

Evamaria Freienhofer, Verkörperungen von Herrschaft. Zorn und Macht in Texten des 12. Jahrhunderts, Berlin, Boston, MA (De Gruyter) 2016, 218 S. (Trends in Medieval Philology, 32), ISBN 978-3-11-047083-3, EUR 69,95.

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»Verkörperungen von Herrschaft« offers a fitting addition to the already robust »Trends in Medieval Philology« series. It has been a distinguishing feature of TMP that its contributions have dealt with questions of emotionality as seen for instance in »Codierungen von Emotionen im Mittelalter«¹, »Lachgemeinschaften«², and »Trauer und Identität«³ and more recently »Machtvolle Gefühle«⁴, »Scham und Schamlosigkeit«⁵, and »Lachen und Schweigen«⁶. The present study thus falls in line with the abundance of research emerging in the wake of the pivotal scholarship set forth by the field's originator and popularizer Barbara Rosenwein.

In addition to dealing with the history of emotions, however, the study treats matters of power and influence. These two worlds collide in an elegant and thoughtful manner in Freienhofer's book. The study represents the author's doctoral dissertation carried out under the auspices of the SFB 447 – Kulturen des Performativen at the FU Berlin, which she subsequently revisited and redacted for publication. In it, the author tersely lays out the scope, thesis, and trajectory of the study in a concisely formulated introduction. As she states, the author seeks to further develop the analysis of prior scholarship regarding the matter of anger with a somewhat more open approach (»mit einer offeneren Herangehensweise«, p. 4), thereby going beyond the dichotomy of combative anger (*Kampfzorn*) and that of a ruler or hero wishing to avoid violent conflict (*Herrscherzorn*). Her objective is thus to explore the different functions of anger as an emotional construct employed in the conceptualization of power and rulership as evidenced in primarily four twelfth-century texts; namely, »Policraticus«, »Rolandslied«, »Gesta

¹ C. Stephen Jaeger, Ingrid Kasten et al. (ed.), *Codierungen von Emotionen im Mittelalter/Emotions and Sensibilities in the Middle Ages*, Berlin, Boston 2003 (Trends in Medieval Philology, 1)

² Werner Röcke, Hans Rudolf Velten (ed.), *Lachgemeinschaften. Kulturelle Inszenierungen und soziale Wirkungen von Gelächter im Mittelalter und in der Frühen Neuzeit*, Berlin, Boston 2005 (Trends in Medieval Philology, 4).

³ Elke Koch, *Trauer und Identität. Inszenierungen von Emotionen in der deutschen Literatur des Mittelalters*, Berlin, Boston 2006 (Trends in Medieval Philology, 8).

⁴ Ingrid Kasten (ed.), *Machtvolle Gefühle*, Berlin, Boston 2010 (Trends in Medieval Philology, 24).

⁵ Katja Gvozdeva, Hans Rudolf Velten (ed.), *Scham und Schamlosigkeit. Grenzverletzungen in Literatur und Kultur der Vormoderne* (Trends in Medieval Philology, 21).

⁶ Werner Röcke, Hans Rudolf Velten (ed.), *Lachen und Schweigen, Grenzen und Lizenzen der Kommunikation in der Erzählliteratur des Mittelalters*, Berlin, Boston 2017 (Trends in Medieval Philology, 26).



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Frederici«, and »König Rother«. The assortment of texts comprises a broad range of sources originating from various linguistic and cultural contexts. The textual diversity of her sources reflects the conceptual diversity regarding anger and literary functionalization that had previously gone unaccounted for in the academic literature, a disparity which ultimately prompted the author to conduct the study.

In particular, Freienhofer's monograph covers two spheres of examination, which are mutually complementary; namely, the relationship between anger and violence and that between anger and irrationality (or rationality). It does so by investigating the matter of anger vis-à-vis hierarchy as reflected in the literary genres of prose and narrative. John of Salisbury's »Policraticus«, in addition to presenting a sentential amalgam of ancient ideas from the Western philosophical tradition on the issue of anger, serves as a theoretical conduit for further analysis, as it renders explicit certain themes, which later come to the fore in the narrative sources, albeit in implicit fashion.

A marked feature of the study is the attention given to both processes of personal as well as institutional attribution regarding anger. Thematically, Salisbury's political treatise distinguishes itself from the narrative corpus in its fundamentally divergent position concerning the institutional significance of the anger embodied in an emoting subject. In the »Policraticus«, the ruler embodies the empire only when he acts in accordance with the cardinal virtues of justice and prudence, which is to say, only when he conducts himself in a manner completely unaffected by anger (*zornfrei*). Conversely, the texts of a narrative genre provide evidence of an emerging inclination, which portrays the emotion as a characteristic element of the embodiment of rulership, each in its own way, whether by means of gesture (»Rolandslied«), by metaphor (»Gesta Frederici«), or by literary figure (»König Rother«).

With the anger of the strong displayed in the examined texts also came the fear experienced by the effectively weaker individuals on the receiving end of the perceived threat, an experience long overlooked by scholars holding to the reductive model of emotion as a sign. Here arises a subtle dimension with regard for a ruler's sphere of influence, wherein a show of anger evoked in an emotive-symbolic act served not only as a threat of the use of power, but as an effective tool in exercising power itself (a point expressed perhaps too reservedly in the book). In what proves a core finding of the doctoral study, highly symbolic moments of anger were intentionally utilized by rulers and their courts to legitimize one's own suitability to rule and to de-legitimize that of the other, be they past or present, real or figurative. In such a way, the anger motif appears to have been instrumentalized as a deliberate and calculated political strategy to bolster the authority of the ruling order and its genealogy as well as to downplay rival claims to rule.

In this reviewer's opinion, the author convincingly achieves her proposed goal of analyzing the emotion of anger as a function of institutionalizing and personalizing literary motifs in select 12th century texts. The way in which she arrives at her goal is also commendable. The clarity of the study's style and tenor is one of its many strong suits. The book is accessible in its layout and reads well even for non-native German speakers. Its author writes in plain sentences without excessive subordinate clauses or compound phrases, and the content is rich and sound in method. Given that it is a truly (i. e. not only nominally)



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interdisciplinary work, her study rotates on two axes, combining insights from various fields of history but also from the discipline of philology.

The publication navigates the textual terrain with relative ease, even as it undertakes serious analytical text work. Insights garnered particularly from both semasiological (the meaning of words) and onomasiological (the naming of concepts) considerations serve as her strongest tools in particular for the interpretation of gestures and structures of conflict and in effect permitted her to offer the close and attentive reading that she promised at the book's outset. With its expansive approach to a rather specialized topic, Freienhofer's book presents a challenge to disciplines such as the history of emotions, the history of power relations, ritual and performance studies, and the history of ideas. As such, it will be of interest even for non-specialists in the field of philology.

In hermeneutical terms, the book largely constitutes a »world within the text« study – involving the literary construction of history (*Geschichtskonstruktion*) – that could benefit from the incorporation of an enhanced view of the »world behind the text«. In particular, it may prove useful to look more into the link between the motifs operational in the above mentioned texts and their textual communities, as so much of the history of emotions takes its meaning from the development of emotional communities. Perhaps such publications as »Die Performanz der Mächtigen. Rangordnung und Idoneität in höfischen Gesellschaften des späten Mittelalters«⁷ or »Idoneität – Genealogie – Legitimation. Begründung und Akzeptanz von dynastischer Herrschaft im Mittelalter«⁸ may serve as an impetus for further research.

⁷ Klaus Oschema, Christina Andenna, Gert Melville, Jörg Peltzer (ed.), *Die Performanz der Mächtigen. Rangordnung und Idoneität in höfischen Gesellschaften des späten Mittelalters*, Ostfildern 2015 (RANK. Politisch-soziale Ordnungen im mittelalterlichen Europa, 5).

⁸ Cristina Andenna, Gert Melville (ed.), Kai Hering (collab.), *Idoneität – Genealogie – Legitimation. Begründung und Akzeptanz von dynastischer Herrschaft im Mittelalter*, Cologne, Weimar, Vienna 2015 (Norm und Struktur, 43).



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