

Judith Hagen, **Die Tränen der Mächtigen und die Macht der Tränen. Eine emotionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung des Weinens in der kaiserzeitlichen Historiographie.** Publisher Franz Steiner, Stuttgart 2017. 356 pages.

On February 5, 2 B.C. the emperor Augustus was given the title of ›pater patriae‹ (father of the fatherland). The title inferred that the recipient was, for Rome, a later-day Romulus, a later-day version of Rome's founder. If you add in Romulus himself, then to that date Augustus was only the fifth Roman to receive the title. It took three attempts to persuade Augustus to accept the honorific title. Suetonius (Aug. 58) explains, »The whole body of the people, upon a sudden impulse, and with unanimous consent, offered him the title of pater patriae. It was announced to him first at Antium, by a deputation from the people, and upon his declining the honour, they repeated their offer on his return to Rome, in a full theatre, when the people were crowned with laurel.« It appears to have taken yet one more attempt to pin Augustus down. Suetonius continues: »The senate soon afterwards adopted the proposal, not in the way of acclamation or decree, but by commissioning M. Messala, in a unanimous vote, to compliment him ... [and to] this compliment Augustus replied, with tears in his eyes, in these words: ›Having now arrived at the summit of my wishes, O Conscript Fathers, what else have I to beg of the Immortal Gods, but the continuance of this your affection for me to the last moments of my life?‹«

It is the phrase »with tears in his eyes« – and the many others like it in the imperial historiography of Rome – that provides one starting point for Judith Hagen's monograph. What do tears such as those of Augustus signify, she wonders? And how do the »tears of the mighty« act within Roman history more generally? An explanation for the function of tears in public life within the historiography of ancient Rome is the goal that the author sets out to understand. To accomplish this she investigates the descriptions of the occasions for tears in Roman and Greek writing on impe-

rial Roman history, primarily (her text-corpus, p. 65 s.). The period that she covers is from the first century B.C. right up to and occasionally well beyond the sixth century A. D. Hagen believes that an understanding of the role of tears in historiography will allow us to better comprehend the role of weeping – and strong emotion generally – perhaps even within the fabric of Roman experience (p. 64). Augustus' tearful acceptance of the title *pater patriae* is something that the author returns to twice (p. 88 s. and p. 139–143). Her understanding of the function of Augustus' tears offers a vivid and clear explanation for the main aspect of the overall conclusions that she draws concerning the role of weeping in public life. Hagen interprets Augustus' double rejection of the honorific title, *pater patriae*, and his apparently hesitant final acceptance as »ein machtpolitisches Kalkül« (»a calculated strategy for power«). There was no modesty here, no tearful gratitude, but rather, the author believes, the emperor was carefully aiming to bolster his power by a dignified and even modest display of tears (p. 143). Who would not trust such a sensitive man, we might say?

There are two versions of weeping in »Die Tränen der Mächtigen und die Macht der Tränen«. We have just seen a vivid example of the first version. It is this one to which Hagen provides (or her sources provide) the most attention. Tears, in this instance, may be the display of what we could term »socialized« emotion. Augustus' tears exemplify such an emotion when he accepts the honorific *pater patriae*. Such socialized emotions, the author believes, are »performative«. Tears are always addressed, or they are in the bulk of her book's examples, to another individual or other individuals (p. 163). They are not to be understood, in many cases, simply as the reflection of personal, inner emotional states. Like gestures, they may aim at an audience and may aim at persuasion. This is precisely how Hagen would have us understand the tears of the emperor Augustus. Tears like his, the author helpfully explains, may occur furthermore within a »performative community«, a contemporary group of emotionally like-minded individuals who are able to »read« the messages encoded in such emotional displays as Augustus' modest tears. Presumably they could also use such displays themselves. Such »socialized« tears, it goes without saying, are much harder to come to grips with for us moderns whose public emotional repertoire is based on the sincere sensibilities of the Romantics, a repertoire which would seamlessly blend the public and private emotional inventories.

»Socialized« emotion, as we see it in tears and weeping, may also be understood through the idea of »ritual«. I believe that the easiest way to comprehend Hagen's understanding of »ritual« is to say

that a ritual emotion, such as can be displayed by tears, exhibits the way that people will habitually or stereotypically express emotion in formal social contexts (she offers her own definition on p. 272: »actions which are carried out on specific occasions and in the same manner and whose course is defined by tradition or precedent«). The pathos freighted and tearful speeches of commanders responding to the mutiny of their troops may offer one example. So too can the tearful speeches of commanders to their troops before battle. A famous instance of the latter and one to which the author refers (p. 114) occurs soon after Caesar has crossed the Rubicon. Suetonius (Caes. 33) details, »Accordingly, having marched his army over the river, he showed them the tribunes of the people, who, upon their being driven from the city, had come to meet him; and, in the presence of that assembly, called upon the troops to pledge him their fidelity, with tears in his eyes, and his garment rent from his bosom.« The »tears in his eyes« here, aimed at persuasion, are just like those of Augustus. They have ample parallels in other such formal and stereotypical social contexts.

Socialized emotion is the first and most important version of weeping to which Hagen directs her attention. It will be for this that her book should be best known. But tears may also be the result of what we might term »felt« emotion. These are the tears that result from grief, sadness, frustration, disappointment, hurt, or pain. This version of weeping is much easier to understand. It occurs more in the private sphere and, as a result, it is not something given much prominence in the public world of the historiography dedicated to imperial Rome. The author (p. 167 s.) highlights Brutus' wife Porcia and her tearful emotions. She relies on Plutarch's Brutus (Brut. 23). Brutus has fled Rome after the assassination of Caesar and is in Elea in Greece with his wife, Porcia, and stepson, Bibulus. Porcia is shortly to return to Italy but before doing so she spots a portrait of Andromache »bidding farewell to Hector; she was taking from his arms their little son, while her eyes were fixed upon her husband.« The portrait makes a profound impression on Brutus' wife. She identifies closely with Homer's Andromache: »When Porcia saw this, the image of her own sorrow presented by it caused her to burst into tears, and she would visit it many times a day and weep before it.« These are not the tears of Augustus or of Caesar. They are not designed to persuade. They are, according to Plutarch, the expression of Porcia's inner »felt« emotion.

There, in these two versions of weeping, the socialized and the felt, is the ideational heart of Judith Hagen's very helpful monograph, »Die Tränen der Mächtigen und die Macht der Tränen«. Hers is,

however, a large book and one that aims to be as comprehensive on the topic of tears as possible. My epitome therefore does her an injustice. ›Die Tränen‹ is divided into three learned sections. The first portion (p. 1–66) aims to place tears within an intellectual framework. The author epitomizes relevant work on emotions and ritual in classical studies, in medieval studies, and then explains her approach to the topic. Her key ideas, the performative nature of tears, their life within a performative community, and the role of ritual, seem inspired particularly by medieval studies and notably by the work of Barbara Rosenwein for the idea of the performative (*Emotional Communities in the Middle Ages* [Ithaca 2006]) and Gerd Althoff for ritual (*Der König weint. Rituelle Tränen in öffentlicher Kommunikation* [1996]). This first portion acts an introduction, as it were, to the ›commentary‹ section of the book (p. 67–319). In this segment of the book, the author works through the evidence for tears in Roman writing on imperial history by examining a very large range of writers (her ›text-corpus‹) drawn from the first century B.C. right up to and occasionally beyond the sixth century A. D. Hagen's areas for concentration are ›who weeps and before whom‹ (emperors, generals, senators, soldiers), whether women weep differently to men (not really), what are the occasions for weeping (this is the longest section within the book and instructively covers everything from the tears shed for the dead Pompey in Lucan's *Bellum Civile* 8 to the deaths of philosophers), and finally the link between tears and the capacity of a ruler to display them (the aptitude for tears is one of the important abilities of the Roman emperors as we see them in historiography). The final section of the book (p. 320–327) provides a brief and helpful summary (markedly she emphasizes a tension that exists between felt emotion and ritual or socialized emotion). There is a full bibliography and index.

Judith Hagen's fascinating monograph is unlike much of the work that is done by contemporary scholars of the ›history of the emotions‹, in the English-speaking world at least. The book is directed at the ancient world for starters whereas contemporary Anglophone research usually begins with the Enlightenment and seldom looks back over its shoulder. It is for this reason that contemporary scholars of the ›history of the emotions‹ place considerable stress on what I have termed ›felt‹ emotion. Much of this work, furthermore, is strongly politicized: ›felt‹ emotion can mirror societal oppression or frustrated identity. What makes Hagen's monograph so instructive and so interesting is the singularity it displays, a singularity derived especially from its persistent emphasis on the performative nature of weeping and tears. But ›Die Tränen der Mächtigen‹ is also compen-

dious. It will provide a very useful but specific primer for others working on the history of emotions and gestures in the ancient world. Its compendious nature and its specific focus is something that supplements recently edited collections on the topic (Th. Fögen [ed.], *Tears in the Graeco-Roman World* [Berlin et al. 2009]; M. Alexiou / D. Cairns [ed.], *Greek Laughter and Tears. Antiquity and After* [Edinburgh 2017]).

And finally: Michel Foucault or, for example, Thomas Laqueur do not appear in the bibliography to ›Die Tränen der Mächtigen‹. I mean this as no criticism. Why should they? Rather, their absence might be thought to signify that Hagen has nothing to say on periodization, a topic that is often felt too unavoidable in works on the history of the emotions. (Did the ancients experience emotion in the same manner that we do? If there is an evolutionary basis to emotion, perhaps ought they to have?) But Hagen does. She argues in her conclusion that the depiction of tears and the associated emotions remain constant in imperial historiography from approximately the time of the rule of Augustus and to the year 600 A. D. During this period tears, when publicly displayed, are subject to imperial influence and they are essentially performative. After 600 A. D. there is a ›caesura‹, and all this changes. Emotions within the genre became, I suppose, more ›felt‹? And there, if you like, is a response to those whose interests look to periodization. But Hagen's caesura is not necessarily what you might have expected. In other genres, such as the novel or even in Roman funerary inscriptions, and within other literary groupings such as are exemplified by the second sophistic (Aelius Aristides, for example), there is much earlier a hesitant efflorescence of the personal and of the felt. Perhaps the conservative nature of imperial historiography causes it to defy such trends?

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