda’s arguments has received scholarly attention. In Barbara Schlieben’s view, Dhuoda phrased her exhortations with reference to contemporary phenomena in an effort to manage her present. She noted that in the *Handbook*, Dhuoda engaged in discreet modifications to contemporary political models of society, such as the status of bishops.¹⁴ However, although Schlieben also emphasised Dhuoda’s reliance on eschatological thought patterns, she did not take a closer look at how Dhuoda’s advice regarding William’s present within the world might have been intertwined with ideas about the future, and her conception of time, more generally.

While Schlieben looked primarily at Dhuoda’s use and transformation of political models in view of the future, others have emphasised her reliance on Scripture to confront her present.¹⁵ In constructing her *Handbook*, Dhuoda brought together well-known biblical extracts, which she arranged to suit her needs.¹⁶ While research has emphasised the centrality of Scripture to Dhuoda’s writings, until now it is above all her preference for the Old Testament that has been the focus of scholarly attention. Mayke de Jong highlighted the importance of the past for interpreting the ninth-century present by analysing Carolingian exegetes’ preference for using Old Testament models in a typological fashion.¹⁷ However, although de Jong focused on

11 Nelson, “Dhuoda,” 117–120.

12 Nelson, “Dhuoda,” 112–113.

13 On the theme of Dhuoda admonishing William to be prepared for his temporal service, see for example: Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, 2.3, 4.2, 7.1, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 81, 131, 190.

14 Schlieben, “Zum Zusammenhang von Gegenwartsbetrachtung und Prognose im Frühmittelalter,” 42–47.

15 Although Dhuoda’s literary enterprise owes much to Scripture, she also relied on classical sources. For her use of sources, see: Dhuoda, *Manuel pour mon fils*, 33, ed. Riché, 375–385; Lepree, “La Carolingian Exegetical Tradition,” 46–86. For Dhuoda’s reading of the Bible, see Nelson, “Lay Readers of the Bible in the Ninth Century,” 50–53.

16 For citations of the Bible in Dhuoda, see Dhuoda, *Manuel pour mon fils*, ed. Riché, 375–382; Riché, “Bible de Dhuoda.”

17 De Jong, “Carolingian Political Discourse and the Biblical Past,” 94–101, esp. 97. On the relevance of the Old Testament to Carolingian thought, see Kottje, *Studien zum Einfluß des Alten Tes-*

the Old Testament and the uses of the past, she nevertheless pointed out “that Dhuoda made associative and allegorising connections between Old and New Testament text”.¹⁸ In this way, De Jong called attention to the intricate ways in which Old Testament and New Testament could be associated with each other. However, it still remains to be explored how the Old and New Testaments became a point of reference for Dhuoda and an explanatory model for how her conception of the present related to redemption and to Judgment Day.

Dhuoda clearly framed her reactions to recent events in biblical language. Past, present and future are therefore set into a horizon of revelation and salvation derived from the Bible, which informs her thought. Therefore this study looks not only at the entwinement of the innerworldly and spiritual futures in Dhuoda’s thought, but also explores the impact of exegesis on her argumentative patterns, her moral exhortations and, more generally, her ideas of time. Furthermore, it analyses the influence of the concepts of redemption, salvation and the Last Judgment on Dhuoda’s spiritual and religious values. Finally, this article explores the ways in which revelation and the belief in the Last Judgment established a framework for individual and collective improvement.

1 Biblical Revelation, Redemption, Salvation and Time

Dhuoda herself provided a clue as to how she located her book and her advice within the temporal framework of biblical history. At the very beginning of the *Handbook*, she explained its subject by using etymology and biblical quotations to explore the meaning of “hand” (*manus*).

For ‘hand’ signifies the work completed, as Scripture says: ‘And the Lord’s hand was laid upon me’, that is to say, the redemption which has led believers to perfection. [...] The ‘-alis’ part of *Manualis* has many meanings. [...] It means scope, which is aim; consummation, which is ‘achievement’; and striving after, which is ‘completion’. [...] What other meaning, then, could this term *Manualis* have but the end of ignorance. One thinks, too, of the messenger foreknowing the light of the future, as if to say: ‘The night has gone before, the day will hasten’,¹⁹ that is, Christ, who himself has plainly said, ‘If I am the day and you are the hours, follow me’,²⁰ and so forth.²¹

tamentes auf Recht und Liturgie des Frühen Mittelalters; Hartmann, “Die Karolingische Reform und die Bibel;” Contreni, “Carolingian Biblical Culture;” Hen and Innes, eds., *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*; Chazelle and Edwards, eds., *Study of the Bible in the Carolingian Era*; Contreni, “The Patristic Legacy to c. 1000,”

¹⁸ De Jong, “Carolingian Political Discourse and the Biblical Past,” 96.

¹⁹ Romans 13:12.

²⁰ This refers to John 8:12, 9:4–5, 11:9.

All the biblical quotations cited by Dhuoda in this passage use time as a rhetorical element. They also reflect the connection that Dhuoda establishes between her present and biblical revelation. The salvific fact revealed in Christ is at the core of the temporal concept expressed here. In a sense, Christian faith relies on a bifold revelation, of which one part is already fulfilled. Christ is the fulfillment of the promises of the Old Testament: his coming redeemed Christendom and opened the possibility of salvation. At the same time, this raises the question of how salvation history moves forward after Christ's first coming. The biblical Book of Revelation is an answer to this. It is a prophecy about the end, the Last Judgment and the fulfillment of the kingdom of God. This prophetic structure of the Bible implies a relation between the past and the prophesied future, with the present as a bridge linking the two. Dhuoda picks up on this in her short explanation of "hand", steeped in biblical images. She thereby links her programme, and thus also her present and future, to biblical revelation in a very specific way. While the work of God is completed, because redemption through Christ's death on the cross led believers to perfection, there is still the "light" of the future to come.²² Dhuoda inserts her work in between the poles of past redemption and of the prophecy of the future end. Knowing about the possibility of perfection is the end of ignorance, but at the same time the possibility of perfection contains the need for "completion". It is to this completion that Dhuoda intends her *Manual/Handbook* to lead/guide the reader.²³ Thus although God has completed his work, mankind is still following his path, and this means that biblical revelation is interwoven into the fabric of the present.

Although eschatological in nature, Dhuoda's selection of biblical citations does not point to any millennialism on her part. She does not represent the apocalypse as an eschatological prophecy shortly to be fulfilled. Instead of treating the end of the world as imminent, Dhuoda points her reader in a different direction. Citing St. Paul's letter to the Romans, which has a clear eschatological dimension, she lays out the path for following Christ, a path which cannot be ignored. Her juxtaposition of only half a passage cited from Romans 13:12 with quotes from St. John's Gospel illuminates the argumentative framework of her exhortations. The sentences that

21 Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, Incipit, 40–41: *'Manus' enim multis intelligitur modis: [...] Scriptura dicente: Et facta est super me manus Domini, hoc est redemptio, quod credentes ad perfectum usque perduxit [...]. 'Alis' quanquam multas habet significationes [...] hoc est scopon quod dicitur destinatio, et consumatio quod intelligitur perfectio, et secutio quod est finitio; [...] Quam significationem habeat huius locutio quod dicitur Manualis; nisi finis ignorantiae? Et nuntius intelligitus prescius lucis futurorum, ac si dicat: Nox precessit, dies autem adpropinquabit, hoc est Christus, ipse videlicet qui dixit: Si ego dies et vos horae, sequimini me, et cetera.*

22 Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, Incipit, 40.

23 Placing Dhuoda's statements in the broader context of salvation history might render them more easily comprehensible. As yet, there is much confusion about how they refer to each other, see Sedlmeier, *Die laienparännetischen Schriften der Karolingerzeit*, 379–380, especially footnote 29. For Dhuoda connecting wisdom to God's Scriptures in the Old and New Testament and to God's eternity, see Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, 4.4, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 136–137.

Dhuoda cites from Romans 13:12 remind the reader of the apocalypse and are perhaps used by her to establish a sense of urgency. Another idea, however, is much more prominent in her argument: her quotations from the Gospel of John stress the need to follow Jesus. If one reads the whole of Romans 13:12, this theme continues: “[L]et us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.”²⁴ The individual possibility of redemption and the potential of salvation in the future calls for action in the present life: to embody Christ’s way and to behave in a Christian fashion. Christian ethics and moral formation are thus based in salvific history.

Dhuoda emphasises the nexus of past redemption and prophesied future salvation.²⁵ Redemption relates to the hope for the coming of God’s kingdom on Judgment Day, and sets in motion the need to adhere to Christian morality in the present. The momentum of revelation thus played a powerful role in the Carolingian discourse on Christianity. Through the interrelatedness of the biblically revealed past, present and future, Dhuoda located her advice inside a complex pattern of Christian time.

2 God’s Eternity and Human Time

Before moving on to Dhuoda’s ideas regarding William’s earthly and salvific futures, another one of her observations on time has to be considered. Dhuoda’s admonitions are based on a model of time steeped in the fact of redemption and the promise of salvation, which hinges on two distinctive features of divine and human time. God is eternal and spans the past, the present and the future. Dhuoda writes:

Dwelling in the past, now in the present and in the future, he [God] is always here and everywhere. Existence is his forever, for in his words: ‘I am Alpha and Omega’ and ‘I am who am’.²⁶ Human life on earth, by contrast, is limited, and therefore everything earned in it is short-lived. Everything one gains will only be possessed for a time, and not all time.²⁷

It is the belief in God’s eternity, on the one hand, and the temporality of finite worldly human life, on the other, that is the horizon in which life beyond the Day of Judgment becomes imaginable. The idea that human life on earth ends and God’s

²⁴ King James Bible. Vulgata: [...] *abiciamus ergo opera tenebrarum et induamur arma lucis.*

²⁵ The emphasis on salvation was already pointed out by Sedlmeier, *Die laienparänetischen Schriften der Karolingerzeit*, 383, especially footnote 29, though without following up this theme.

²⁶ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, 1.1, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 60–61: *Ipse in praeteritis tunc, ipse in praesentibus nunc, ipse in posteris manens, semper hic et ubique est, et esse apud omnia utilia possibiliter habet. Apud illum semper esse abetur, dicente illo Ego sum alfa et omega. Et Ego sum qui sum.*

²⁷ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, 1.5, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 66–67.

eternity will prevail serves a foil to all Dhuoda's thoughts, although the concept itself mostly remains implicit.

While Dhuoda's exhortations to William are thus infused with temporal concepts linked to ideas of redemption and salvation, she also contemplates the temporal linearity of human life by setting out a sequence of past, present and future. Thus she admonishes William to follow and imitate in the present and future the behaviour of virtuous men in the past.²⁸ The linear concept of time governing human life, and the role of future in it, come to the fore in book 8, where Dhuoda admonishes William: "Pray for things past, present and future. Pray for the past if you have been lax about this, so that you will be able to put it aside; pray for the present wrongs so that you may avoid them; pray for the future in order to guard against any evils that may run into you."²⁹ Prayer was thus a tool to repent past sins, a guide in the present and a preparation for an unknown future, in which many pitfalls could lie ahead.³⁰ The uncertainty of the future and the importance of prayer in anticipation of it is also a part of book ten. Here Dhuoda turns to the subject of her own future and beseeches her son: "Shall I live long enough to see that time with my own eyes? I am not sure of my own merits, not sure of my strength, since in my fragile labour I feel shaken by the waves of the sea. Though this is how it is with me, all things remain possible with the Almighty."³¹ Again Dhuoda's thoughts seem to oscillate between her future within the world and her future salvation. The statement about the time drawing nearer might be read in light of the political turmoil through which Dhuoda had to live.³² It can equally be read as showing her awareness of the openness and uncertainty of both her earthly future and her soul's future beyond earthly time. Again, prayer is a tool of guidance in the face of an unknown future. Although Dhuoda insists in other instances that William should plan his future and prepare for it,³³ these passages show that she was acutely aware of the fluidity of a future that could not be foretold.

Whilst Dhuoda's focus on William and his soul seemingly favours the individual, she nevertheless imagines reaching heaven not as a solitary task, but as a collective one. Already Janet Nelson pointed out that Dhuoda intended William to share her *Handbook* with others. Time and again, Dhuoda stresses that William is not alone in striving for salvation. For example, she writes: "I entreat you, my son,

²⁸ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, 4.1, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 130–131.

²⁹ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, 8.2, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 196–197.

³⁰ For the embeddedness of individual salvation into the collective, see also Ganz, "Individual and Universal Salvation in the *In honorem sanctae crucis*."

³¹ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, 10.3, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 225: *Et ut ego ad hoc pervaleam tempus, ut cernere valeam, incerta consisto, incerta ex meritis, incerta vigore, fragilique labore per undas conquassor. Licet in me ita consistat, tamen apud omnipotentem cuncta possibilia manent.*

³² For the passages about tribulation and their meaning, see Sedlmeier, *Die laienparänetischen Schriften der Karolingerzeit*, 426–431.

³³ See for example Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, 4.1, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 130–131.

you who are amongst these [human creatures], that you strive with all your strength in order to scale the summit – with all others worthy and capable of loving God – and with them arrive in the kingdom that shall endure without end.”³⁴ Dhuoda sees salvation as something that has to be reached collectively because the promise of redemption is made to all Christians. However, before we can understand the interrelations between her concept of time and the idea of individual and collective betterment, we have to first explore how she imagined present, future and salvation to be intertwined.

3 Redemption of the Spirit, the Body and Two Futures

Dhuoda placed her whole endeavour within a framework of biblical revelation. Therefore, her practical advice is often linked to the past as well as the future. As a consequence, her view of the future was based on ideas of past redemption and future salvation, and her practical advice often applied to both the past and the future. However, her thoughts concerning the future not only had to accommodate redemption and salvation, but also had to be related to a future within the world.³⁵ As will be seen below, Dhuoda was convinced that the future within the world and eternal salvation went hand in hand. Living according to Christian moral precepts was thus not only beneficial for the salvation of the soul, but also for present-day life.

³⁴ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, 1.1, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 58–59: *Inter quos adortor te, fili, ut, in quantum vales, illa semper perquiras ubi cum dignis et abtis Deumque diligentibus, ad certum possis scandere culmen, atque una cum illis ad regnum valesa pertingere sine fine mansurum.* For another example, see Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, 3.10, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 112–117.

³⁵ The notion that the future within the world and the spiritual future are intertwined does not seem to be unique to Dhuoda. See Czock, “Creating Futures through the Lens of Revelation in the Rhetoric of Carolingian Reform.” However, it was far from pervasive in Carolingian thought. Alcuin, for example, seems to offer a much more inward-looking kind of argument. He underlines spiritual growth, see Alcuin, *Liber de virtutibus et vitiis*, PL 101; Szarmach, “Alcuin’s ‘Liber de virtutibus et vitiis’;” Alcuin, *De virtutibus et vitiis liber*, transl. Stone, <http://www.heroicage.org/issues/16/stone.php>. That Alcuin’s arguments are rather spiritual is made plain in his preface, Alcuin, *Liber de virtutibus et vitiis*, PL 101, 613–614, where he says: “From whence I ask that the holy desire of your salvation may run very often back to the reading of these letters, as if to a certain comfort; so that the spirit tired out by external troubles may have a return to itself, in which it may rejoice; and that it may know to what it ought chiefly to hasten.” (*Unde precor sanctum salutis vestrae [Al. sanctæ salutis tuæ] desiderium, ad harum sæpius, quasi ad quoddam recurrere solatium, litterarum lectionem; ut animus exterioribus fatigatus molestiis, ad seipsum reversus habeat, in quo gaudeat; et quo maxime festinare debeat, intelligat.*)

The entwining of present and future within the world with the salvific future beyond Judgment Day is already apparent in the preface to the *Manual*, in which Dhuoda commends her book to William.

You will also find it in a mirror, in which without a doubt you can fix your gaze upon the health of your soul. In doing so, you can please in every way not only the world but [also] him who formed you from clay. What is in every way necessary, son William, is that in fulfilling both duties you show that you can lead a useful life in the world and that you can please God in all things.³⁶

Following the guidelines and values set out by Dhuoda is thus not only necessary for reaching the future goal of salvation, but also for living a fulfilling life on earth. Moreover, Dhuoda is not only thinking of spiritual fulfillment, but also hopes for worldly offices and endowments for her sons. As she tells William later in the text, “He will abundantly grant you the world’s prosperity, and he will convert all your enemies to peace. But you must, as it is written in the Book of Job, ‘gird up your loins like a man’, be humble of heart and chaste in body: ‘turn toward that which is upright, be all glorious and clothe yourself in splendour’.”³⁷ The Christian ethics she envisions are not necessary to overcome an internal struggle,³⁸ but are a technique to reach salvation as well as success within the world. Her *Handbook* therefore encourages an active involvement in, and even a shaping of, the world. It is not only to be used as a guide for salvation, but as a guide for dealing with society.³⁹ As she wove the promise of salvation into her admonitions, she also to some extent harmonised the worldly present and future salvation. The world for her is already immersed in heavenly things.⁴⁰

As a result, ideas of the present, its meaning for the future beyond Judgment Day, and the future within the world became deeply intertwined in her text. This

36 Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, Prologus, 48–49: [...] *invenies etiam et speculum in quo salutem animae tuae indubitanter possis conspicerere, ut non solum saeculo, sed ei per omnia possis placere qui te formavit ex limo: quod tibi per omnia necesse est, fili Wilhelme, ut in utroque negotio talis te exhibeas, qualiter possis utilis esse saeculo, et Deo per omnia placere valeas semper.*

37 Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, 1.7, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 68–69: [...] *tributes tibi prospera in mundo largissime, et omnes inimicos tuos convertet ad pacem. Tu autem, ut scriptum est in Iob accinge sicut vir lumbos tuos; sis humilis corde castusque et corpore, atque erectus in sublime esto gloriosus valde et speciosus induere vestibus.*

38 Dhuoda does not stress any internal emotional struggle to reach salvation within the world and in the afterlife. Alcuin, in comparison, as Barbara Rosenwein has shown, thought of virtues and vices as emotions that were to be managed, if one wanted to lead a happy life. See: Rosenwein, “Taking Pleasure in Virtues and Vices.”

39 This is also stressed for example by Claussen, “God and Man in Dhuoda’s *Liber manualis*.”

40 Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, 2.2, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 74–75: “Earthly things, son, teach us about the heavenly. When you have earnestly striven for something in the world and you have obtained it, you will rejoice.” (*Docent, fili, terrena quae sunt coelestia. Tu cum pulsaveris in saeculo et adquisieris, gaudebis [...].*)

reading in which the future within the world and the salvific future are mutually dependent also leads to a specific programme of spiritual development that impinges on the body. Dhuoda's discourse on moral reform does stress inner contemplation,⁴¹ but it is not only inward-looking: she also emphasises the merits of morals for the body. The body might be the theme in Dhuoda's work in which the subordination of the material world to the spiritual emerges most clearly. Dhuoda often contemplates the fate of body and soul.⁴² And although there are clear instances in which she writes about the physical, worldly body,⁴³ she also considers its spiritual health. Therefore her ideas sometimes seem to shift between the physical body of the world, its spiritual status within the world and the resurrected body and soul. She ends her preface: "However, as Scripture says, 'seek first the kingdom of God in all things and the rest will then be added to you', all that is necessary for the benefit of your soul and body, to be happily enjoyed."⁴⁴ Dhuoda here cites the account of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 6:33, which stresses the need to seek God's kingdom first. At the same time, it promises those who do so that all their earthly wants will be provided for. To decide whether she is talking about the worldly body, and with this William's present, is even harder if we take into account her belief that not only the soul will be saved, but that also the body will be resurrected.⁴⁵ She writes:

Let anyone who seeks with all his heart the author of salvation believe that he can obtain salvation, not only of body but of soul. As you turn these thoughts over, hasten, in the present and the future, to commit your watchful zeal to action, so that you can surely receive this twofold salvation from the One whom you must discern with pure mind, having believed.⁴⁶

Once again, Dhuoda admonishes William that he has to take action in present and future to ensure his salvation.

41 For an interpretation that, although factoring in Dhuoda's political message, mainly stresses the spiritual dimension and sees Dhuoda on par with later mystics, see Mayeski, "The Beatitudes and the Moral Life of the Christian."

42 See for example Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 125, 126, 131, 135, 137, 147, 149, 179, 155, 157, 187, 193, 199.

43 For example, while admonishing William to pray for the sick, she entreats him to pray "for the sick, that God may give them spiritual health and bodily remedy [...]. ([...] *pro infirmis, ut det illis Deus salutem animae et corporis medelam.*) Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, 8.8, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 198–199.

44 Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, Praefatio, 50–51: *Tamen, ut ait Scriptura, primum in omnibus regnum Dei quaere et cetera tunc adicientur, ea quae necessaria sunt animae et corpori tuo fruenda feliciter.*

45 For the belief in the bodily resurrection see, for example, Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity*.

46 Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, 4.2, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 132–133: *Quisquis enim salutis Auctorem toto quaesierit corde, non solum corpori, sed animae salutem credat sibi percipere posse. Hoc in te huc illucque conflatens, tempore praesenti atque futuro in studio certaminis pervigil ita satagere festina, ut utrasque ab illo quem puro intuitu cernere debes, indubitanter accipere valeas fisus.*

This shifting image comes to the fore when Dhuoda picks up the theme of spirit and body most thoroughly in the first chapter of book 7,⁴⁷ which Janet Nelson thought was at the core of her arguments about the dual theme of worldly conduct and God's grace.⁴⁸ In this chapter, Dhuoda talks about the two birth of Christians, the first physical and the second spiritual. And although she concedes that the spiritual is nobler than the physical, she points out that neither is much use without the other.⁴⁹ Janet Nelson pointed out that although Dhuoda recognised a tension between the carnal and the spiritual, she also saw the necessity of coexistence, even harmony, between the two. This dialectic between body and soul is another indicator of how deeply intertwined the present within the world, past redemption and the salvific future beyond Judgment Day became for Dhuoda.

4 Thinking Improvement, Redemption and Salvation in a Social Matrix: The Example of Justice as Moral Value

A closer look at Dhuoda's thoughts on the theme of just judgment can reveal the intricacies of her concept of time.⁵⁰ In a chapter on the vices and beatitudes (book 4.8), Dhuoda admonishes her son William: "'Love justice', so that you will be known as a just man when you preside over legal cases. [...] And another 'if you administer justice, judge correctly'. For it is written: 'According to the judgment that you have rendered' etc."⁵¹ The last quotation comes from the Gospel of Matthew 7:2, and reads in full: "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."⁵² Matthew's is a revelatory message, but Dhuoda's use of it does not seem to be intended to evoke

⁴⁷ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, 7.1, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 190–191. Claussen, "God and Man in Dhuoda's *Liber manualis*," 45: This is not to say that she does not draw the ancient and traditional dichotomy between things spiritual and carnal. Book VII of the *Liber* is concerned precisely with this difference, but it becomes first confusing, and then blurred, as the same people and the same things participate in both qualities at the same time.

⁴⁸ Nelson, "Dhuoda," 113–117.

⁴⁹ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, 7.1, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 190–191: [...] *duo nativitates in uno homine esse noscuntur, una carnalis, altera spiritualis, sed nobilior spiritualis quam carnalis. Una enim sine alia utiliter non potest in genere consistere humano, [...]*.

⁵⁰ Meyers, "Dhuoda et la justice d'après son *Liber Manualis*."

⁵¹ Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, 4.8, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 154–155: *Dilige iustitiam, ut iustus esse videaris in causis. Nam iustus Dominus iustitias dilexit diligique semper: aequitatem videt vultus eius. Valde eam, eo tunc in tempore, diligebat et diligere admonebat ille qui dicebat: Diligite iustitiam, qui iudicatis terram. Et item alius: Si iustitiam loquimini, recta iudicate. Scriptum namque est: In quo enim iudicio iudicaveritis, et cetera.*

⁵² King James Bible.

aspects of apocalyptic fear; instead, she uses it to talk about the individual's chance of salvation. Although men like William administered justice in this world, their judgment had also a significance beyond this life, because its consequences follow in the afterlife. This again shows how the prospect of future salvation impinges on the present. To Carolingian aristocrats such as William, however, justice was much more than just another part of a programme of moral values: it was essential to reach heaven.

Dhuoda envisions judging to be an act that could easily endanger one's salvation if meted out unfairly or corruptly. However, her description of justice also reveals the connections between the individual and the collective in the workings of present and of salvation:

You, therefore, son William, beware and flee iniquity, love righteousness, practice justice. [...] Do not pursue the cravings for perishable things. The True and Pure has provided a home in your feeble body for a true, pure, immortal soul. Never allow yourself to prepare hideous chains for this soul by planning, saying or consenting to some injustice through lack of fairness or pity. For many suffer pain for wrongs that others have committed. [...] For someone has said: 'I sin with all who are sinners, if I fail to correct those I see sinning!'⁵³

In this passage, Dhuoda calls two things to William's attention. First, injustice produces suffering in the present world. Judging justly is therefore necessary to minimise worldly suffering. Second, Dhuoda warns William that letting someone else commit an injustice is as much a sin as acting unjustly yourself, as every Christian is responsible for safeguarding the salvation of others, too. As a result, consenting to the wrongs of others is also a vice, endangering every individual's salvation. Correcting others' behaviour is thus part and parcel of ensuring both individual and collective salvation. Ideas of redemption and salvation therefore not only bear temporal implications as well as salvific ones, but also linked together the individual and the collective.

This is also connected to book 4's overall theme of self-perfection. In it, Dhuoda insists on watchfulness not only to ensure salvation, but also for William to shape his innerworldly present and future in beneficial ways. She invokes the examples of the saints to advise her son to

[...] curse and flee from the wicked, unrighteous, slothful, and proud. In every way, shun those who are an abomination in spirit. Why? Because they cast their nets like mousetraps in order to deceive. They never stop preparing roadblocks and impediments along the way, so that they

53 Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, 4.8, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 154–155: *Tu ergo, fili Wilhelme, cave et fuge iniquitatem, ama aequitatem, sectare iustitiam, time audire Psalmographi dictum: Qui diligit iniquitatem, odit animam suam. Absit a te ut, pro ceducis concupiscentiarum rebus, animam quam verus et mundus et veram et mundam atque immortalem in tuo misit fragili corpore manentem, tu, ob iniustitiis et inmiscordis aliquid iniuste componendo, dictando etiam et consentiendo, illa laqueis praepares malis. Pro alienis namque culpis multi torquentur. [...] Dicit enim quidam: 'Cum omnibus peccantibus pecco, si quos videro peccantes ipse non corrigam.'*

themselves fall headlong to the ground and cause others like them to fall. They were like this in the past. I entreat you to avoid them now and in the future, whether this occurs at present or is about to occur. God grant that your lot will in no way be linked to them.⁵⁴

Dhuoda thus urges William to learn to influence both his temporal and his salvational future alike. Central to his ability to shape his future is his moral conduct and that of those he surrounds himself with. Again the individual's fate is linked to a collective one, but this time on earth. Dhuoda makes it clear that wrong behaviour, or consenting to such behaviour, not only paves the road to hell but also leads one to lose one's worldly position. Again we see how she argues dialectically: acts of moral decency provide both temporal benefits and salvation.

At the same time, Dhuoda's musings on justice show how her ideas of salvation, as well as her reception and adaptation of scripture, played a vital role in her response to a political arena that she perceived to be a treacherous environment. The choice of the theme of justice in this specific context is invested with a meaning beyond that of the salvation of William's soul, and not only because salvation is bound up with the collective. For in the same chapter in which she admonishes her son to judge justly, Dhuoda also sets out how rulers should behave, including being just.⁵⁵ Justice was, of course, one of the core themes of legitimate rule in the early middle ages, as attested, for example, by the writings of Isidore of Seville, Cathwulf or Jonas of Orléans.⁵⁶ By evoking ideas of justice, Dhuoda not only speaks about her son's behaviour, but reminds everyone who reads her work that justice is a fundamental feature of good rulership. It is possible that in promoting this idea, she was also claiming justice for her family.⁵⁷ However, this remains implicit. Rather than making a direct reference to the political limbo⁵⁸ in which her family found itself, Dhuoda expressed her concerns in a discourse on salvation. Nevertheless, her call for justice in this distinct discursive way demonstrates that specific current

54 Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, 4.1, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 129–131: [...] *ut malos, improbos pigrosque atque superbos execrandum et fugiendum et abominabiles in animo per omnia vitandum. Quare? Quia funes, velut muscipula, ad decipiendum tendunt et iuxta iter scandala atque ofendicula, ut praecipites corruant, et alios sui consimiles praecipitare faciant, parare non cessant. Hoc fuerunt in praeteritis, hoc ortor ut fugias in praesentibus atque futuris, si sunt aut fuerint quod permittat Deus, ut non tibi sors cum illis iugantur in nullo.*

55 Dhuoda, *Liber manualis*, 4.8, ed. and trans. Thiébaux, 154–157.

56 Isidore of Seville, *Sententiae*, 3.54–54, ed. Cazier, 305–310; Cathwulf, *Epistola* ed. Dümmler. Cathwulf remains a shadowy figure. Indeed, everything we know relies on the letter he wrote, see Story, "Cathwulf, Kingship, and the Royal Abbey;" Garrison, "Letters to a King and Biblical Exempla;" Anton, "Königsvorstellungen bei Iren und Franken im Vergleich," 282–284, 298–301. For Jonas and Dhuoda's view on justice see Meyers, "Dhuoda et la justice d'après son *Liber Manualis*," 456. For the use of Isidore in admonitory texts on justice of the Carolingian Reform see, for example, Diesenberger, *Predigt und Politik im frühmittelalterlichen Bayern*, 232–234.

57 Meyers, "Dhuoda et la justice d'après son *Liber Manualis*."

58 A very short overview of the political turmoil her family was in is found in this article on pages 71–72. See there for more literature.

problems could easily be clothed in an often seemingly standard discourse on Christian morals.

5 Conclusion

We cannot know for certain that William, or anyone else, fully understood the potential meanings inherent within Dhuoda's argument. Nevertheless, the parallels between how she made her case about the future and the general early medieval tendency to cite Christian morals when reacting to problems in the here and now, suggest that hers is just one example of how the Carolingian world thought about time and the future. Although, at first glance, Dhuoda's admonitions might sound like standard Carolingian moralising, this study suggests that they had a far more complex underpinning. The revelatory structure of the Bible provided a blueprint for exhortation, thinking and the setting forth of Christian morals. Christians had to navigate both the fact of redemption and the promise of salvation in their present life – and, in a way, also in God's eternity. While Christ's incarnation had redeemed humanity, salvation was to be gained only at the Last Judgment. The perfection reached in Christ's incarnation and his death on the cross in the past led to a constant need to follow Scripture in the present in order to become complete in salvation in the future. Although there is a tension between (past) redemption and (future) salvation, both integrate a linear concept of human time into the divine scheme of things. Dhuoda's book, therefore, contains a message about how a discourse in which scriptural past and earthly present, as well as earthly future and salvation, are intricately linked, can help to (re-)orientate Christian living both in the present and in the future, be it individual or collective. The idea Dhuoda's *Handbook* presents of the future is not one marked by innovative thinking. Instead, it is a discourse on the Christian morals that hold the key to managing the future.⁵⁹

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Abbreviations

CCSL	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina. Turnhout: Brepols, 1953–.
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica. 1819–.

⁵⁹ This structuring of innovation has been observed by others: Phelan, "Catechising the Wild." Jennifer O'Reilly argues that the close connection between exegesis, revelation and mission is particularly evident: O'Reilly, "Islands and Idols at the Ends of the Earth." I would like to thank Máirín MacCarron for pointing this out to me.

- MGH Epp. Epistolae (in Quart)
 PL Patrologiae cursus completus, series Latina. Edited by Jacques-Paul Migne, 221 vols. Paris, 1844–1855, 1862–1865.
 SC Sources Chrétiennes. Paris: Édition du Cerf, 1941–.

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