**PREFACE**

The collaborative project ‘Visions of Community: Comparative Approaches to Ethnicity, Region and Empire in Christianity, Islam and Buddhism (400-1600 CE)’ explores the impact of the three major ‘universal’ religions on the formation of particular communities. It addresses the relationship and the productive tension between religions on the one hand and empires, regional, ethnic and urban communities on the other. Five exemplary in-depth case studies deal with post-Roman Europe, medieval Islamic South Arabia, early Tibet, late medieval Central Europe, and Dalmatia. On this basis, we have conducted broad cross-cultural comparative studies of visions and practices of community along specific lines of comparison, involving the project team as well as many guest researchers. These comparative ventures include urban communities, monastic or similar enclaves of learning, relations between local and overarching communities, eschatological hopes and fears, constructions of identity in historiography, ethnic origin narratives or the dissolution or resilience of empires. Such studies compromises reflections on practices and methods of global comparative research. The following pages give an overview of the main results of the project.

The project, running from 2011 to 2019, is based in Vienna, funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) and hosted by the University of Vienna and the Austrian Academy of Sciences. This booklet presents the collaborative publications and monographs that have already been published or are forthcoming (as of summer 2019), as well as an overview of the most relevant articles of all researchers involved in the individual sub projects.
This volume explores some of the many different meanings of community across medieval Eurasia. The studies assembled here in thematic clusters address the terminology of community, genealogies, urban communities, and monasteries or ‘enclaves of learning’: in particular in early medieval Europe, medieval South Arabia and Tibet, and late medieval Central Europe and Dalmatia. It includes works by medieval historians, social anthropologists, and Asian Studies scholars. The volume presents the results of in-depth comparative research from the ‘Visions of Community’ project in Vienna, and of a dialogue with guests, offering new and exciting perspectives on the emerging field of comparative medieval history.

Table of Contents

WALTER POHL, Meanings of Community in Medieval Eurasia

GERDA HEYDEMANN, People(s) of God? Biblical Exegesis and the Language of Community in Late Antiquity and Early Medieval Europe

JOHANN HEISS / ERIK HOVDEN, The Political Usage of Religious and Non-Religious Terms for Community in Medieval South Arabia: A Comparative Response to Gerda Heydemann’s Chapter

RÜDIGER LOHLKER, Jamāʿa vs. mulk: Community-Centred and Ruler-Centred Visions of the Islamic Community

ELISABETH GRUBER, The City as Commune

OLIVER SCHMITT, Addressing Community in Late Medieval Dalmatia

JOHANN HEISS / ERIK HOVDEN / ELISABETH GRUBER, Urban Communities in Medieval South Arabia: A Comparative Reflection

DANIEL MAHONEY, The Political Construction of a Tribal Genealogy from Early Medieval South Arabia

CHRISTIAN NIKOLAUS OPTITZ, Genealogical Representations of Monastic Communities in Late Medieval Art

BIRGIT KELLNER, Genealogy into the Future: Glimpses from Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho’s (1653–1705) Exposition of the Extended Dalai Lama Lineage

WALTER POHL, Genealogy: A Comparative Perspective from the Early Medieval West

RUTGER KRAMER, Spiritual Communities across Medieval Eurasia

PASCALE HUGON, Enclaves of Learning, Religious and Intellectual Communities in Tibet: The Monastery of gSang phu Ne’u thog in the Early Centuries of the Later Diffusion of Buddhism

RUTGER KRAMER, Teaching Emperors: Transcending the Boundaries of Carolingian Monastic Communities

ERIK HOVDEN, Competing Visions of Welfare in the Zaydi Community of Medieval South Arabia

CHRISTINA LUTTER, Vita communis in Central European Monastic Landscapes

DIARMUID Ó RIAIN, The Schottenklöster in the World: Identity, Independence and Integration

MATHIAS FERMER, Among Teachers and Monastic Enclaves: An Inquiry into the Religious Learning of Medieval Tibet

STEVEN VANDERPUTTEN, Enclaves of Learning: A Commentary on the Papers in the Section on ‘Spiritual Communities’

JONATHAN R. LYON, Response to the Chapters in ‘Spiritual Communities’ Section

ANDRE GINGRICH, Medieval Eurasian Communities by Comparison: Methods, Concepts, Insights
This volume looks at ‘visions of community’ in a comparative perspective, from Late Antiquity to the dawning of the age of crusades. It addresses the question of why and how distinctive new political cultures developed after the disintegration of the Roman World, and to what degree their differences had already emerged in the first post-Roman centuries. The Latin West, Orthodox Byzantium and its Slavic periphery, and the Islamic world each retained different parts of the Graeco-Roman heritage, while introducing new elements. For instance, ethnicity became a legitimizing element of rulership in the West, remained a structural element of the imperial periphery in Byzantium, and contributed to the inner dynamic of Islamic states without becoming a resource of political integra-

tion. Similarly, the political role of religion also differed between the emerging post-Roman worlds. The contributions to the volume explore this new line of research and look at different aspects of the process, with leading western Medievalists, Byzantinists and Islamicists covering a wide range of pertinent topics. At a closer look, some of the apparent differences between the West and the Islamic world seem less distinctive, and the inner variety of all post-Roman societies becomes more marked. At the same time, new variations in the discourse of community and the practice of power emerge. Anybody interested in the development of the post-Roman Mediterranean, but also in the relationship between the Islamic World and the West, will gain new insights from these studies on the political role of ethnicity and religion in the post-Roman Mediterranean.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WALTER POHL, Introduction: Ethnicity, Religion and Empire

ANDRE GINGRICH, Envisioning Medieval Communities in Asia: Remarks on Ethnicity, Tribalism and Faith

GUNTAR HAZOD, Tribal Mobility and Religious Fixation: Remarks on Territorial Transformation and Identity in Imperial and Early Post-Imperial Tibet

FRITZ MITTHOF, Zur Neufassung von Identität unter imperialer Herrschaft: Die Provinzen des Römischen Reiches als ethnishe Entitäten

BERNHARD PALME, Political Identity versus Religious Distinction? The Case of Egypt in the Later Roman Empire

HERWIG WOLFRAM, How Many Peoples Are (in) a People?

HELMUT REIMITZ, The Provincial Past: Visions of Frankish Identity in the Early Medieval History of Gregory of Tours’ Historiae (Sixth-Ninth Century)

CATHERINE MICKENNA, Inventing Wales

MICHAEL G. MORONY, Religious Communities in the Early Islamic World

WALTER E. KAEGI, Seventh-Century Identities: The Case of North Africa

BAS TER HAAK ROMENY, Ethnicity, Ethnogenesis, and the Identity of Syriac Orthodox Christians

RICHARD PAYNE, Avoiding Ethnicity: Uses of the Ancient Past in Late Sasanian Northern Mesopotamia

LYNN JONES, Truth and Lies, Ceremonial and Art: Issues of Nationality in Medieval Armenia

HARTMUT LEPPIN, Roman Identity in a Border Region: Evagrius and the Defiance of the Roman Empire

GEORGE HATKE, Holy Land and Sacred Territory: A View from Early Ethiopia

MISCHA MEIER, Anastasios und die ‘Geschichte’ der Isaurier

RALPH-JOHANNES LILIE, Zur Stellung von ethnischen und religiösen Minderheiten in Byzanz: Armenier, Muslim und Paulikianer

JOHN HALDON / HUGH KENNEDY, Regional Identities and Military Power: Byzantium and Islam c. 600-750

STEFFAN ESSERS, ‘Faithful believers’: Oaths of Allegiance in Post-Roman Societies as Evidence for Eastern and Western ‘Visions of Community’


WOLFRAM DREWS, Diaspora Jewish Communities in Early Medieval Europe: Structural Conditions for Survival and Expansion

CLEMENS GANTNER, New Visions of Community in Ninth-Century Rome: The Impact of the Saracen Threat on the Papal World View

DANIEL G. KÖNG, Arab-Islamic Historiographers on the Emergence of Latin-Christian Europe

ANN CHRISTYS, The Vikings in the South through Arab Eyes

PRZEMYSLAW URBANZEK, Identities of the Sāqilāta and the Rūsyya in Early Arabic Sources

WOLFRAM BRANDES, Gog, Magog, and the Hunnen: Anmerkungen zur eschatologischen Ethnographie der Völkerwanderungszeit

ALEXANDER REHAMMERM, Strategies of Identification and Distinction in the Byzantine Discourse on the Seljuk Turks

JOHN VICTOR TOLAN, ‘A wild man whose hand will be against all’: Saracens and Ishmaelites in Latin Ethnographical Traditions, from Jerome to Bede

IAN N. WOOD, Where the Wild Things Are

CONCLUSIONS by LESLIE BRUBAKER and CHRIS WICKHAM

Visions of Community: The West, Byzantium and the Islamic World, 300-1100

In Preparation:

ETHNICITY AND RELIGION
Walter Pohl, Gerda Heydemann, Ingrid Hartl (Eds.)
Brill 2020

End of Times

CULTURES OF ESCHATOLOGY Vol.1
Worldly Empires and Scriptural Authorities
in Medieval Christian, Islamic, and Buddhist Communities
Veronika Wieser, Vincent Eltschinger (Eds.)
De Gruyter, München
Publication Date: June 2019

In Eastern and Western past societies, ideas about the present and the future were shaped by the expectations that all things must end. This belief in the Last Things has an integral place in Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism. The aim of the two volumes ‘Cultures of Eschatology’ is to come to a more nuanced understanding of how eschatological thought influenced and factored into the political and religious perception and self-definition of medieval communities. How did notions of an imminent end shape a community’s identity, the perception of other communities and an individual’s perspective towards life and the world?

TABLE OF CONTENTS
VINCENT ELTSCHINGER / VERONIKA WIESER, Introduction
SEBASTIAN GÜNTHER, ‘When the sun shall be darkened and the stars be thrown down’ (Quran 81:1-2): Imagery, Rhetorical, and Doctrinal Instruction in Muslim Apocalyptic Literature
UTA HEIL, Apocalyptic Literature – a Never-Ending Story
GUY LORBRICHON, Western Eschatologies, or the Future of a Society (9-12th Centuries): Addition of Individual Projects, or Collective Construction of a Radiant Dawn?
VINCENT ELTSCHINGER, The Buddhist Appropriation of the Kaliyuga
MATTIAS DÄUMER, Eschatological Relativity: on the Scriptural Undermining of Apocalypses in Jewish Second Temple, Late Antique and Medieval Receptions of the Book of Watchers
JOHANNES VAN OORT, Manichean Eschatology: Gnostic-Christian Thinking about Last Things
MICHAIL KARL-HEINZ SOMMER, Choices – John’s Use of Authoral Texts
PHILIPPE BUC, Eschatologies of the Sword, Compared: Latin Christianity, Islam(s), and Japanese Buddhism
STEPHEN SHOEMAKER, The Portents of the Hour: Eschatology and Empire in the Early Islamic Tradition
GRAEME WARD, Exegesis, Empire and Eschatology: Reading Orosius’ Histories Against the Pagans in the Carolingian World
ANN CHRISTYS, The History of Ibn Habīb: al-Andalus in the Last Days
ARMIN BERGMAYER, Volatile Images: the Empty Throne and its Place in the Byzantine Last Judgment Iconography
JAMES PALMER, Apocalyptic Insiders? Identity and Heresy in Early Medieval Iberia and Francia
EKIR HOVDEN / JOHANN HEISS, Zaydi Theology Popularized: a Hallstorm Hitting the Heterodox
FAUSTINA DOPPIAK-AERTS, Gog and Magog crossing Borders: Biblical, Christian and Islamic Imaginings
ELENA TEALDI, Political Propheticism. John of Rupestris’s Figure of the End Times Emperor and its Evolution
ZOSKA GELLE, Treasure texts on the Age of Decline: Prophecies concerning the Hidden Land of Yolmo, their Reception and Impact

CULTURES OF ESCHATOLOGY Vol.2
Time, Death and Afterlife in Medieval Christian, Islamic, and Buddhist Communities
Veronika Wieser, Vincent Eltschinger, Johann Heiss (Eds.)
Publication Date: June 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS
VINCENT ELTSCHINGER / VERONIKA WIESER, Introduction
ROBERTO TOTTOLI, Death and Eschatological Beliefs in the Lives of the Prophets According to Islam
BERNHARD SCHEID, Death, Pollution, and the Afterlife as a common Matrix of Japanese Buddhism and Shinto
PIA LUCAS, Scattered Bones and Miracles: the Cult of Saints, Resurrection of the Body and Eschatological Thought in the Works of Gregory of Tours
MIRIAM CZOCH, Arguing for Improvement: the Last Judgment, Time and the Future in Dhouda’s Liber Manualis
MARC TIFFENAUER, The End of the End: Devotion as an Antidote for Hell
FREDERICK CHEN, The Evolution of the Buddhist Otherworld Empire in Early Medieval China
ERINI AFENTOULIDIS, Aerial Tollhouses: Space and Power in Byzantine Accounts of the Aerial Tollhouses
VERONIKA WIESER, ‘Exibus in paradisum’: the Many Ways of Searching Paradise in the Fifth-Century Community of Nola
MARILYN DUNN, Apocalypse Now? Judgment, Body and Soul in the Christianization of the Anglo-Saxons
FLORIAN SCHWARZ, Communal, Imperial, Global? Reflections on Early Modern Muslim Eschatology and Millenarianism(s)
JOHANN HEISS, Multiple Uses of an Enemy: Gog, Magog and the ‘two-horned one’
IMMO WARNITJES, A.D. 672 – The Apex of Apocalyptic Thought in the Early Medieval Latin West?
RUTGER KRAMER / SØREN KASCHKE, The Chronicle of Moissac
KURT APPEL, The Testament of Time – the Apocalypse of John and the recapitulatio of Time According to Giorgio Agamben
CHRISTIAN ZOLLES, History beyond the ken. Towards a Critical Historiography of Apocalyptic Politics with Jacob Taubes and Moïse Tcheremissine
When empires lost their grip on peripheral areas, new political communities could emerge. Often, military elites from outside the empire, who had been more or less involved with its defence system, ruled them. Frequently, a political landscape of the 'middle ground' evolved, with several competing political centres and considerable extension into the barbarian fringes of the imperial system. These 'sub-imperial' powers could remain in an unstable balance with the empire, they could eventually replace it, or be drawn into the imperial sphere again.

Such new political powers usually faced similar challenges, but relied on rather different structures, with widely different outcomes. The most obvious differences lay in their self-representation and outside perception. Many relied on dynastic legitimacy, often also in combination. All of them sought imperial legitimation, though to very different degrees; a few also claimed imperial status themselves. Most of these polities where rather short-lived, either because the central imperial power recovered or because new 'barbarian' groups replaced them. Comparing a number of late antique and medieval Eurasian test cases may offer insights into the dynamics of such constellations and their effect on the new configuration of the empire.

The publication aims at a comparison between six cases:

- The Later Roman Empire and the post-Roman kingdoms in the West
- Byzantium and the peripheral states in the orthodox world
- The Carolingian Empire and the emerging states in its Northern and Eastern periphery
- The Inner Asian fringes of the Sasanid empire
- The Abbasid Caliphate and the new dynastic formations on its territory
- China and the Northern Dynasties

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

WALTER POHL, Introduction: the Emergence of New Polities in the Shadows of Empire

ANDREW CHITTICK, The Huai Frontier and the Ethnization of Difference in Early Medieval China

MICHAEL DROMPP, In the Shadows of Empires: The Tuyuhun and Khitans in Late Antiquity

Q. EDWARD WANG, "Cultural Chinua" from the Eleventh Century: Legitimacy, Metanarrative and Historiography

RICHARD PAYNE, The Making of Turan: Iranian Institutions in the Service of Hun and Turk States

IAN WOOD, When Did the West Roman Empire Fall?

STEVEN EDWARDS, In the Shadow of the Roman Empire: Layers of Legitimacy and Strategies of Legitimation in the Western Regna

WALTER POHL, The Role of Ethnicity in the Post-Roman Kingdoms

HELMUT REIMITZ, The Carolingian Politzization of Ethnic Identity in the Eastern Periphery of the Frankish Kingdoms

MAIKE VAN BERKEL, Communication between Centre and Periphery in the Early Tenth-Century Abbasid Empire

JÖRGEN PAUL, Local and Imperial Rule. Examples from Fars (9th–10th centuries)

DANIEL MAHONEY, A Tale of Two Families: The Varied Formation of Post-Abbasid Polities in 9th Century South Arabia

BAS TER HAAR ROMENY, Ethnicity, Religion, and Sovereignty in Twelfth-Century Melitene: A Note on Michael the Syrian

JOHANNES PREISER-KAPELLER, Early Medieval Armenia between Empires (fifth-eleventh century AD): Dynamics and Continuities

JONATHAN SHEPARD, Countering Byzantium’s Shadow: Contrarianism among the Bulgars, Rus and Germans

ALEXANDER BEIHAMMER, Strategies of Legitimation in the Shadow of Empires: Byzantine-Turkish Contact Zones in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Asia Minor

FRANCESCO BORRI, At the Edge of the Adriatic. The Social Structure of the Italian Romania

ILDA GARZIPAZANOV, Peripheral Polities North of the Carolingian Realm: The regnum Danorum

**EMPIRES AND COMMUNITIES IN THE POST-ROMAN AND ISLAMIC WORLD, C. 400-1000 CE**

Walter Pohl, Rutger Kramer (Eds.)

Oxford University Press

Expected Publication Date: 2019

This book deals with the ways empires affect smaller communities – for instance, ethnic groups, religious communities, and local or peripheral populations. The time frame is roughly the fifth to tenth centuries CE, a period with a particular dynamic of empires in Europe and the Mediterranean. While successive parts of the Roman Empire eroded, its Byzantine core areas showed a surprising resilience. Islamic expansion led to a succession of caliphal states in a wide area previously dominated by the Roman and Sasanian empires. The Franks attempted to recreate a Western Roman Empire, albeit with limited success. The period is thus exceptionally well suited to study the various expansive and erosive dynamics of empires, and their interaction with somehow smaller communities.

The emerging questions are best addressed from a comparative perspective. The volume does not aim at an overall model, but at mid-range comparison that does not take the West (and its notions of empire) as a conceptual bench-mark. What also distinguishes this book from many other comparative contributions is that it is the work of an international research group uniting some of the best scholars in their respective fields, who came together in yearly meetings between 2013 and 2017 to develop the research questions and discuss successive drafts of the papers. The chapters are in-depth studies written in full awareness of the other contributions; taken together, they constitute a major contribution to the advancement of comparative studies on pre-modern empires.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

WALTER POHL, Introduction

HUGH KENNEDY, Why did the Break-Up of the Abbasid Caliphate in the Tenth Century not lead to the Development of Ethnically Based Polities in the Middle East?

WALTER POHL, Why Did the Break-Up of the Western Roman Empire Lead to the Development of Kingdoms with Ethnic Names?

WALTER POHL / HUGH KENNEDY, Comparative Perspectives: Differences between the Dissolution of the Western Roman Empire and the Abbasid Caliphate

PETER WEBB, Comment: The Break-Up of the Abbasid Realm

JOHN HADLON, Historizing Resilience: The Paradox of the Medieval East Roman State – Collapse, Adaptation and Survival

STEVEN EDWARDS / HELMUT REIMITZ, An Empire of Communities: The Accommodation of Legal and Ethnic Pluralism in the Carolingian renovatio imperii

LESLIE BRUBAKER / CHRIS WICKHAM, Processes and Political Identity in the Mediterranean

RUTGER KRAMER, Franks, Romans and Countrymen: Carolingian Interests, Local Identities, and the Conquest of Aquitaine

PETER WEBB, From the Sublime to the Ridiculous: Yemeni Arab Identity in Abbasid Iraq

DANIEL REYNOLDS, Death of a Patriarch: The Murder of Yihannâ ibn Jami (966) and the Question of Melkite Identity in Early Islamic Palestine

PETRA SUPSTEIJN, Integrating Egyptian Elites in Early Islamic Egypt

CHRIS WICKHAM, Conclusions
Urban Communities and Non-Urban Sites and Centres

**PRACTICING COMMUNITY IN URBAN AND RURAL EURASIA (1000–1600)**

**Comparative Perspectives & Interdisciplinary Approaches**

Fabian Kümmeler, Eirik Hovden, Judit Majorossy (Eds.)

Brill, Leiden

Expected Publication Date: 2019

This volume explores the social practices of framing, building, and enacting community in urban-rural relations by comparing case studies from Central and Southeast Europe through the Mediterranean and the Arabian Peninsula to Central Asia and Tibet. Choosing an interdisciplinary and comparative approach, the contributions focus on a broad spectrum of social practices, discursive and symbolical framing of communities, as well as expressions of community in performance and material culture in different regional and cultural contexts. Conceiving urban and rural communities as being composed of ‘multiple layers of communitarian belonging’, the contributions refer to (and apply) a series of research questions elaborated in a series of international workshops aimed at a coherent linking of the meaning, ideas and discourses about the concept of “communities” in the Middle Ages. As communities emerge, are strengthened and changed by the social practices of its members and in the interaction with external groups, the authors scrutinize practical aspects of communal life in urban-rural relation against the background of power politics, legal systems and visions of community in the respective cultural and geographical contexts, by focusing on four dimensions:

1) The practical aspect of sustaining a community in and throughout urban-rural relations by the management of resources, infrastructure, exchange of goods, administration and information, etc.

2) The forms of representing, symbolizing and enacting community through public buildings and performative culture in a spatial setting.

3) The practices of integration and differentiation in a long-term perspective by scrutinizing various forms of endowments dedicated to specific purposes in order to serve the common good.

4) The enactment of community in a spatial perspective by analysing processes of integration and differentiation via the practice of religious and secular processions. The volume is a result of continuously challenging the discussion of urban and non-urban communities within the framework of VISCOM.

With contributions from:

Maaike Van Berkel, Hubert Feiglstorfer,
Andre Gingrich, Károly Goda, Elisabeth Gruber,
Johann Heiss, Kateřina Horníčková, Eirik Hovden, Christian Jahoda,
Christiane Kalantari, Hugh Kennedy, ODile Kommer, Fabian Kümmler,
Christina Lutter, Judit Majorossy, Ermanno Orlando, Noha Sadek,
Oliver Jens Schmitt

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Narratives of Community

**HISTORIOGRAPHY & IDENTITY Vol. 4**

**WRITING HISTORY ACROSS MEDIEVAL EURASIA**

Walter Pohl, Daniel Mahoney (Eds.)

Brepols, Turnhout

Publication Date: 2020

This volume examines the social function of historical writing across various world regions from Europe through the Islamic world to China during the medieval period. These chapters explore how historiographical works in these diverse contexts construct and shape identities, as well as communicate ‘visions of community’ and legitimate political claims.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

WALTER POHL, Historiography in Comparison: An Introduction

SIMON MACLEAN, Who Were the Lotharingians? Defining Political Community after the End of the Carolingian Empire

WALTER POHL, Building on Paul the Deacon in Southern Italy

MATTHIAS TISCHLER, Spaces of Convivencia and Spaces of Polemic: Transcultural Historiography and Religious Identity in the Intellectual Landscape of the Iberian Peninsula (9th-10th Centuries)

EMMANUEL BOURBOUHAKIS, The Byzantine Past as Text: Historiography and Political Rule c. 900

IOANNIS STOIRAITHIS, Scriptores post Theophanem: Normative Aspects of Imperial Historiography in Tenth-Century Byzantium

SCOTT JOHNSON, Convergence to Multiplicity in Byzantine Historiography: Literary Trends in Syriac and Greek, 9th to 12th Centuries

SARAH SAVANT-BOWEN, Iran’s Conversion to Islam and History Writing as an Art for Forgetting

MICHAEL COOK, Iran and Islam: Two Historical Narratives

DANIEL MAHONEY, The Formation of South Arabian Identity in al-Hamdānī’s al-Iklīl

Q. EDWARD WANG, National History in Post Imperial East Asia and Europe

RANDOLPH FORD, The Wars of Procopius and the Jinshu of Fan Xuanling: Historiographical Representations of Barbarian Political Identity under Reconstituted Empires
The volume discusses Central European and Eastern Central European historiographies of the High and Late Middle Ages. It deals with histories written in a time which brought about a profound differentiation of medieval societies in these regions. The demand for reassuring identifications grew the more pressing as new social strata achieved their share of economic and political power. Narratives of identification produced and reproduced by historiography were tailored specifically for distinct social groups often using their languages: the vernaculars instead of the universal language of elite education, Latin.

The focus of the volume is on the strategies of identification that individual works developed to balance many alternative modes of identification. Of an eminent interest is the interplay between the languages – in the area under scrutiny that was, apart from Latin, mainly German and Czech. In this interplay, orality and literacy interacted, with mutual effects on each other. The publication offers deep insights in these and related questions and herewith fills a significant scholarly gap.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Visions of Community: Publication of the Special Research Programme**

**HISTORIOGRAPHIES IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN CENTRAL EUROPE BETWEEN LATIN AND VERNACULARS, 15th-16th C.**

Pavlína Ryčterová, David Kalhouš (Eds.)

Brepols, Turnhout

Expected Publication Date: 2020

This book is a product of the Medieval Biographical Collections working group and will offer a comparative approach to collections of biographical texts emanating from the Buddhist, Christian and Islamic worlds in the period 400-1600 CE. Throughout history, remarkable men and women stood out in a way that triggered an often-complex process of retelling their lives and preserving their memory through written narratives, and could thus become examples and sources of inspiration and identification for communities. This volume looks at instances where such stories were preserved and presented within wider collections of biographies, where they could acquire new meanings and significance within an over-arching narrative. Within a comparative framework, the volume will examine the writing and compilation strategies behind the works, their reception, audience and use, and the contexts and communities that gave rise to them.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**


GRAEME WARD / VERONIKA WIESER, Cataloguing Community: Reading Jerome’s On Illustrious Men in the Post-Roman World.

JOHANN HEISS, Shaping Community through Biographical Collections from South Arabia: A Comparison of Two Tabaps.


DANIEL MAHONEY, Obituaries in the Service of the Rasulid State: A Biographical Collection in an Early Fifteenth-Century Chronicle from South Arabia.

GIORGIA VOCIINO, Creating a Sense of Glorious Destiny: Mastery of Speech in the Libellus de Situ Civitatis Mediolanii.

**Forthcoming**

**KINSHIP AND GENDER: Comparative Perspectives on Practices of Exchange and Belonging**

Andre Gingrich and Christina Lutter (Eds.)

History and Anthropology, Special Issue (2020), forthcoming

Taylor & Francis

**CROSS PUBLICATIONS • Articles**


Odile KOMMER, Salvatore LICCARDO and Andrea NOWAK, Comparative Approaches to Ethnonyms: The Case of the Persians, in: Hungarian Historical Review 7/1 (2018) 18-56.

By the early ninth century, the Carolingian dynasty ruling over the Frankish Empire had assumed full responsibility for the social, religious and political reforms that had become an integral part of their policy. This became especially clear when, in 813/4, Louis the Pious and his court seized the momentum generated by their predecessors, and broadened the scope of these reforms ever further. Those involved knew they constituted a movement greater than the sum of its parts; the interdependence of imperial authority and ecclesiastical reformers was driven by comprehensive, yet surprisingly diverse expectations.

Taking this diversity as a starting point, this book takes a fresh look at the optimistic years between 813 and 828. Extrapolating from a series of detailed case studies rather than presenting a grand narrative, it offers new interpretations of contemporary theories of reform, and demonstrates how vital it is to take into account the self-awareness of its main instigators as they pondered what it meant to be a good Christian in a good Christian empire.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

1. Framing the Carolingian Reforms – The Early Years of Louis the Pious: Building an Empire • Communities and Discourse Communities • Between Cloister and Court
2. A Model for Empire – The Councils of 813 and the institutio canonicorum: The Road to 813 • Teaching the Empire • An Effort, not an Honor: Bishops and their Responsibilities • Church Fathers in Aachen • Correcting Communities • Communicating correction • Channelling Authority
3. Monks on the Via Regia – The World of Smaragdus of Saint-Mihiel: A Life in Context • Directions for a King: The Via regia • Explaining A Way: The expositio in Regulam Sancti Benedicti • A Crowning Achievement: The Diadema monachorum • The Lives of Smaragdus of Saint-Mihiel
4. Caesar et abba simul – Monastic Reforms between Aachen and Aniane: The Emperor and the Monks • On the Outside Looking In • Armed with the Javelins of Debate: Benedict of Aniane goes to Court • The Death of an Abbot

Epilogue: Imperial Responsibilities and the Discourse of Reforms
In the years 816-819, a series of councils was held at the imperial palace in Aachen. The goal of the meetings was to settle a number of questions about ecclesiastical organisation. These issues were hotly debated throughout the Christian Roman Empire of fourth and fifth centuries, and then reinvigorated by the renewal of empire under Charlemagne and his son Louis the Pious. At the centre of the ensuing debate stood the distinction between monks and monastic communities on the one hand, and the so-called clerici canonici and their communities on the other. Many other reforms were proposed in its wake: the position of the episcopacy needed to be renegotiated, the role of the imperial court needed to be consolidated, and the place of every Christian within the renewed Carolingian Church needed to be redefined. What started out as a seemingly straightforward reorganisation of the religious communities that dotted the Frankish ecclesiastical landscape thus quickly turned into a broad movement that necessitated an almost complete categorisation of the orders of the Church. The contributions to this volume each zoom in on various aspects of these negotiations: their prehistory, their implementation, and their influence. In doing so, previously held assumptions about the scope, the goals, and the impact of the ‘Carolingerian Church Reforms’ will be re-assessed as well.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**GRAEWOE EADE / RURGGER KRAER** M, The Debate about Religious Communities in the Carolingian World: Introduction.


**SEBASTIAN SCHOLZ** M, The Organisation of Clergy and canonici in the 6th Century.

**ALBRECHT DIEM** M, The Memorale Qualiter: Complicating the Notion of Regular Observance before 816.

**BRIGITTE MEJNS** M, Confusion and the Necessity to Choose? A Fresh Look at the Objectives Behind the Carolingian Reform Efforts in the Legislative sources (c. 750-813).

**EMILIE KURZIEGL** M, Redefining ordines, Refocusing Lives: Reforming the ecclesia through the Law (760s-819).

**SØREN KASCHKE** M, Capioty Legislation and Church Reform: The Case of Louis the Pious and Lothar I.

**RUGGER KRAMER** M, The Instituto Canonicorum: A Composition between Court, Clergy and Episcopacy.

**MICHAEL EBER** M, Canon, Canones, and Connections to the Secular World: Regulating Religious Life in the Instituto Canonicorum and the Instituto Sanctionum.

**VERONIKAY WIESER** M, Beyond the Church Fathers: Uses of Patristic Authority in the Instituto Canonicorum.

**STEPHEN LING** M, Superior to the Canonical, but Inferior to the Monastic: Monks, Canonics and Alcuin’s Third Order.

**CINZIA GRIFFONI** M, This is a Cleric: Habranus Maurus’ De institutio cleriicon in the Context of the Carolingian Reforms.

**INGRID ROMBOLD** M, ‘The apostates’ of Saint-Denis: Reforms, Dissent, and Carolingian Monasticism.

**JOHANNA IBBE** M, Discussing the una regula: Reflections on Monastic Life in Ninth Century Manuscripts from St Gall.

**MIRIAM CZOZK** M, Conceptual Diversity of Sacred Space? Churches and Monasteries in the Carolingian World.

**RENEE CHOUY** M, The Office throughout Night and Day: Clerical Prayer and the Christian Assembly.

**GRAEWOE EADE, AMALIUS, ADAMAR, and the Instituto Canonicorum** M.

**JESSE BILLIET** M, The 816 Liturgical Reforms, Hildemar’s Commentary on the Rule, and the Milanese Rite.

**ARTHUR WESTWELL** M, Ordering the Church in the Ordines Romani.

**EMILIE KURZIEGL** M, Conclusion.
This volume looks at changing identities during the transition from the Roman Empire to a political world defined by different kingdoms and peoples in western Europe. It addresses ‘ethnicity’ in the context of alternative modes of identification, mainly Christianity and Romaness. To widen the horizon of current debates, it shows that the ancient dichotomy between barbarians and Romans is hardly helpful in understanding the complex transitions to a post-imperial age in the West. In a broad sweep of regional examples, from Spain and North Africa to Dalmatia and the British Isles, the book follows the unfolding of Christian and barbarian identities: How were both the Roman and the barbarian past used for the formation and legitimation of new identities?

The ‘scripts of Romaness’ changed in the early Middle ages, and so did the significance of othering pagans, heretics, or barbarians. The contributions trace the tenacity and the ambiguity of traditional narratives and signs of distinction: manuscripts and material remains, costume and epigraphy, historiography and hagiography were used in creative ways to shape civic, local, or religious communities. Many of the contributions show the fundamental importance of Christian ‘strategies of identification’ for creating a stronger political role for ethnicity in the post-Roman kingdoms. As such, they follow a line of argument that has also been explored in the book’s companion volume in this series, ‘Strategies of identification: ethnicities and peoples in western Europe. It addresses ‘ethnicity’ in the context of alternative modes of identification, mainly Christianity and Romaness. To widen the horizon of current debates, it shows that the ancient dichotomy between barbarians and Romans is hardly helpful in understanding the complex transitions to a post-imperial age in the West. In a broad sweep of regional examples, from Spain and North Africa to Dalmatia and the British Isles, the book follows the unfolding of Christian and barbarian identities: How were both the Roman and the barbarian past used for the formation and legitimation of new identities?

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WALTER POHL / GERDA HEYDEMANN, Preface

WALTER POHL, Christian and Barbarian Identities in the Early Medieval West: Introduction

ALBRECHT DIEM, Who is Allowed to Pray for the King? Saint-Maurice d’Agaune and the Creation of a Burgundian Identity

ALEXANDER O’HARA, Patria, peregrinatio, and paenitentia: Identities of Alienation in the Seventh Century

JAMIE WOOD, Religiones and gentes in Isidore of Seville’s Chronica maiora

JOHN-HENRY CLAY, Adventus, Warfare, and the Britons in the Development of West Saxon Identity

FRANCESCO BORRI, Arrivano I barbari a cavallo? Foundation Myths and Origins gentium in the Adriatic Arc

MARCO STOFFELLA, Tuscan as gens? Shaping Local Identities and Communities in Early Medieval Tuscany

MAYA MASKARINEC, Who Were the Romans? Shifting Scripts of Romaness in Early Medieval Italy

PHILIPP VON RUMMEL, The Fading Power of Images: Romans, Barbarians, and the Uses of a Dichotomy in Early Medieval Archaeology

IRENE BARBIERA, Remembering the Warriors: Weapon Burials and Tombstones between Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages in Northern Italy

ROLAND STEINACHER, Who is the Barbarian? Considerations on the Vandal Royal Title

GERALD KRUZTLER, Die Wahrnehmung der römischen Völker in der marcomannischezeitlichen Historiographie

FLAVIA DE RUBES, Scritture nazionali e aree culturali: le epigrafi tra forze, contenuti e trasmissioni testuali in Italia e nell’Europa altomedievale
Viscom@oeaw.ac.at  
https://viscom.ac.at

Visions of Community: Publications of the Special Research Programme

HISTORIOGRAPHY & Identity. Vol. 3
The Emergence of New Peoples and Politics, c. 1000-1300
Walter Pohl, Francesco Borri (Eds.)
Brepols, Turnhout
Expected Publication Date: 2019

This volume deals with some of the earliest histories narrating the past of the new polities that had emerged after 1000 in Northern, East Central and Eastern Europe, as well as in the Adriatic regions. They have often been understood as ‘national histories’, but a closer look brings out the differences in their aims and construction. One question addressed here is to what extent these historians built on models of identification developed in earlier historiography. The volume provides an overview of several fundamental texts in which identities in the new Christian kingdoms were negotiated, and of recent research on these texts.

Table of Contents

Walter Pohl, Introduction: Historiography and Identity

1. Jan Woód, Adam of Bremen’s Use of Earlier History

2. Sverre Bagge, National Identity in Scandinavian Chronicles (Saxo and Snorri)

3. Rosie Bontë, Orkney, Òtfrí Tryggvason, and the Conversion to Christianity

4. Stefan Donecker/Peter Fraundorfer, Biblical Topoi and the Shaping of Ethnic Categories in the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia

5. Jan Klápště, Heliodor of Bosau and Our Reading of His Chronica Slavorum


7. Jacek Banスキewicz, By the Crown of my Empire! The Things I Behold are Greater than I had Been Led to Believe! The Narrative Pattern Sheba visits Salomon in Medieval Narratives (Gallus’s Chronicle, Chronicon Salernitanum and Pèlerinage de charlemagne)

8. David Kalhou, Tunc dux extendens manum suam super sacram tumbam sic orsus est ad populum turbam... Towards the communication in the Chronicle of Cosmas and his contemporaries

9. Jan Hasil, A Discourse of Cosmas Pragensis: a Nodal Point of the Czech Historical Identity

10. Max Diesenberger, The Steppeiders as a Mirror: The Hungarians as an Exegetical Challenge in the Post-Carolingian World

11. Daniel Bägi, Us and Them: The Description of Foreigners and Indigenous in Master P’s and Simon of Kéza’s Gesta Hungarorum

12. Lászlo Veszprémy, Christian Identity versus Heathendom: Hungarian Chronicles facing with the Pagan/Nomadic Past and Present

13. Neven Budak, Narratives of Thomas of Split and Dujam de Cranchis of Brad

14. Peter Stih, Grado as Aquileia Nova and Split as Salona Nova? Local Historiography and Local Identity

15. Francesco Borri, Through Turbid Water: John the Deacon’s Search for the Venetian Origins


17. Donald Ostrovsky, The Debate over Authorship of the Rus’ Primary Chronicle: Compilations, Redactions, and Urtexts


The Avars
A Steppe Empire in Central Europe, 567-822
Walter Pohl
Ithaca: Cornell University Press 2018
http://www.cornellpress.cornell.edu/book/?GCOI=80140103214450

The Avars arrived in Europe from the Central Asian steppes in the mid-sixth-century CE and dominated much of Central and Eastern Europe for almost 250 years. Fierce warriors and canny power brokers, the Avars were more influential and durable than Attila’s Huns, yet have remained hidden in history. Walter Pohl’s epic narrative, translated into English for the first time, restores them to their rightful place in the story of early medieval Europe.

The Avars offers a comprehensive overview of their history, tracing the Avars from the construction of their steppe empire in the center of Europe; their wars and alliances with the Byzantines, Slavs, Lombards, and others; their apex as the first so-called barbarian power to besiege Constantinople (in 626); to their fall under the Frankish armies of Charlemagne and subsequent disappearance as a distinct cultural group. Pohl uncovers the secrets of their society, synthesizing the rich archaeological record recovered from more than 60,000 graves of the period, as well as accounts of the Avars by Byzantine and other chroniclers.

In recovering the story of the fascinating encounter between Eurasian nomads who established an empire in the heart of Europe and the post-Roman Christian cultures of Europe, this book provides a new perspective on the origins of medieval Europe itself.

Table of Contents

1. Approaching the Avars
   1.1. Marginal Europeans?
   1.2. Sources and Prejudices
   1.3. Steppe Research and its Methodological Problems

2. The Avar Migration
   2.1. Constantinople 556
   2.2. The Empire and the Steppe Peoples
   2.3. Fugitives from the East
   2.4. Avars or Pseudo-Avars?
   2.5. The Advance of the Avars
   2.6. Byzantium and the Turks
   2.7. The Discovery of the Avars
   2.8. Decisive Years
   2.9. 565: A Turning Point

3. The New Power, 567–90
   3.1. The First Attack on Sirmium
   3.2. Between Peace and War
   3.3. Balkan’s Alliance with Byzantium
   3.4. The Conquest of Sirmium
   3.5. 583/4: Avar Raids and Symbolic Politics
   3.6. 585/86: Slavic Raids and the Books of Babylon
   3.7. 587: The War in Thrace
   3.8. The Carpathian Basin in the Later Sixth Century: The Archaeological Evidence
   3.9. Circles around Koszťely

4. Avars and Slavs
   4.1. Slavs before the Avars: Perceptions and Origins
   4.2. The Sarm and the Barbarians
   4.3. Slavic Campaigns and Memories of Avars on the Greek Peninsula
   4.4. The Oder and His Slavs
   4.5. Avar Rule and Slavic Expansion
   4.6. Becoming Slavic

5. The Balkan Wars of Maurice, 591–602
   5.1. Maurice’s Campaign and the Dale of the Wars
   5.2. The Avars on the Offensive
   5.3. 593: Attacks on the Slavs North of the Danube
   5.4. 594: The Limits of the Slavic War
   5.5. 595: The Illyrian War
   5.6. The Avars’ Western Policy and the Slavs
   5.7. 598: Only the Peace of Car Pelagius can Stop the Avars
   5.8. 599: The Khaγanos under Pressure
   5.9. 600–602: The End of Imperial Politics on the Danube

6. Life and Organization in the Avar Empire
   6.1. Nomads, Warriors, Steppe Peoples
   6.2. Their Life Is War
   6.3. The Early Avar Khaganate
   6.4. The Avars and Byzantium
   6.5. Avar Gold: Proclivity, Gifts, Representation
   6.6. Logades and Warriors
   6.7. Forms of Production and Distribution
   6.8. Exchanges and Their Limits
   6.9. Religion and Ritual
   6.10. The Development of Identities in the Avar Empire

7. The Seventh Century
   7.1. Consolidation and New Offensives
   7.2. The Surprise Attack on the Emperor
   7.3. 826: The Siege of Constantinople
   7.4. Sarno
   7.5. Central Migrations?
   7.6. Accossos and Kurial
   7.7. Kuser and Asparagh
   7.8. Continuity and Cultural Change

8. The Century of the Griffin
   8.1. Ways of Life in Archaeological Evidence
   8.2. The Hierarchy of the Late Avar State
   8.3. Lines, Cartus: The Avars and the West
   8.4. The Collapse of Avar Power
   8.5. Why Did the Avars Disappear?
   8.6. Conclusion
This volume studies the social function of historiography in the Justinianic age and the post-Roman kingdoms of the West. The papers explore how writers in Constantinople and in the various kingdoms from Italy to Britain adopted the late antique historiographical traditions and adapted them in response to the new needs and challenges created by the transformation of the political and social order. What was the significance of their choices between different models (or their creation of new ones) for their ‘vision of community’? The volume provides a representative analysis of the historiographical resources of ethnic, political, and religious identifications created in the various Western kingdoms. In doing so, it seeks to understand the extant works as part of a once much wider and more polyphonic historiographical debate.

**Table of Contents**

HELMUT REIMITZ, Historiography and Identity in the Late Antique and Early Medieval West: An Introduction  
WALTER POHL, Debating Ethnicity in Post-Roman Historiography  
MAYA MASKARINEC, Clinging to Empire in Jordanes’ Romana  
RANDOLPH FORD, From Scythian, to Getan, to Goth: The Getica of Jordanes and the Classical Ethnographic Tradition  
PHILIPP DÖRLER, Two Tales – Two Peoples? Goths and Romans in Jordanes’ Works  
THOMAS CHARLES-EDWARDS, Celtic Britain and Ireland: An Arena for Historical Debate  
HELMUT REIMITZ, Genre and Identity in Merovingian Historiography  
ANDREAS FISCHER, The Appropriation of History: The Austrasians, Gregory of Tours, and Fredegar  
JAMIE WOOD / VICTORIA LEONARD, History-Writing and Education in Late Antique and Early Medieval Iberia  
MOLLY LESTER, The Ties that Bind: Diagnosing Social Crisis in Julian of Toledo’s Historia Wandalorum  
IAN WOOD, Bede’s Historia ecclesiastica and Anglian Northumbria  
WALTER POHL, Historical Writing in the Lombard Kingdom: from Secundus to Paul the Deacon
The authors in this volume have studied the ever-changing perceptions of the end of Time and the apocalypse from Late Antiquity until the early 21st century. Long associated with specifically biblical themes which were first shaped by the Book of Revelation in the New Testament, the main goal of the contributors has been to trace the social dynamics and discursive strategies behind the different visions of the end times in various eras. Such descriptions and the world-views they exemplified were, after all, important factors in the formation of identities and communities. Ranging from modern times to the early modern, medieval and late antique periods, the socio-cultural approaches pioneered by the contributors take into account questions of medial and representational strategies, as well as the identities and cosmologies that gave rise to the depictions under scrutiny.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**CHRISTIAN ZOLLES / MARTIN ZOLLES / VERONIKA WIESER**, Einleitung: Auf den Spuren abendländischer Apokalyptik

**YVONNE SHERWOOD**, ‘Napalm falling like Prostitutes’: Occidental Apocalypse as Managed Visibility

**ROBERT WENINGER**, Letzte Menschen und der Tod Gottes: Eine philosophische und literarische Genealogie

**EVA HORN**, Die romantische Verdunklung: Weltuntergänge und die Geburt des letzten Menschen um 1800

**CHRISTIAN ZOLLES**, Die symbolische Macht der Apokalypse: Zu den Grenzen moderner Identität

**VALENTIN RAUER**, Apokalyptische Verunsicherung: Zur Bedrohlichkeit des Ununterscheidbaren

**FLORIAN SPRENGER**, Lob des Berührens: Zur phantasmatischen Dimension der Elektrizität und ihrer Medientheorien

**MARTIN ZOLLES**, Mediätät als Weltgericht: Zur Visualität inszenierter Katastrophenhaftigkeit und technischer Offenbarung

**JÖRG TREMPLER**, Katastrophen und Apokalypse im Film

**TOBIAS NANZ**, Bei Anruf: Apokalypse

**TILL GREITE**, Wörter End – Denstitutionalisierung und mediale Mobilisierung: Rolf Dieter Brinkmanns poetische Erkundungen um 1973

**FRANK HARTMANN**, Geräte-Eschatologie und postapokalyptische Zeit

**CHRISTIAN HOFFSTÄDT**, ‘Da von geht die Welt nicht unter ...’: Mediale Vermittlung von Katastrophen zwischen Fiktionalität und Faktikalität


**JUDITH SCHÖSSBÖCK**, Das bin doch (nicht) ich: Identität und personale Einzigartigkeit in postapokalyptischen Szenarien

**LEOPOLD SCHLÖNDORFF**, Die mögliche Welt des Anderen: Das Ende und der Andere in (post-)apokalyptischen Narrativen bei Arno Schmidt und Ferdinand Grautoff

**ROLAND INNERHOFER**, Mögliche Enden, endlose Möglichkeiten: Kritik und Krise des apokalyptischen Denkens bei Robert Musil

**WERNER MICHLER**, Träume der Vernunft: Utopien und Apokalypsen von der Spätaufklärung bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg

**META NIEDERKORN-BRUCK**, Apokalypse – Libertas vitae – Libertas vitae oder Gottes Wissen und des Menschen Tun in den Libri vitae von Martin Luther und in seinem Umkreis

**PAULINA CERMANOVA**, Figurae angelorum et bestiarum: Die hussitischen Identitätsstrategien an der Schwelle des apokalyptischen Zeitalters

**CATHERINE FEIK**, In Erwartung des Endes: Offenbarung und Weissagung bei Martin Luther und in seinem Umkreis

**ANJA KÜRBEIS**, Der Antichrist im Chorrock: Apokalyptik als Ordnungstheologie

**THEO PRONK**, A City of God: Augsburg during the Thirty Years’ War

**MARION STEINICKE**, Zeichen des Antichrist im Fernen Osten: Franziskanische Missionsberichte vom Ende der Welt

**DEBRA HIGGS STRICKLAND**, Saracens, Eschatological Prophecy and Later Medieval Art

**CLEMENS GANTNER**, Hoffnung in der Apokalypse? Die Ismaïliten in den älteren lateinischen Fassungen der Revelationes des Pseudo-Methodius

**KATHARINA ENDERLE**, Die Vita des Daniel Stylios im Kontext der Endzeiterwartungen um 500 n. Chr.

**JASON R. BERG**, ‘Breasts of the North’ and Other Apocalyptic Imagery in the Cosmographia of Aethicus Ister

**ELISABETH MÉGÉD**, Die Historisierung der Apokalypse oder von der globalen zur geschichtlichen Zeit der Kirche in lateinischen Apokalypsenkommentaren, von Tyconius bis Rupert von Deutz

**JAMES PALMER**, The Ordering of Time

**PETER DARBY**, Bede’s Time Shift of 703 in Context

**THOMAS E. KITCHEN**, Apocalyptic Perceptions of the Roman Empire in the Fifth Century A.D.

**VERONIKA WIESER**, Die Welchronik des Sulpicius Severus: Fragment der Sprache der Endzeit im ausgehenden 4. Jahrhundert

**RICHARD CORRADINI**, Augustines eschaton: Back to the Future

In Preparation:

**ETHNIC TERMINOLOGIES**

Walter Pohl, Cinzia Grifoni, Sophie Gruber (Eds.)

Brill 2020
ARTICLES


Gerda HEYDEMANN, The Orator as Exegete: Cassiodorus as a Reader of the Psalms, in: Janet Nelson, Damien Kempf (eds.), Reading the Bible in the Middle Ages (London: Bloomsbury Academic 2015) 19-42.


Walter POHL, Gerda HEYDEMANN, The Rhetoric of Election: 1 Peter 2.9 and the Franks, in: Rob Meens, Dorine van Espelo, Bram van den Hoven van Genderen, Janneke Raaijmakers, Irene Van


Giorgia VOCINO, Framing Ambrose in the Resources of the Past: The Late Antique Sources of the Carolingian Life of St Ambrose, in: Rosamond McKitterick, Clemens Gantner, Sven Meeder (eds.), The Resources of the Past in Early Medieval Europe (Cambridge: University Press 2015) 135-151.


DATABASE

GENS: Group Terminology and Ethnic Nomenclature: a Semantic Database (Latin Europe c. 400-1200), Content: Cinzia GRIFONI
https://www.oeaw.ac.at/imafo/genesis/
SOUTH ARABIA BETWEEN LATE ANTIQUITY
AND EARLY MODERNITY

BOOKS

SOUTHWEST ARABIA ACROSS HISTORY
Essays to the Memory of Walter Dostal
André Gingrich, Siegfried Haas (Eds.)
Sammlung Eduard Glaser
OAW Verlag, Wien 2015
https://verlag.oew.ac.at/southwest-arabia-across-history

Southwest Arabia across History honors the legacy of Walter Dostal as one of Continental Europe’s most eminent scholars in the fields of social and historical anthropology, by offering innovative contributions in the interdisciplinary fields of South Arabian studies. These texts are presented by experts in pre-Islamic epigraphy and archeology, regional geography and Islamic historical studies, as well as contemporary history and socio-cultural anthropology. They discuss central riddles and key issues in South Arabian studies, such as interrelations between texts and contexts, environment and economy, water management and law, conflict and mediation for peace, or tribalism and state constellations. Beyond its relevance for regional historical and contemporary expertise, this volume also represents a lively and fresh contribution to methods and practices of interdisciplinarity in the humanities and the social sciences.

TABLE OF CONTENTS
ANDRE GINGRICH / SIEGFRIED HAAS, Southwest Arabia across History: Introducing Insights from Current Research.
ROSWITHA STEIGNEGER, Walter Dostal and (An)cient South Arabia: Cultural and Social Anthropology and the ‘Ivy Tower’ of Regional Studies.
EIRIK HOVDEN, Birka and Baraka – Cistern and Blessing: Notes on Custom and Islamic Law Regarding Public Cisterns in Northern Yemen.
DANIEL MAHONEY, Cultural Heritage and Identity Politics in Early Medieval South Arabia.
JOHANN HEISS, Sab’ da Revisited.
MARIEKE BRANDT, Inhabiting Tribal Structures: Leadership Hierarchies in Tribal Upper Yemen.
ANDRE GINGRICH, Galactic Politics: Anthropological Insights for Understanding States in Yemen’s Pre-Ottoman Past.

TRIBES AND POLITICS IN YEMEN

A History of the Houthi Conflict
Marieke Brandt
London: Hurst/Oxford University Press 2017

WAQF IN ZAYDI YEMEN
Legal Theory, Codification, and Local Practice
Eirik Hovden
Leiden: Brill 2018

In Preparation:
Magdalena Moorthy-Kloss
SLAVES AT THE NAJAHID AND RASULID COURTS OF YEMEN
(412-553 AH/1021-1158 CE and 626-858 AH/1229-1454 CE)
Odile Kommer

ETHNONYME IM JEMEN DES 9. UND 10. JAHRHUNDERTS
U. Z. AUS SICHER DER HISTORISCHEN ANTHROPOLOGIE:
Eine Untersuchung anhand von al-Hamdānīs Hauptwerken
Sammlung Eduard Glaser, Wien: Verlag der DAW

ARTICLES


**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

I. Einleitung

I.2. Forschungsstand zum Wiener Handwerksordnungsbuch

I.3. Regionale Unterschiede der Zunft-Bezeichnungen und Definitionsversuch

II. Das Wiener Handwerk vom 13. Jahrhundert bis zum Jahre 1527

II.1. Die Entwicklung Wiens als Wirtschaftsplatz und des Wiener Handwerks bis zu Herzog Rudolf IV


II.3. Das Wiener Handwerk vom späten 14. Jahrhundert bis zur Handwerksordnung Ferdinands I. 1527

III. Das Wiener Handwerksordnungsbuch: Verwaltungsgeschichtlicher Kontext und Handschriftenbeschreibung

III.1. Verwaltungsschriftwesen des Wiener Rats

III.2. Allgemeines zur Geschichte der Handschrift

III.3. Aufbau und äußere Merkmale der Handschrift

III.4. Schreiber und Schrift

IV. Inhaltliche Aspekte

IV.1. Lehringe

IV.2. Gesellen und Gesellenschaften

IV.3. Meister

IV.4. Amts-, Bürger- und Treueide

IV.5. Weitere Ordnungen

V. Schlussbetrachtung

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The main research question addressed in this international comparative analysis of Károly Goda was how to interpret the socio-cultural and political role of late medieval Eucharistic marches in the context of four, Central European, both residential and capital urban communities. One might emphasize in the case of Vienna that concerning the form of Eucharistic processions the regulations and orders of marches always involved acts of power from external authorities imposing their political, social and cultural agenda on non-individualized groups of people. Concerning the Czech cult of the Host, following the Luxemburg-era dynastic grandeur & gloire, in the bi-confessional context of the Prague Cities the strong Utraquist domination after the mid-1430s was later followed by religious modus vivendi during the Catholic Jagellonian dynasty. As Goda’s monograph revealed the Polish late medieval capital, Cracow demonstrated the key role of bishopric and later royal initiatives in establishing & maintaining the cult of Corpus Christi highlighting key political interests in Catholic forms. Finally, in the case of the Kingdom of Hungary in the city of Buda secular civic and royal intentions had by the 1420s inscribed their agendas into the religious cult. The form of the processional veneration of the Host was, among others, mobilised for unifying the Latin and Greek Christian churches, fighting against the Czech Hussite movement and facing the growing Islamic threat of the Ottoman Empire.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

I. Introduction

II. The Holy Roman Empire

III. Austria and the City of Vienna

III.1. Austrian Contexts

III.2. The Capital and Residential City of Vienna

IV. Bohemia and the Prague Cities

IV.1. Bohemian Contexts

IV.2. The Czech Capital Agglomeration

V. Poland and the Cracow Cities

V.1. Polish Contexts

V.2. The Polish Capital Agglomeration

VI. Hungary and the Capital Cities

VI.1. Hungarian Contexts

VI.2. The Hungarian Capital Agglomeration

VII. Conclusions

VIII. Appendices

IX. Bibliography
In his monograph Károly Goda put under intensive and curious academic scrutiny the uniqueness of the institutional local politics and elite formation patterns of the town of Sopron/Ödenburg in the contexts of the medieval and Renaissance Holy Roman Empire and the Kingdom of Hungary. As his study surprisingly revealed the structure of internal and successive power relations showed an unprecedented variety of different patterns. The turn of the 15th – 16th centuries for example demonstrated a manifold pluralist world of local internal power relations. Finally, the local civic elite was almost always at least partially open to integrate successful local craftsmen and highly ambitious new-comers. The latter features provided Sopron/Ödenburg a special position in the urban elite-formation phenomena within the Carpathian basin, which at the local level of the Western-Hungarian town preceded, in a sense even prepared the economic and cultural success of the early 17th-century “golden era”.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

I. Introduction
   I.1. Key Research Problems and Academic Agenda
   I.2. A Tradition Revisited: Retrospect & Prospect
   I.3. Defining Main Goals and Methodical Foci

II. The Holy Roman Empire: Neighbour & Influencer
   II.1. Settings of Urbanisation and Legal Status
   II.2. Potentials of Civic Self-Governments
   II.3. Key Features of Leading Urban Groups
   II.4. Chances and Limits of Comparisons

III. The Hungarian Kingdom: Civic Governance & Leadership
   III.1. Potentials of Civic Self-Governments
   III.2. Key Features of Leading Urban Groups

IV. The Urban & Political Settings in Sopron/Ödenburg
   IV.1. Settings of Urbanisation and Legal Status
   IV.2. Potentials of Civic Self-Governments
   IV.3. Sources on Civic Governance und Leadership

V. Key Protagonists of the Local Civic Leadership
   V.1. Classic Frameworks of Interpretation: Families & Occupations
   V.2. Internal Structures & Power Dynamics of Local Leadership
   V.3. Featuring the Local Mighty: Networks, Taxing & Spatial Aspects

VI. Conclusion

VII. Sources & Literature

VIII. Appendices

---

**VISUALIZING THE MIGHTY**

**Solemn Processions and Festive Entries in Central European Residential Capital Cities**

Károly Goda

Cambridge: CUP 2020

The key point of investigation in this research monograph on Vienna, Prague, Cracow, and Buda/Ofen addressed medieval festive lordly entries and Eucharistic marches in a comparative perspective. Using in the double interface contexts key variables such as source bias, participation patterns, solemn topographies and contents of staging, Károly Goda successfully (re)constructed an open-end, multi-vocal, comparative approach to festive continuity and change. As complex, hierarchical interfaces of ecclesiastical, urban & noble/courtly interactions, on the one hand, Corpus Christi processions in general (and esp. around 1500 in Vienna) were more negotiated-consensual forms of community building with mostly inclusive participation patterns. On the other hand, festive lordly entries remained hierarchically structured events, yet offering almost all-inclusive participatory options. Notwithstanding the Christian origins of both traditions, *adventus* in order to propagate lordly power offered a less sacred and thus socially more open vision of community (the lord as *pars pro toto* of a “proto-state”), successful even in the bi/multi-confessional contexts of the 15th & 16th centuries. As a summary, during the transitional autumn of the Middle Ages the Eucharistic processio became the key articulation form of co-ordinated, mostly exclusive, often belligerent confessional/religious visions of community, while the *adventus* announced with its form and content the advent of strongly hierarchical still highly inclusive (early) modern secular political rituals.
This book portrays a little-known phenomenon in Bohemian cultural and political history—the visual culture that grew up in the environment of Reformation churches in Bohemia from the time of the Hussites until the defeat of the Estates by the Habsburg coalition at White Mountain in 1620. It provides the first comprehensive overview of a forgotten era of artistic production over a period of approximately two hundred years, when most of the population of Bohemia professed non-Catholic faiths.

During the 15th and 16th centuries a unique situation arose in Bohemia, with five main Christian denominations (Utraquists, Lutherans, the Unity of Brethren, Calvinists, and Catholics) gradually coming to function alongside each other, with a number of other religious groups also active. The main churches, which had a fundamental influence on political stability in the state, were the majority Utraquists and the minority Catholics. Yet the essays of this book establish that despite the particularities of the Bohemian situation, the religious trends of Bohemia were an integral part of the process of Reformation across Europe.

Featuring over fifty illustrations including manuscript illumination, panel painting, and architecture, the book also presents the surviving cultural products of the four non-Catholic Christian denominations, ranging from the more moderate to radical Reformation cultures. The book also analyses the attitudes of these denominations to religious representations, and illuminates their uses of visual media in religious and confessional communication. The book thus opens up both the Reformation culture of Bohemia and its artistic heritage to an international audience.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FRANTIŠEK ŠMAHEL, Foreword: Was There a Bohemian Reformation?

KATERINA HORNÍČKOVÁ / MICHAL ŠRONĚK, Visual Culture of the Bohemian Reformation

MARTIN NODL, The Hussites and the Bohemian Reformation

MILENA BARTLOVÁ, The Image as a Religious Issue

MILENA BARTLOVÁ, Hussite Iconoclasm

KATERINA HORNÍČKOVÁ, Images and Visual Culture in Bohemian Utraquist

KATERINA HORNÍČKOVÁ, Utraquist, Images, and Representation in the Bohemian Towns

DAVID R. HOOLEN, Liturgical Life during the Bohemian Reformation

PAVEL VLČEK, Bohemian Protestant Church Architecture

PETR HLAVAJEC, Lutheran Culture in Bohemia

MICHAL ŠRONĚK, The Unity of the Brethren and Images

JIRI JUST, Printed Books in the Bohemian Reformation

MICHAL ŠRONĚK, Calvinist Views on Religious Images in Bohemia

ONDŘEJ JAKUBEC, Ephemera in Bohemian Protestant Culture

MARTINA ŠAROVCOVÁ, Illuminated Musical Manuscripts in the Bohemian Reformation

TOMÁŠ MALÝ, The End of the Bohemian Reformation

FACES OF COMMUNITY IN CENTRAL EUROPE TOWNS

Images, Symbols, and Performances, 1400–1700

KATERINA HORNÍČKOVÁ (Ed.)

Rowman and Littlefield/Lexington Books Publication Date: September 2018


Concepts of visual communication provide an explanatory framework for discussing symbolic expressions of community in late medieval and early modern towns, including Reformation and Counter Reformation. This book examines the role of images and visual representation by concentrating on the varieties of symbolic communication in towns that made a range of relationships visual: the status and role of urban civic, professional, and religious communities and the relations between the town and its lord or powerful families and individuals. The geographical framework of this book is the region in the former Habsburg countries north of the Danube River embracing the region between western Bohemia and what is today eastern Slovakia, including the borderland towns of northern Austria. Two studies focus on specific local and occupational communities in the Prague towns, but most of the texts in this book focus on small towns by contemporary European standards in which many forms of urban topography, buildings, objects, and monuments survive, even though few written sources have been preserved. Accessing a wide range of literature in regional languages and German for English speakers, this collection describes typical urban landscapes in early modern Central Europe outside the well-known Central European urban centers and traditional areas of study.

The book is a relevant new contribution to medieval and early modern studies, not only covering an underappreciated geographical area but also addressing general questions about the history of rituals and performance as well as visual culture, communication, and identity discourses in late medieval and early modern urban space.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

KATERINA HORNÍČKOVÁ, Introduction: To Be Seen. The Visual Aspect in Urban Symbolic Communication

ELISABETH GRUBER, Towns in Neighbouring Regions, 1400–1700: Austria, Bohemia, Moravia, and the Carpathian Basin

ROBERT ŠIMUNEK, The Bohemian Town as a Space for Symbolic Communication (1400–1600)

ELISABETH GRUBER, Representing bonum commune in Austrian Border-Region Towns: Seals, Fortifications, and Hospitals


TOMÁŠ BOROVSKÝ, Urban Commemorative Festivities as Representations and Visualizations of Town Order

KATERINA HORNÍČKOVÁ, Insiders’ Visions: Memory and Self-Representation in Bohemian Utraquist Towns

MICHAL ŠRONĚK, The Representation Practices of the Prague Painters’ Guild in the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period

ZDENKA MICHÁLOVÁ, The Self-Presentation of Burghers in Moravian Seigniorial Towns: Telč and Slavonice in the Second Half of the 16th Century

JOSEF HRDLUČKA, Public Expressions of Religious Transformation in Moravian Towns (1550–1618)

JANA DOKTOROVÁ, Reading the Prague Lesser Town Square: Topography of Change in a Residential City

ONDŘEJ JAKUBEC, Ephemera in the Moravian Royal Cities around 1600 and their Confessional Imagination

MICHAL ŠRONĚK, The Jesuits and their Urban Visual Presence in the Bohemian Lands

KATERINA PRAŽÁKOVÁ, Rewriting Memory: Remodelling Churches in 17th-Century Freistadt

KATALIN SZENDÉ, Post-Face(s): On the Relationship of Visual Culture and Urbanity in Late Medieval and Early Modern Central Europe
The religious ethos of late medieval people involved serious concern for the fate of their souls after death. Beyond the general strategies for reaching eternal life, several factors affected the means that community members selected to reach this spiritual end. The overall goal of this new study on the religious life of late medieval German-speaking Pressburg (Pozsony, today Bratislava) is to highlight what the testamentary ‘pro anima’ bequests reflect about the religious thinking of 15th- and early 16th-century Pressburg people and how their wills expressed religiosity in general. To provide a broader base for interpreting the wills, other types of sources and data from art history and archaeology were also incorporated. Another, indirect, objective is to offer a tool for comparison with other European urban communities. Since wills are universal sources and they have been widely researched by Western scholars from the point of view of religiosity in general, they represent excellent vehicles for comparing different regions in medieval Europe. By revealing similarities and dissimilarities, Pressburg can be firmly situated on the wider European religious landscape, and through it a window can also be opened on the piety and church life of the medieval Kingdom of Hungary.


Judit MAJOROSSY, The Fate and Use of Medieval Confraternities in the Kingdom of Hungary during the Age of Reformation, in: E. Lobenwein et al. (eds.), Bruderschaften als multifunktionale Dienstleister der Frühen Neuzeit in Zentraleuropa (Vienna: Böhlau 2018) 441-475.


DATABASE

Magnum Legendarium Austriacum – MLA
Content: research focus „Hagiography and monastic networks“ (Christina LUTTER, Diarmuid Ó RIAIN)
http://mla.oeaw.ac.at/
Il volume analizza la dimensione comunitaria di Spalato nel pieno Quattrocento (1420-1479), secondo una struttura a spirale che, muovendo dal basso verso l’alto, si occupa nella sua prima parte delle strutture di base della società spalatina, dalla famiglia sino alle comunità di lavoro e alle confraternite di sostegno e di mutua cooperazione; nella seconda, delle comunità di diritto, in particolare i nobili, i popolani, i cittadini e i forestieri; nella terza del comune (e delle sue strutture), inteso quale momento primario di unificazione e sintesi in un ente politico-istituzionale legittimo, inclusivo e solidale delle tante communitas di cui la communitas spalatina era formata. Nella quarta e ultima parte del volume si sofferma, infine, sulla forza e la pervasività delle relazioni intercomunitarie, delle reti informali e dei legami alternativi di solidarietà, al fine di evidenziare il grado di commistione e vischiosità delle strutture di afferenza e identificazione, anche in una società all’apparenza così severamente strutturata in termini di appartenenze comunitarie come quella di Spalato del pieno Quattrocento.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| 1. L’acquisizione di Spalato nel Commonwealth veneziano |
| 2. L’angolo di osservazione: le comunità |
| 3. Le fonti |
| 4. Struttura del volume |

Le comunità di base

1. La famiglia
2. La fraterna
3. La societas familiare ad unum panem et vinum
4. Comunità di lavoro
5. Comunità di sostegno
6. Nobili
7. Popolani
8. Cittadini e forestieri

La comunità e il comune

9. Ale radici dell’appartenenza comunitaria: il comune
10. Il conforto della giustizia comunitaria
11. La confidenza nella giustizia di apparato: il sistema degli appelli
12. Legami comunitari e spazi urbani

Un sistema aperto: appartenenze plurime e sovrapposizioni

13. Le comunità trasversali
14. Le comunità emozionali

Epilogo

1. Lo scollamento istituzionale
2. L’ossessione turca
Il volume tratta la dimensione comunitaria dello Stato e della società veneziana, ristrutturando le strutture, i progetti e le prassi della vita comunitaria nel Commonwealth marcianno.

Numerosi specialisti, pertanto, analizzano la dimensione sia giuridica che socio-culturale della vasta gamma di comunità insistenti nello spazio veneziano, da quelle politiche a quelle professionali (corporazioni), da quelle religiose e caritative (comunità monastico-conventuali e confraternite) a quelle su base etnica e della provenienza (scuole nazionali). Il filo conduttore che lega questi aspetti è quanto le comunità abbiano contribuito a strutturare e a stabilizzare il dominio e l’architettura sociale dello Stato veneziano e viceversa. L’approccio è necessariamente pluridisciplinare, visto che da tempo le dimensioni testuali e visuali della vita comunitaria sono oggetto di crescenti attenzioni da parte di diversi settori della ricerca. Alcune questioni chiave riguardano l’uso delle strutture comunitarie da parte dello Stato, al fine di creare una comunità sovra-territoriale con caratteri comuni (in termini di simboli, prassi e rituali, cerimonie e visualizzazione del potere), l’impatto dello sovraincontinentale con caratteri comuni (in termini di simboli, prassi e cerimonie) e viceversa. L’approccio è necessariamente pluridisciplinare.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

OLIVER JENS SCHMITT, Le comunità nello Stato e la società veneziana nel periodo classico: Prolusione.

GIAN MARIA VARANINI, Studi sulle ‘comunità’ nel tardo medioevo: apunti per un bilancio storico-geografico sull’area italiana (XX sec.).

EGIDIO IVETIC, Le comunità nello Stato da Mar adriatico nel secolo XIX.

LUCIANO PEZZOLO, Storia e storiografia delle comunità rurali venete in età moderna.

ALESSANDRA RIZZI, Essere comunità nelle istituzioni ai rettori veneziani in Istria e Dalmazia (secoli XIII-XV).

ERMANNO ORLANDO, Strutture di interazione di una comunità urbana: Spalato nel XV secolo.

GERHARD ORTALLI, Una comunità in terra islamica: la colonia veneziana di Tunisi e la dinastia dei Marciano.

FABIAN KÜMMELE, Herdsmen as a Socio-Professional community in Late Medieval Dalmatia.


PHILIPPE BRAUNSTEIN, Les Allemands à Venise à la fin du Moyen Age.

ANDREA ZANNINI, Le comunità straniere a Venezia e le dinamiche di inclusione ed esclusione in città.

REBECCA MÜLLER, La corporazione dei pittori a Venezia nel Quattrocento: Costrizioni e libertà d’azione in una comunità professionale.

VALENTINA SAPENZA, L’arte dei pittori a Venezia tra Quattro e Cinquecento: una comunità? Alla ricerca di un’identità tra pratiche di mestiere e apprendistato.

MARTIN GAIR, Aspirazioni accademiche nella comunità artistica veneziana del Cinquecento?

GIANNARDO GUIDARELLI, Una comunità benedettina e l’architettura monastica: il caso dell’abbazia di Praglia.

MARTINA FRANK, Casini e ridottini veneziani tra Sei e Settecento: per quale comunità?

**KORČULA SOUS LA DOMINATION DE VENISE AU XVIe SIÈCLE**

Pouvoir, économie et vie quotidienne dans une île dalmate au Moyen Âge tardif

Oliver Schmitt

Paris: Publications du Collège de France 2010

http://www.lcspu.fr/livre/?GCOI=27050100658380

En 1420, l’île de Korcula sur la côte dalmate (aujourd’hui en Croatie) passe sous l’administration de Venise. Ses archives d’une richesse exceptionnelle permettent de brosser le tableau «total» d’une petite société vivant en bordure de l’empire maritime vénitien au xve siècle, face à Raguse (Dubrovnik), la rivale: comment ce microcosme de paysans et de bergers, de pêcheurs et de marins commerçants, de patriciens de la ville et de populaces de la campagne a-t-il été transformé par son insertion dans l’espace économique et politique de la grande puissance médiévale?

Dans ces trois conférences données au Collège de France en 2010, Oliver Jens Schmitt, professeur à l’université de Vienne, historien des Balkans, croise la micro-histoire avec la grande. On y apprend comment les familles patriciennes font fortune dans la contrebande, vitale pour les habitants d’une île en manque permanent de blé. À travers les procès-verbaux des gardes champêtres et les registres du port, on entre dans tous les détails de la vie quotidienne de l’île, avec ses histoires de lavandières et de capi- taines de navire, de moutons volés sur les plages et de forêts incendiées. Et l’on en vient à comprendre qu’entre la toute-puissante Venise, uniquement représentée par un gouverneur qui ignore la langue locale, et ce petit monde de paysans et de marins lui-même profondément divisé, c’est tout un jeu de négociations permanent qui règle la vie de l’île et de ses habitants.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

I. Les hommes et le pouvoir

Introduction

Le cadre politique et constitutionnel de la domination vénitienne

Un roman politique: Dragacig, Franuša et le gouverneur

Venise face aux conflits entre patriciens et populaces

Comment s’exerçait le gouvernement vénitien outre-mer

II. La terre

La terre, ses propriétaires et le cadre juridique de l’exploitation agricole

La terre et ses produits: blé, orge, vigne, oliviers, figues, amandes

De la fiscalité sur Korcula : les forêts et la production de poix

Les hommes et les animaux : le bétail, les ânes et les chevaux, les chiens, les loups

Riches et pauvres dans la campagne curzolaine

III. La mer

Les liens et la mer

Le cabotage et la navigation en Adriatique

La position de Korcula dans le système commercial vénitien et les routes commerciales

L’ampleur de la contrebande et sa fonction

Ce que nous apprennent les registres du port de Korcula

Sources complémentaires sur le commerce corculain
è stato un rapporto particolarmente stretto quello che per oltre un millennio ha legato la Repubblica di Venezia e la Dalmazia. Un rapporto che, proprio a causa della particolare vicinanza, fu segnato ripetutamente anche da tensioni. Fu la caduta della Serenissima e il sorgere nazionalismo a trasformare la Dalmazia da un territorio di complessa simbiosi culturale in un'area di conflitti nazionali e contrapposizione etnica.

Le modificazioni nel rapporto tra Venezia e la Dalmazia si riflettono particolarmente anche nella storiografia. Proprio negli ultimi anni si è verificato però un forte cambiamento: il dialogo tra storici croati e italiani si è intensificato e sono stati resi accessibili nuovi filoni di ricerca, nei quali si stanno impegnando alcuni dei massimi esperti croati e italiani che intendono mettere in luce questioni di fondamentale importanza della storia della Dalmazia sotto il dominio veneziano (dal Quattrocento al Settecento).

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Uwe Israel / Oliver Jens Schmitt**, Premessa

**Ermanno Orlando**, Politica del diritto, amministrazione, giustizia: Venezia e la Dalmazia nel basso medioevo

**Tomislav Raukar**, La Dalmazia e Venezia nel basso medioevo

**Oliver Jens Schmitt**, Storie d’amore, storie di potere: la tormentata integrazione dell’isola di Curzola nello Stato da mar in una prospettiva microstorica

**Francesco Bettarini**, Il notariato dalmata e la ‘Santa Intrada’

**Josip Vranđečić**, La Dalmazia nell’età moderna: l’influsso della ‘rivoluzione militare’ sulla società dalmata

---

**In Preparation**

Fabian Kümmeler

**Ländliche Gemeinschaften im Venezianischen Dalmatien im Spätmitelalter**

Lebenswelten und Gemeinschaftsvorstellungen auf Korčula (1420-1499)


Oliver Jens Schmitt

**Südosteuropa und die Adria im Späten Mitelalter**

ed. by Victor Spinei


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**The Ottoman Conquest of the Balkans**

Oliver Jens Schmitt (Ed.)

Austrian Academy of Sciences Press

Wien 2016

https://www.austriaca.at/7890-3inhalt?frames=yes

The Ottoman conquest of the Balkans constitutes a major change in European history. Scholarship on the topic is extensive, yet the evidence produced by decades of research is very scattered and lacking comprehensive synthesis, not to mention consensual interpretation. Although major political and military milestones seem to have been investigated thoroughly, there is a notable absence of more theoretical and interpretative approaches that overdraft the entire phenomenon rather than merely individual aspects. Scholars have hitherto addressed the topic from various perspectives and employing a wide range of methods, but Byzantine studies, Ottoman studies, Eastern Mediterranean studies and national historiographies in the Balkan countries have yet to establish either a coherent collaboration or a consistent model of interpretation. This volume therefore rather aims at opening and structuring a new heuristic approach and at coordinating a field of studies that is of crucial importance for understanding change in European history.

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Oliver Jens Schmitt**, Introduction: The Ottoman Conquest of the Balkans. Research Questions and Interpretations

**Maurus Reinowski**, Conquests Compared: The Ottoman Expansion in the Balkans and the Mashreq in an Islamicate Context

**Toni Filippović**, Before and After the Battle of Maritsa (1371): The Significance of the Non-Ottoman Factors in the Ottoman Conquest of the Balkans

**Mariya Kiprovskia**, Ferocious Invasion or Smooth Incorporation? Integrating the Established Balkan Military System into the Ottoman Army

**Grigor Boyko**, The Human Cost of Warfare: Population Loss during the Ottoman Conquest and the Demographic History of Bulgaria in the Late Middle Ages and Early Modern Era

**Tuana Krstić**, New Directions in the Study of Conversion to Islam in Ottoman Rumelia between the 14th and the 17th Centuries: Reconsidering Methods, Theories and Terminology

**Andrei Pipidi**, Taking Possession of Wallachia: Facts and Interpretations

**Stefan S. Groove / Maria Magdalena Szekely**, Old Questions, Old Clichés – New Approaches, New Results? The Case of Moldavia

**Dušan Lovrenović**, The Ottoman Conquest of Bosnia in 1463 as Interpreted by Bosnian Franciscan Chroniclers and Historiographers (A Historic(al) Event With Political and Psychological Ramifications That Are Still Present Today)

**Ovidiu Cristea**, Venice Confronting the Ottoman Empire: A Struggle for Survival (14th–16th Centuries)

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**Tomislav Raukar**, La Dalmazia e Venezia nel basso medioevo

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**Francesco Bettarini**, Il notariato dalmata e la ‘Santa Intrada’

**Josip Vranđečić**, La Dalmazia nell’età moderna: l’influsso della ‘rivoluzione militare’ sulla società dalmata

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Uwe Israel / Oliver Jens Schmitt**, Premessa

**Ermanno Orlando**, Politica del diritto, amministrazione, giustizia: Venezia e la Dalmazia nel basso medioevo

**Tomislav Raukar**, La Dalmazia e Venezia nel basso medioevo

**Oliver Jens Schmitt**, Storie d’amore, storie di potere: la tormentata integrazione dell’isola di Curzola nello Stato da mar in una prospettiva microstorica

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### TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Oliver Jens Schmitt**, Introduction: The Ottoman Conquest of the Balkans. Research Questions and Interpretations

**Maurus Reinowski**, Conquests Compared: The Ottoman Expansion in the Balkans and the Mashreq in an Islamicate Context

**Toni Filippović**, Before and After the Battle of Maritsa (1371): The Significance of the Non-Ottoman Factors in the Ottoman Conquest of the Balkans

**Mariya Kiprovskia**, Ferocious Invasion or Smooth Incorporation? Integrating the Established Balkan Military System into the Ottoman Army

**Grigor Boyko**, The Human Cost of Warfare: Population Loss during the Ottoman Conquest and the Demographic History of Bulgaria in the Late Middle Ages and Early Modern Era

**Tuana Krstić**, New Directions in the Study of Conversion to Islam in Ottoman Rumelia between the 14th and the 17th Centuries: Reconsidering Methods, Theories and Terminology

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**Ovidiu Cristea**, Venice Confronting the Ottoman Empire: A Struggle for Survival (14th–16th Centuries)
ARTICLES

Fabian KÜMMELER, The Others from Within: Herders between Rural and Urban Communities and Venetian Governance on Korčula (15th Century), in: Hans-Werner Goetz, Ian N. Wood (eds.), Otherness in the Middle Ages (Turnhout: Brepols 2019).


Ermanno ORLANDO, Dalmatians and Slavs in Venice in the Late Middle Ages: Between Integration and Assimilation, in: Irena Benyovski Latin, Zrinka Pešorda Vardić (eds.), Towns and Cities of the Croatian Middle Ages: The City and the Newcomers (Zagreb: Croatian Institute of History 2019).


Oliver Jens SCHMITT, Micro-History and Lebenswelten as Approaches to Late Medieval Dalmatian History: a Case Study of Korčula, in: Srđan rudić (ed.), Spomenica akademika Sime Čirkovića (Belgrade: Institute of History 2011) 137-158.

Starting with the middle of the first millennium South Asia saw the emergence and rise of Tantrism within all major religious traditions, a development that resulted in the production of a rich textual corpus expounding the ritual and philosophical systems of Śaivism, the Vaiṣṇava Pāñcarātra, the Buddhist mantrayāna, and Jaina Tantra. Despite the fact that tantric traditions grew to become such an integral part of the religious landscape of early medieval South, South-East and East Asia, the social reality of how these initiatory groups were organized on the ground and concretely interfaced with the wider community of non-initiates or with competing traditions during this period is still little understood. This is partly due to the fact that the surviving tantric textual sources are prescriptive in nature, propagating an idealistic vision of their position in society and rarely addressing questions of social relevance. This volume aims to overcome this methodological challenge and traces indicators that inadvertently provide some insights into socio-religious history of the emergence and institutionalization of these traditions in different literary genres, including tantric scriptures, ritual manuals, philosophical treatises and commentaries as well as non-tantric sources that contain representations of tantric communities such as the Purânas. In addition, some contributions complement text-based approaches with field studies and art historical analyses. The themes of the volume include the development of tantric rituals and symbols in relation to the political sphere, the domain of social ritual as an indicator of the various degrees tantric communities were socially integrated at a given place or time, specific points of interface between initiatory and lay communities, and the modalities of the construction of broad as well as specific ‘confessional’ tantric identities.
LIBERATING THE LIBERATED  
Early Śaiva Tantric Death Rites

Nina Mirnig
Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press 2019
https://viscom.ac.at
viscom@oeaw.ac.at

This volume examines the formation and development of Śaiva tantric funerary practices (antyeṣṭi) and rituals of post-mortem ancestor worship (śrāddha) as preserved in the earliest extant strata of textual sources. These tantric scriptures and ritual manuals of the Śaiva Siddhānta cover a period from about the 5th to the 12th century CE. A close analysis of individual texts shows how the incorporation of death rites into the tantric repertoire was directly linked to the tradition’s development from one focused on private worship and limited to ascetics living outside society to a dominant religion throughout the Indic world. A focal point of the study is how, in this process, Śaiva ritual specialists catered to initiates who were established in the brahmanical householder society, with their death rites essentially coming to serve as the model for Śaiva equivalents. To make these rites more meaningful in terms of Śaiva doctrine, cremation and post-mortem ancestor worship were redefined as a means for liberating the deceased person’s soul, this through its funerary initiation and subsequent worship in manifestations of increasingly potent forms of Śiva.

The book first introduces the socio-historical context of early Śaivism, and then in five chapters traces the development of Śaiva funerary rites in the available text sources, examining also the extent to which Śaiva propagators were willing to tolerate doctrinal compromises to be able to include a wider clientele. The appendices contain editions and annotated translations of the passages on cremation and post-mortem ancestor worship from the pre-9th century tantric scriptures Svāyambhuvasūtrasaṃgraha 22.9–20, Sarvajñānottara 12 and 13, and Kiraṇa 60 and 61, as well as the chapters on cremation and post-mortem ancestor worship in the 12th-century South-Indian ritual manual Jñānaratnāvalī.

TABLE OF CONTENTS
Introduction: On Śaiva Tantric Death Rites in the Early Medieval Religious Context
1. Preliminary remarks
2. Śaiva communities in the early medieval period
3. The early Siddhānta literature under consideration
Chapter 1: Doctrinal and Structural Premises for Śaiva Tantric Funerary Practices
1. The conundrum of Śaiva death rites: Liberating the already liberated
2. Śaiva funerary rites: A tantric upgrade of the brahmanical model
3. Theoretical problems in terms of Śaiva doctrines
4. Conclusion: Ascetic values in the householder context
Chapter 2: The Emergence and Formation of Śaiva antyeṣṭi in the Earliest Extant Śaiva Siddhānta Scriptures
1. Preliminary remarks: Three stages in the development of Śaiva funerary rites
2. The Gukhyassūtra: A brief reference to antyeṣṭi in the last book of the Nīlasvāsatasattvasaṃhitā
3. The Svāmbhuvasūtrasaṃgraha: Simple cremation
4. The Sarvajñānottaraśāstra: An intermediary stage towards initiatory cremation
5. Full initiatory cremation: the Sarvajñānottara, Kiraṇatantra and Dīkṣottara
6. Burial in the Siddhāntika scripture Mataṅgapārameśvara: Connections with the Atilmārga
7. Conclusion: Gradual increase of doctrinal justification
Chapter 3: Śaiva Cremation in Early Saiddhāntika Ritual Manuals
1. Introduction
2. Brahmāśambhu’s Naimittikakriyānusandhāna
3. The Somasambhupaddhati
4. The Nāṭarājapaddhati
5. The Kiraṇārāmatāvatā
6. The Kriyākramadyotikā
Chapter 4: The Cremation Ritual
1. Preliminary remarks
2. The officiant and other people involved in death rituals
3. Ritual procedures: An outline
4. Death pollution
5. Disposal of property
Chapter 5: Ancestor Worship in Early Śaiva Siddhānta
1. Introduction
2. Śrāddha in its original brahmanical context
3. Rationalizing śrāddha in Śaiva tantric terms
4. Śaiva śrāddha: On the ritual procedure
5. Beyond the initiate community: The Kiraṇa’s rudraśrāddha and laukikāśrāddha
6. Conclusion

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**CONTACT**

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Walter Pohl
University of Vienna
Department of History
Universitätsring 1
A-1010 Vienna

E-mail: walter.pohl@univie.ac.at

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Andre Gingrich
Austrian Academy of Sciences
Institute for Social Anthropology
Hollandstraße 11-13
A-1020 Vienna

E-mail: andre.gingrich@oeaw.ac.at

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SFB Project VISCOM
Universitätsring 1
1010 Vienna

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