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(gallo-römischem) Episkopat zur Sprache kommen. Es ist dies ein Thema, das in seiner verfassungs- und kirchenrechtlichen Konsequenz schon oft abgehandelt wurde, nicht jedoch auf der Grundlage der Raum:Mensch-Beziehung. Fabienne Cardot vermeint in der Verwaltungsorganisation des römischen Gallien einen Stufenbau *civitas-pagus-ducatus* zu erkennen, dem in merowingischer Zeit nun das fränkische *regnum* gegenübersteht. Während *civitas* und *pagus* zur Domäne des Bischofs werden, bildet der Dukat die Basis für die sich formierende weltliche Adelsmacht. In dieser Staffelung und Scheidung wird die Struktur der regnalen Organisation sichtbar. Nach der Autorin faßten die Merowinger den Raum als eine Folge von Plätzen verschiedenen Machtcharakters auf. Ohne ein Verständnis dieser Anschauung wäre die politische Administration des Reiches nicht richtig zu würdigen. Etwas unvermittelt geht Fabienne Cardot von diesem Modell ab und leitet zum fränkischen Partikularismus über, der Austrasien geschaffen habe. Die Macht, traditionell verkörpert im König, habe hier eine Territorialisierung erfahren: das auch in anderen Reichsteilen vorhandene Sonderempfinden habe mit den expansiven Möglichkeiten des Ostens zu einem speziellen Raumbewußtsein beigetragen. Eine sehr wichtige Beobachtung gelingt der Verfasserin, wenn sie feststellt, daß in Austrasien zuerst der Gedanke an ein *regnum* »sans roi« aufgekomen sei. Es setzt dies ein schon mehr abstraktes, in der Erfahrung gemeinsamen Raumes wurzelndes Empfinden voraus, welches den Pippiniden den Aufstieg ohne König ermöglichte.

Den Abschluß bildet das Kapitel: *Espace et lieux sacrés*, das Territorium des Heiligen, das sich auf Stadt oder Kloster beschränkt, aber zugleich als Vorposten einer besseren Welt angesehen wird. In diesem Bereich liegt aber auch die Grenze von Alltagswelt, mit ihren dauernden Sorgen um Gesundheit, mit ihrer Angst vor den Folgen wirtschaftlicher und kriegerischer Not, und der Unermeßlichkeit ewigen Seins. Dieses Zusammentreffen zweier real gedachter Welten in der Kleinräumigkeit der tatsächlichen Gegebenheiten wirft ein bezeichnendes Licht auf den merowingischen Menschen der Unterschicht in seiner historischen Fragwürdigkeit. Gerade diese Darstellung spricht für die wissenschaftliche Originalität der vorliegenden Arbeit. Eine Raumanalyse mit Methoden der Mentalitäts- und Sozialgeschichte ist ungewöhnlich. Eindeutige und unmittelbar rezipierbare Ergebnisse darf man sich davon freilich nicht erwarten. Fabienne Cardots Werk bedeutet den Versuch, einen bisher unbekanntem Zugang zur Welt des merowingischen Reiches zu eröffnen. Dabei werden überraschende Beziehungen hergestellt und bisher anscheinend nicht beachtete Zusammenhänge und Aspekte deutlich! Dennoch bleibt das Ganze irgendwie unverbindlich, verschiedentlich sogar verschwommen.

Ob das Werk »une dimension fondamentale du monde franc« wirklich aufzuhellen vermag oder nur eine intelligente Konstruktion darstellt, wird die Zukunft lehren, wenn sich die neuen Ansätze der Verfasserin als tragfähig erwiesen haben. Doch so rasch wird wohl niemand Fabienne Cardot auf ihrem steinigem Pfade folgen wollen.

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Walter GOFFART, *The Narrators of Barbarian History (A. D. 550–800). Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede, and Paul the Deacon*, Princeton (University Press) 1988, XV–491 p.

Those who study the early medieval period are thoroughly familiar with the works of Jordanes, Gregory, Bede, and Paul the Deacon. Their accounts have been and remain the indispensable repository of data that make it possible for modern scholars to attempt a more or less problematic reconstruction of Gothic, Frankish, Anglo-Saxon and Lombard history, respectively. Of course, it is no longer acceptable to cobble together lengthy passages from these works in a »scissors and paste« fashion. Rather, extended efforts are made in an attempt to establish fact and to uncover pretense. Indeed, medievalists have even come to find value in



how or why one or another author has provided false information. Yet, despite the ever increasing sophistication that is brought to the materials under consideration, for most historians these texts remain sources to be exploited for greater purpose than the intellectual value of the works themselves, the overall intentions of their authors, or as representative of the mentalité of the milieu in which they were written.

By contrast, some scholars tend to view the works of Jordanes, Gregory and the others within the framework of the history of ideas or, perhaps as some would have it, intellectual history. More particularly, these works are seen to form a chapter in the »history of history writing«. In this context, they are usually described as some sort of »barbarian« or »national« history with very peculiar attributes. Among the most important of these is their putative naiveté which does double duty for the scholar. When translated into modern research method, it permits the early medievalist to use his sources without worrying that the facts have been manipulated or »invented« for some ulterior purpose. If, however, these naifs do have an agenda, it is presumed to be simple minded and thus easily compensated. The quality of the »barbarian historians« is usually judged by how well they do in providing accurate data for use by modern scholars who thus merely separate obvious fact from unbelievable fantasy. In addition, these primitive historians are traditionally compared, to their detriment, with the »more advanced« writers of Greco-Roman antiquity and those of the twelfth century who are thought to have rediscovered the individual and matured to self-consciousness. Thus the works of Jordanes and the rest are seen as evidence for the »darkness« of the early Middle Ages.

Walter Goffart, professor of history at the University of Toronto and author of numerous important though controversial books and articles on late antiquity and the early Middle Ages, now with ›The Narrators of Barbarian History‹ threatens to overturn many long-cherished assumptions held by early medievalists regarding their sources. Goffart skewers the notion so dear to many specialists that these authors are naive primitives, the Grandma Moses of their time and genre. He asks rhetorically: »Why should one be suspected of exaggeration for treating medieval authors (forgers or not) as thoroughly conscious of their actions and wily in carrying them out?« (p. ix). He continues, »If a single theme runs through this book, it is that, like us, Jordanes, Gregory, and the others meant to write what they did and were well aware of what they said and why« (p. ix).

Here I agree thoroughly, at least, with the direction of Goffart's comments. However, »like us« covers a vast terrain and without mincing words, it is clear that the works of Peter Brown, for example, are barely on the same planet as many Habilitationsschriften that are produced each year. Secondly, fine historians make mistakes unintentionally, omit information which could strengthen their arguments (see below), and fail to be perfect proof readers. Even a cursory examination of the vast bibliography which has accumulated regarding the works of Jordanes and the others indicates that much scholarly argument centers upon »errors« and problems due, at least in part, to manuscript transmission and allied difficulties. »Like us« must be taken to mean a vast spectrum of ability and not a bevy of Goffart-clones.

A second major introductory point that Goffart makes is that the works of Jordanes, Gregory and the rest do not constitute a new chapter in the history of history writing, i.e. the national or barbarian phase. He contends with considerable reason that »The title Narrators of Barbarian History speaks to a modern audience in the terms with which it is familiar, but it should not be understood to mean that the authors in question wrote a type of history sharply contrasting in subject to that practiced in earlier centuries« (p. 6). Goffart continues the point: »None of them had a subjective sense of doing something that had not been done before« (p. 8).

Here again I tend to agree with Goffart. However, his argument need not have focussed so single-mindedly upon late antiquity nor was it necessary to rely upon a curious argument that Josephus wrote barbarian history. Goffart asserts that the Jews »were deemed to be aliens, that



is ›barbarians‹ in the neutral sense of the word« (p. 5). There is hardly a Greco-Roman writer who describes the Jews as ›barbarian«. Indeed, Goffart would not have had to conjure up such contrasense had he known of Arrian's ›History of the Alans‹ which was still extant in the mid-sixth century (John the Lydian, *De Magistratibus*, III, 53) and of which the surviving *Contra Alanos* is perhaps a part. In addition, at Hadrian's court there was a circle of scholars who set about writing the histories of their own peoples. For example, *fragmenta* of the work of Philo the Phoenician, not to be confused with Philo Judaeus, have been indentified.

In discussing Gregory of Tours, Goffart writes: ›It need not follow that he knew no more than what he wrote« (p. 138). If we accept such assumptions in principle are we to conclude that Goffart knew about the works of Arrian and Philo but suppressed that information because it did not comport with the shape of his history or should we be generous and suggest that he merely was ignorant. The latter argument would be difficult to sustain at least in the case of Arrian's *Contra Alanos* since Goffart reviewed a book in which the text is not only discussed but translated into English. Arguments from silence and the vagaries of memory make it very risky to issue pronouncements concerning what an historian knew and did not know as well as when he knew it or forgot it.

Of all the chapters in ›The Narrators‹, Goffart's treatment of Jordanes is likely to be the most controversial. It would seem that Goffart believes that Justinian, designated by the pseudonym Vigilius, commissioned a Constantinopolitan *litteratus* of sorts, who took the pseudonym Jordanes, to write a work of historical propaganda intended to demonstrate to Romans, who had lived under alien rule since 476, and perhaps to some Germans that the reconquest of Italy reestablished the right order of things through the reinstatement of imperial rule. The result of this commission was the *Romana* (parts I and II as Goffart divides the text) and the *Getica* (RG) completed ca. 554, which taken together, as the author intended, present the historical background and justification for the Pragmatic Sanction issued by Justinian in the same year.

Goffart is likely correct regarding the date of the work although it perhaps could be even later. He is also correct concerning Jordanes' effort to justify imperial rule in Italy and the conceptual inseparability of the *Getica* and the *Romana*. However, it is unlikely that Justinian was the patron. Goffart makes clear he accepts the conclusion that the dedication to Vigilius which styled him *nobilissimus et magnificus frater* is ›wholly improper for anyone« (p. 45). By this reasoning, it surely is improper for an emperor. Whether residence in Constantinople during the early 550's when RG was researched and written made its author a Constantinopolitan is problematic. The quality of Jordanes' Greek is hardly self-evident as is, for example, that of his noted Lydian and Caesarean contemporaries. Finally, if Goffart is to convince many readers that Jordanes is the author's pseudonym, he will find it necessary to muster more than a few symbolic allusions to baptismal waters.

Most specialists, however, are little concerned with Jordanes' thesis or speculation concerning imperial patronage. The main interest for early medievalists in the *Getica* is its relation to Cassiodorus' now lost twelve books of Gothic history and the value of the former for modern scholars who would write a history of the Goths. Here Goffart takes the most reasonable approach and points out that in the one surviving quotation from Cassiodorus' ›History of the Goths‹ and from all of the mentions of the Goths in his ›Chronicle‹, which survives, there is at base a fundamental discord with what is found in the *Getica*. In addition, a careful reading of Cassiodorus' *Variae* makes clear that his aim was to propagandize the Romans toward acceptance of Gothic rule. If it is assumed that this too was the purpose or theme of Cassiodorus' now lost ›History‹, and this is not only a reasonable assumption but a necessary one, then it also had to have been in discord with Jordanes' *Getica*. Goffart demonstrates compellingly that Jordanes presents a view of Gothic history which would have been totally unacceptable at the Ostrogothic court in the late 520's or early 530's and thus cannot represent Cassiodorus' views.



To the question, what from Cassiodorus' ›History of the Goths‹ survives in the *Getica*? The answer must be we do not and cannot know. In 1858, Carl Schirren identified what he believed to be Cassiodorian rhetorical flourishes in many passages of the *Getica*. Yet, until a computer-aided study of all of Cassiodorus' work and all of Jordanes' work is undertaken we will not be able to ascertain the extent of the putative stylistic influence in a statistically significant manner. Jordanes' statement that he knew the sense of Cassiodorus' work on the Goths but could not recall the words would seem to suggest that too long delayed computer evaluation is more likely to undermine Schirren's long-accepted observations rather than confirm them. In any case, even where stylistic influence can be established, it is unlikely that such a finding will establish the copying of factual material. It seems that the time has now come for those interested in writing a history of the Goths to forget about Cassiodorus' lost work and concentrate on the *Getica* within the conceptual framework of its Alano-Gothic author as adumbrated by Goffart.

Like Jordanes, Gregory of Tours is found by Goffart to be no mere naive recorder of events nor the historian of a »barbarian« people. No one who reads Goffart's chapter on Gregory will be able even to peruse the bishop of Tours' works without a finer appreciation of both them and their author. In undermining the prevailing views of Gregory's work, Goffart often follows the thread of an argument developed by notable scholars such as Kurth and Ebert but he does much more and in very individual ways. As Goffart sums up the major point: »Far from documenting gloom, it [the ›Histories‹] forces us to reorient our thinking toward a late-sixth-century Gaul that appears to have generated a satire only marginally less accomplished and sophisticated than those of Juvenal's Rome and Swift's England« (pp. 231–2). The ›Histories‹ thus are in Goffart's view a satire, indeed a Christian satire.

When the Roman satirist Juvenal was asked why he wrote satire, he observed that in light of the times in which he lived *difficile est saturam non scribere*. For Gregory, as Goffart sees it: »What matters is that the scene should illustrate the ugliness of merely human groupings« (p. 182). He quotes Gregory: »I do not believe it should be regarded as lacking in reason if we commemorate the life of the blessed among the disasters of the worthless, for that is the way they are presented, not by the levity [sic] of writers, but by the course of events« (p. 173). This view not only accounts for the long lists of secular disasters that Gregory records side by side with blessed behavior in the ›Histories‹ but the chaotic internal treatment of events portrayed in an apparently disconnected manner. In order to provide in a systematic manner the blessed alternative to the ugliness of the secular world which dominates the ›Histories‹, Gregory wrote eight books of wonders. Thus Gregory's admonition not to separate his various works one from the other and not tinker with them makes very good sense.

Once readers come to appreciate the thoroughness and nuance of Goffart's argument, likely it will meet with little sustained opposition and clearly will be far less controversial than his treatment of Jordanes' *Getica*. Whereas Goffart undermines much of what modern scholars have used as sources for the history of the Goths, his work on Gregory strengthens our ability to use the ›Histories‹ as a source. Goffart shows that Gregory omits much that is important to our knowledge of his world and by such omissions seriously distorts what he describes. However, once we understand the canons for inclusion and omission applied by Gregory, as Goffart clearly marks them out, we are far better situated to evaluate and place in broader perspective what he does include.

It is important that Goffart does not show that Gregory made up from the whole cloth stories that he told in the ›Histories‹. Gregory's desire to present the ugly side of things as representative of human behavior within his satiric compass did not require fabrication. There were enough crimes and calamities that really occurred and about which many of his intended audience likely had heard something, at least, for him to stick to a version of the facts which made his point.

That Gregory was a satirist rather than a naive recorder of everyday reality or a national



historian of the Franks is amply shown even if the characteristics of the genre-identification seem at times somewhat formalistic and perhaps even forced. Moreover, when Goffart goes on to talk about »Gregory's inverted rationalism« (p. 202) the manipulation of categories gets a bit out of hand, and some readers may believe the author is engaged in satire himself. Thus while one may perhaps suspect Goffart to be *homo ludens* on occasion, Gregory's satire or, at least, his reasons for writing were most serious and this is made clear.

That Gregory was a Christian satirist connected by this genre to the classical past now must be seen as the state of the question. Goffart's hypothesis explains more and in a more compelling manner than any previous attempt to explain Gregory's works. However, there are questions. Goffart, for example, hints that Gregory's close friend Fortunatus may have provided some of the intellectual background for the bishop of Tours' venture into satire. Yet, no effort is made to press this point with a survey of the manuscripts of relevant classical authors who might have come within the reach of either Gregory or Fortunatus.

The absence of explicit references to classical satirists in Gregory's works is not an issue. Goffart makes clear that Gregory intentionally chose the stylistic »low road« and made an effort to hide from his readers or at the least not to parade the extent of his learning. Despite the intentional rustic affectation of his Latin prose, Gregory maintained careful adherence to the rules of classical prose rhythm. Although Goffart mentions this point more than once he does not make enough of it in relation to Gregory's education and training. Here one should compare the work of Michael Lapidge on Gildas which shows how these stylistic techniques expose much about the background of the writer.

Unlike Jordanes and Gregory of Tours, Bede enjoys as untarnished a reputation as an historian as is likely to be found during the Middle Ages or at any other time. Generations of scholars have studied the bulk of Bede's vast corpus of work in great detail and the result is almost invariably an encomium. The dominant view of Bede is of a »solitary genius fed on books and detached since boyhood from his social milieu ...« (p. 325). From this perspective, Bede has no »parti pris« except his Christianity and his objective search for truth. Goffart effectively and thoroughly shatters this illusion of a detached and uninvolved Christian servant of Clio. According to Goffart, »The politics of the Northumbrian church offer a more plausible point of departure for the HE than Bede's spontaneous initiative or the unmotivated incitement of Abbot Albinus« (p. 325).

The title of Goffart's chapter »Bede and the Ghost of Bishop Wilfrid« foreshadows the argument. Stephanus of Ripon in his »Life of Wilfrid«, sees his subject as the hero not only of the Northumberian church but of the English church in general. According to Stephan, Wilfrid was responsible for the success of Christianity in England after the efforts of the Augustine mission had petered out. Bede, by contrast, used Stephan's work as his foil and tried to undermine Wilfrid's heroic status as portrayed in the *Vita*. For example, unlike Stephanus (and Wilfrid?), Bede is pro-Irish, in general, particularly favorable to Iona, and sustains the importance of Cuthbert.

Both Goffart's and Bede's methods are of great interest. Bede, according to Goffart, is out to strengthen and reform the church as put forth in his »Letter to Egbert«. Contemporary Wilfridians are the adversaries. Exactly what their program is aside from glorifying Wilfrid is not very clear. Goffart shows, in this context, how Bede suppresses important facts of the Wilfridian position such as information concerning the Rule of Saint Benedict. Goffart also makes clear how Bede robs Wilfrid of playing the primary role in numerous important events which Stephanus highlights. For example, in the case of the Roman chant, Bede identifies a number of minor figures who were already doing what Wilfrid is credited as having introduced. By crowding the historical stage in this and other areas where Stephanus focusses upon Wilfrid, Bede diverts attention from his opponents' hero and thereby reduces his status.

At times one may wonder whether Bede was reacting primarily to the Wilfridian agenda, whatever that may have been, or to other less mundane concerns. For example, did Bede



reject, one might suggest as a matter of Christian faith, a »great man« approach to history. Such an approach was surely available to Bede and his contemporaries in the classical literature. By rejecting such an approach, which certainly can be detected in Stephanus' ›Life of Wilfrid‹, Bede also was able to tell the story in greater detail and thus he gives the modern researcher more facts. Which course provides a better view of »reality«? In any case, the attack on Wilfrid and on contemporary Wilfridians by Bede need not have had only a single cause.

Throughout this volume, Goffart's readers will likely take issue with one translation or another, and here I should like to call attention to a case that has particular meaning both within the framework of Goffart's previous work and his treatment of Bede. Goffart observes that Stephanus praises Wilfrid's influence on Caedwalla (VW 26) while Bede paints the latter, by and large, as a murderous thug who at the end is cleansed by baptism (HE 4.15–16). Then, according to Goffart, Bede surprises us: »[Caedwalla] bound himself by a vow even though – they say (*ut ferunt*) – not yet reborn in Christ, to give the Lord a fourth part of the island and its booty if he should conquer it« (p. 319). Here the point of Goffart's argument is to show how Bede is blackening the reputation of Caedwalla in order to undermine the reputation of Wilfrid in dealing with him.

The word at issue is »booty« as Bede writes: *si cepisset insulam, quartam partem eius simul et praedae Domino daret*. By having Bede talk of Caedwalla giving the church »booty«, Goffart strengthens his view of Bede's presentation of Caedwalla as a thug. However, although *praedae* often means booty, in this context as in many others during the early Middle Ages, it more likely means »taxes«. Thus Caedwalla promised that if he took control of the island he would give a fourth part of the land to the Lord along with a fourth part of the taxes. Thus the church not only would become a major landowner but also a collector of government taxes. Does *praedae* function here as the barbarian equivalent of *sortes*?

Did Bede want his readers to understand *praedae* to mean booty?, or taxes?, or was he intentionally ambiguous? Did Goffart fail to see the possible meaning »taxes«?, did he see it but lean toward »booty« because it fitted his view of Bede's putative view of Wilfrid? Parenthetically, it is perhaps worth noting that in Western tradition words such as *praeda* with ambiguous meanings, though having strong connotations, underlie notions that »tax is theft« and the operations of the state in these areas constitute institutionalized pillage. Was Caedwalla a barbarian thug or a sophisticated ruler with a clear idea of the difference between tax and booty?

Like Jordanes and the others, Paul the Deacon is seen to be neither a national historian nor a naive recorder of legend and fact untainted by deep and serious authorial intention. Like Gregory of Tours whose focus is upon the region along the Tours-Clermont axis and Bede whose work is firmly centered upon Northumbria, Paul is the historian of a region, Italy, and not of a people. Indeed, Goffart likens Paul's *Romana* and *Historia Langobardorum* to Hodgkins's Italy and her invaders. To press the point, the Lombards were but one such invader.

Perhaps more importantly, Goffart considers Paul to be the most »conscious« historian of the group he discusses and argues that he is much more easily understood from a literary perspective than an historical one. According to Goffart, Paul uses in his works a bi-partite structure which places symmetry as a very high value. Thus Paul is seen to manipulate chronology and (Goffart believes) make up events from the whole cloth in order to maintain the structure of his account. Goffart uses eight separate tables to detail the structure of the HL, the *Romana*, the ›Life of Pope Gregory I‹ and the ›Gesta of the Bishops of Metz‹.

We can get an idea of Goffart's approach from the following: »Paul plotted H.L. 5 as a romance that shifts abruptly into its ironic opposite after the central hero's death«.

Table 8 (p. 408):

- I. Grimoald's magnanimity (chs. 1–5).
- II. Grimoald repels the invading Byzantine Constans II (chs. 6–14).
- III. Natural events and return to Pavia (*entr'acte*) (chs. 15–16).
- IV. Grimoald's prudent government and death (chs. 17–33a).
- V. Legitimist restoration and civil war (chs. 33b–41).



Goffart summarizes his views on Paul: »Paul the Deacon if able to finish [the HL], would have composed a continuous history of Italy from pre-Roman to Frankish times, and so interpreted its Lombard segment as to suggest the course he thought best for the future of Italy at large and Lombard Benevento in particular« (p. 432).

The argument is plausible here and throughout but there are both questions and reservations. Did Paul »outline« his works or even his »plots« and see his method to be as systematic as Goffart portrays it? For example, did Paul say to himself »now I need a heroic lady who would rather die than face Hunnic captivity« and thus invent »Digna«? (p. 354). Has Goffart seen too much rigor and pattern and found it necessary to explain away the problems with observations such as »Paul, as usual, left rough edges between his chapters« (p. 381) or »The chapters of H. L. 3 do not fall into a pattern quite so clear-cut as those of H. L. 1–2 ...« (p. 395).

Goffart, by and large, does not leave rough edges. Even on very minor points he encourages his readers to see patterns and symmetry. For example, in Table 8, reproduced above, Goffart would seem to avoid the use of arabic numerals, 1–5, to structure his outline but chose to provide a visual pattern, external to the facts at issue and far more systematic than the unbalanced numbers of chapters in question, by using roman numerals having one, two, three, two, one markers, respectively. Have I exaggerated Goffart's conscious use of pattern?

Goffart's efforts not to leave »rough edges« lead him to »reconstruct« the themes of Paul's two »unwritten« books of the HL. Starting with the view that Paul left the HL unfinished, with which I agree but there are dissenters, Goffart builds on his reconstruction of Paul's patterning to suggest that the work was intended for Grimoald III who is advised to accommodate the Frankish conquest, reject the Byzantines, and support the church. However, Grimoald annoyed the Carolingians and flirted with the Byzantines. Goffart suggests, reasonably, that either the moment for Paul's advice had passed or Grimoald did not take it. On the whole the reconstruction is beautiful but there is an air of circularity which is offputting.

Throughout ›The Narrators‹, Goffart makes his argument well and with great force although he likely is more systematic and better organized than the authors whom he treats. However, just as Jordanes and the others were writing in a particular and largely recoverable context with the intention of reaching a particular and ostensibly identifiable audience, Goffart has done the same. ›The Narrators‹ is a very strong and fundamentally useful reaction against those wrong-headed modern literary critics who are bent upon the elimination of authorial intention and excising the notion of audience from scholarly consideration. That such literary nonsense has not yet seriously contaminated the work of medieval historians is not a reason for failing to praise Goffart's wonderfully effective preemptive strike.

»Peace« as Saint Augustine argued »is the result of victory«, and Goffart has won for the forces of reason a respite in the larger academic arena. This is done, however, at the expense of causing considerable discomfort to those wedded to traditional methods of *Quellenforschung*. Goffart not only is likely correct on balance in his appreciation of the narrators but his methods and approach are soundly based history. In my opinion, ›The Narrators‹ is arguably one of the most important books written about the early Middle Ages since World War II.

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Giselle DE NIE, *Views from a many-windowed tower. Studies of imagination in the works of Gregory of Tours*, Amsterdam (Rodopi) 1987, XII–348 S. (Studies in classical antiquity, 7).

Moderne Historiker, die sich mit Gregor von Tours beschäftigen, schieben für gewöhnlich seine Wundererzählungen als störende Einsprengsel in ein Geschichtswerk beiseite, dem sie noch weit höhere Anerkennung zollen würden, wenn es nicht mit dieser Last befrachtet wäre. Man billigt dem Autor allenfalls subjektive Ehrlichkeit zu, fragt sich dann aber doch