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tern und spannungslos. Er schafft Quelle auf Quelle heran und formt einem Bildhauer gleich mit kräftig zupackenden Händen das große, ungefüge Material. Er gibt diesem die ihm einzig genehme Gestalt und kümmert sich nicht darum, ob all das Biegen, Pressen und Abrunden nicht viel von der originären Wirklichkeitsstruktur zerstört. Und doch: in der Zeit der vielen »Konzeptionen« und »Modelle« ist einem Heuclins Vorgehen auch wieder sympathisch!

Georg SCHEIBELREITER, Wien

Christof GEISEL, *Die Juden im Frankenreich. Von den Merowingern bis zum Tode Ludwigs des Frommen*, Frankfurt a.M. et al. (Lang) 1998, XXVIII–766 p. (Freiburger Beiträge zur mittelalterlichen Geschichte. Studien und Texte, 10).

Almost a quarter century ago, I published a study, based largely on official government documents and the occasional chronicle reference, which focused on the official policies that were developed regarding the Jews in the various Romano-German successor states of the empire during the early Middle Ages. In this study, I avoided treating matters articulated largely in ecclesiastical contexts with the exception of those policies that were made operative where *Bischofsherrschaft* prevailed or when the enactments of church councils were adopted or rejected as policy by the secular authorities. In addition, I generally avoided discussion of the various *Adversus Judeos* tracts written by well known clerics such as Isidore of Seville and Agobard of Lyons, except in those rare cases in which these documents either could be seen to have influenced government policy or perhaps failed to have influenced government policy despite the apparent ardor and importance of the author (see B. S. Bachrach, *Early Medieval Jewish Policy: 474–877*, Minneapolis 1977).

It should be clear that none of these three types of source material provide very much direct information regarding the life of the Jews who lived in Rome's successor states. For example, the *Adversus Judeos* literature provides an excellent basis of the study of the history of ideas about Jews held by a variety of Christian intellectuals. Or as more modern writers put it, these tracts indicate the way in which Christian thinkers »constructed« the Jew and Judaism¹. The canons of various church councils provide us with insights regarding how the ecclesiastics, who attended these gatherings, legislated the behavior of Christians in light of some consensus that they had developed regarding one or another construction of Jews in a particular time and place. Finally, the official documents issued by various rulers are indicators of government policy and as a result provide us with an idea of how the rulers of Western Europe and their advisers viewed the Jews of their *regna*.

In his recent study of the Jews in the Frankish kingdom to 840, C. Geisel seems to believe that on the basis of these same sources, he can analyze the lives of the Jews living under Frankish *Herrschaft* while avoiding the stereotypes that have marred previous studies. Geisel does not seem to appreciate the limited nature of the types of sources, discussed above, for this project or the stereotypes perpetrated, for example, in the *Adversus Judeos* tradition and even potentially by governmental documents because of the selective nature of the information that they provide. However, because Geisel does not read Hebrew (p. xv) or any other Semitic languages, he has not been able to look beyond the Latin sources generated by Christians about Jews who lived in the *regnum Francorum* in order to examine materials written by Jews about themselves. Views such as »not a single Hebrew source from this

1 See, for example, Jeremy COHEN, *Living Letters of the Law: Ideas of the Jew in Medieval Christianity*, Berkeley 1999; and my forthcoming review of Cohen's study.

period has survived« are not quite accurate, and Geisel's contention that »the spiritual life of Frankish Jewry had reached a relative nadir« (p. xv) during this period is problematic.

Indeed, there are numerous *responsa* authored by the Geonim of Sura and Pumbedita, from the later sixth to the later tenth centuries, that deal with matters in the West and await proper historical analysis. The Jews of the Frankish kingdoms were in contact with their co-religionists in the East, as Geisel reluctantly recognizes, and would seem often to have had some of the more important internal disputes in their communities treated by these eastern judges. Many tomes of surviving Geonica have been published in multi-volume Hebrew series but the kind of *Quellenforschung* that is needed to make use of this material by historians interested in the lives of the Jews in the *regnum Francorum* remains to be carried out. In addition, the successors to the Geonim of Pumbedita and Sura were established in Baghdad during the tenth century and from there they issued their *responsa* in Arabic. The importance of these *responsa* rests not in extensive direct contact by these latter day Geonim with the Jews of West but in the *fragmenta* of earlier *responsa* that they preserved and as evidence for the content of relevant *perdita*. Finally, the texts authored by the Geonim of the Palestine region, who flourished in Jerusalem until the Seljuks took the city in 1071 and who then moved to Tyre, also require study. This is especially the case in regard to the examination of late medieval manuscripts and early modern printed editions for the identification of *fragmenta* and *perdita*. In short, if anything new is to be brought to our understanding of the lives of the Jews (»Leben der ... Juden«) in the *regnum Francorum* (p. xiii) then the sources produced by Jews themselves must be studied.

Geisel's averred aim to avoid stereotypes both in the sources and those perpetrated in the secondary literature is laudable. However, in a study that makes no effort to uncover relevant Hebrew material, but which replows the highly cultivated field of the Christian-Latin sources, it is incumbent upon the author to provide a detailed examination of the *status questionis* which pin points the specific areas at issue. Unfortunately, Geisel confines himself to an indication in the »Vorwort« that the general works of Dubnow and Roth are of limited value and ends this »survey« with a few desultory comments concerning Blumenkranz's »Juifs et Chrétiens dans le monde occidental 430–1096«. In short, Geisel leaves this »review« of the relevant scholarly literature in 1960, with Blumenkranz's above-cited work.

However, in his justification for this book of almost 800 pages, Geisel writes: »So erfuhren Themen wie Rechtsstatus, Missionskonkurrenz, Wirtschaftsverhalten u. a. eine eigenständige Behandlung, die jeweils einen (mehr oder minder) weitgefaßten Zeitrahmen abdeckt. Da diese Vorgehensweise zum einen eine Ausblendung etwaiger Zäsuren zur Folge hat und andererseits den (lokal-)episodischen Hintergrund vernachlässigt, der zahlreichen anti- wie projüdischen Handlungen zugrunde lag, habe ich mich dazu entschlossen, den Stoff mit einem primär chronologischen Gliederungsschema zu fassen (p. xv–xvi).« If Geisel believes that the scholarly literature since 1960 has not treated the subject in its chronological context and that it has bled out discontinuities and disregarded the episodic and local background of various situations recorded in the sources, he has failed, in general, to understand not only what I have written but what has been written by other scholars in recent years. (This despite the fact that he cites my work well in excess of one hundred times.) Indeed, I am not the only scholar during the past four decades to treat the sources historically and outside the framework of the misleading »lachrymose« tradition. In this context, Geisel's lack of access to relevant scholarly studies in Hebrew should not be ignored while curious lacunae in his bibliography, e. g. the works of Gavin Langmuir, are noteworthy.

In a review of this length there is no point rehearsing my disagreements with Geisel on particular points concerning which I have already published. It is important to emphasize, however, that he assumes a primitivist posture in regard to the governments of Rome's successor states which is typical of those specialists in early medieval history who favor the notion of a barbarian style »Dark Ages«. Geisel has trouble understanding that in the

Romano-German states, which succeeded the empire in the West, kings and their advisers were capable of formulating policies much less enforcing them. He observes, for example: »So konstruiert bereits der Titel von Bachrachs Buch (»Early Medieval Jewish Policy«) eine Problematik, die, wie wir noch sehen werden, zumindest im frühmittelalterlichen *regnum Francorum* kaum als solche wahrgenommen wurde« (p. 104 n. 22). As a result, much of what Geisel writes is a fragmented attempt not only to undermine the notion that one or another early medieval ruler developed a discernible and perhaps even a coherent policy in regard to the Jews dwelling in his *regnum* but to stress the primitivist notion that such policy making was inherently beyond their capacity.

We must be thankful, I suppose, that unlike some of his fellow primitivists, who treat the sources from this doctrinaire minimalist perspective, Geisel does not go so far as to compare Clovis with Sitting Bull or Charlemagne with a Zulu chief. Indeed, it is important to emphasize, in this context, that this primitivist approach, which works toward undermining the notion that the *Herkunft* of early medieval Europe is to be found in the Roman empire and not in the dark forests of *Germania*, serves the agenda of neo-nationalists who strive in their identity politics game for a German history that is »rein« and thus free of alien influences.

Because of his minimalist approach to the sources, Geisel's conclusions, which incidentally say nothing new regarding »Das Leben der ... Juden«, are generally negative. Everything seems to have happened in a haze of historical forgetfulness and semipagan barbarism. Yet, Geisel would appear to recognize in his conclusions that I am correct not only in identifying a Carolingian policy toward the Jews but in characterizing it as pro-Jewish. However, consistent with his primitivist assumptions, he writes: »Hierfür spricht auch unsere Beobachtung, daß Karl und (vor allem) Ludwig ihren jüdischen Untertanen zwar eine Aufmerksamkeit zukommen ließen ... (die) durchaus die Bezeichnung »Judenpolitik« rechtfertigt, sie sich dessen aber selbst gar nicht bewußt gewesen sein dürften« (my ital., p. 733–734).

In his conclusion, Geisel asks the question uppermost in the mind of those who accept one or another version of the lachrymose view of Jewish history and who fail to grasp that decisions are made in real time by real people, who do, in fact, make policies. He queries: »Bleibt zum Schluß die Frage zu streifen, wie ein derart angesehener, wohlsituierter und durchaus machtvoller Personenverband, wie ihn die fränkischen Juden zwischen 500 und 850 darstellten, Ende des 11. Jahrhunderts zum Opfer der Pogrome des Ersten Kreuzzugs werden konnte; einer (bis dahin) beispiellosen Mordhetze, welche dann freilich nur den Auftakt für unzählige vergleichbare, bis in die Neuzeit hinein nicht mehr abreißen Vorgänge bildete« (p. 736).

Geisel tries to set the stage for his undocumented and undocumentable speculations in regard to events that occurred more than two hundred and fifty years after Louis the Pious' death, with an unjustified inflation of Agobard of Lyons' influence which he grotesquely entitles »Ein posthumer Triumph«. However, Agobard's writings, as illustrated by the manuscript tradition, had very little posthumous influence. In addition, even a novice should be aware that the crusaders who attacked various Jewish communities in the Rhineland were a fringe group, who came to a bad end and, who, on the whole, were treated negatively by the Christian chroniclers of the First Crusade. In addition, many of the Jews in these Rhineland towns put up a substantial fight, sometimes with episcopal support, and that at least some of the Jews died by their own hand rather than convert these facts do not meet the proper definition of a pogrom so loosely employed by Geisel. Further, it is worthy of notice that these attacks on Jews and often on particular episcopal resources in the Rhineland took place not only in the context of a newly preached crusade, which at this point in the course of events was ill organized and suffered from a distinct lack of discipline, but also in the context of a deadly and longstanding conflict between the papacy and the German emperor, Henry IV, who along with his bishops in this region was pursuing a very positive Jewish policy. Indeed, it

seems that Henry permitted those Jews, who had been converted by force during this conflict, to return to Judaism despite church teaching to the contrary on this delicate point.

Geisel's overly lengthy primitivist rehash of well known and frequently discussed texts provides nothing which repays the reading of almost 800 pages of execrably written German academic prose. If new light is to be cast on the life of Jews in the empire's Romano-German successors states during the early medieval era, in general, and on those dwelling in the Frankish kingdoms, in particular, it will require a highly sophisticated examination of the Geonic texts by specialists in both the history of the West and of the Geonim. Such a work by mature and competent specialists, unencumbered by primitivist assumptions that ultimately serve a neo-nationalist agenda, would well repay the serious effort required.

Bernard S. BACHRACH, Minneapolis

Bède le Vénérable. Histoire ecclésiastique du peuple anglais. Tome I: Conquête et conversion; tome II: Miracles et missions. Traduction, présentation et notes par Olivier SZERWI-NIACK, Florence BOURGNE, Jacques ELFASSI, Mathieu LESCUYER et Agnès MOLINIER, Paris (Les Belles Lettres) 1999, LIII–311 S. 243 S. (La roue à livres).

Zu den anregendsten und einflußreichsten Quellenzeugnissen des Frühmittelalters gehört zweifellos die 731 abgeschlossene *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* des northumbrischen Mönches Beda Venerabilis. Kein Werk informiert ausführlicher sowohl über Mission und Christianisierung in England als auch über den spannungsreichen Prozeß der Herausbildung der angelsächsischen Königtümer. Deshalb ist es wenig erstaunlich, wenn sich Generationen von Historikern bei ihrer Arbeit immer wieder auf Beda berufen haben. Gerade weil er eine dezidierte Auffassung von der Geschichtsschreibung hat, ist es freilich unumgänglich, die *Historia ecclesiastica* selbst zu lesen. Schon deshalb ist die vorliegende französische Übersetzung verdienstvoll, erleichtert sie doch in einer Zeit abnehmender Lateinkenntnisse Studenten und anderen Interessierten den Zugang zu Beda. Auf eine zweisprachige Ausgabe, die allerdings den Umfang der handlichen Bändchen fast verdoppelt hatte, ist verzichtet worden. Begründet wird dies im Vorwort nicht, und es bleibt bedauerlich, weil die Übersetzung nicht direkt kontrolliert und kein Eindruck von Bedas Sprache gewonnen werden kann.

Die annotierte Übersetzung eines Bearbeiterteams geht zurück auf eine Serie von Konferenzen der École Pratique des Hautes Études in den Jahren 1993 bis 1996. Ihr liegt der erstmals 1896 von Charles Plummer edierte Text zugrunde, auch die 1969 erschienene Ausgabe von B. Colgrave und R.A.B. Mynors mit englischer Übersetzung wurde herangezogen. Auf diesen Werken, dem hervorragenden Kommentar von John Michael Wallace-Hadrill (*Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People. A Commentary*, Oxford 1988, Nachdruck 1993) und der nicht mehr überschaubaren Sekundärliteratur basieren die Anmerkungen, so daß dem Leser Hilfestellungen gegeben werden, die sich meist auf der Höhe der Forschung befinden und die Ausgabe zu einem wertvollen Arbeitsmittel machen.

Fundiert und kenntnisreich führt die Einleitung in den Text ein (I, S. XIII–LIII). Zu Recht wird Bedas Werk als »l'un des chefs-d'œuvre de la littérature latine médiévale« bezeichnet (I, S. XIII), was sich nicht nur an der handschriftlichen Überlieferung zeige (dazu I, S. XLIX–LIII), sondern auch an der Tatsache des Ansehens Bedas als Kirchenvater der mittelalterlichen Theologie, wobei die *Historia* als sein »testament spirituel« (I, S. XIV) verstanden wurde. Nach der Beschreibung der symmetrischen Architektur des Werkes wird eingehend seine historische Bedeutung erörtert. Sie ist schlicht von erstem Rang, »car elle est l'une des rares sources pour l'histoire de la Bretagne romaine et la seule source pour les débuts de la Bretagne anglo-saxonne et son évangélisation par Augustin de Cantorbéry« (I, S. XX). Dabei ist allerdings zu bedenken, daß auch Beda nur begrenzte Quellen zur Verfü-