
Tears, Sighs, and Laughter – Medieval Studies
A Marcus Wallenberg Symposium
(6-9 mars 2014)

PROGRAMME AND ABSTRACTS

Tears, Sighs, and Laughter – Medieval Studies

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Thursday, March 6

Venue: Kungl. Vitterhetsakademien, Villagatan 3, Stockholm

08.30-09.00 Registration

Session 1 Chair: *Gunnel Engwall*

09.00-09.15 Opening

09.15-10.15 Piroska Nagy: *Medieval Emotions and Historical Change. Some unexpected uses of spiritual texts*

10.15-10.45 Coffee

10.45-11.15 Kurt Villads-Jensen: *Crying Crusaders: Pleasure and Pain among the Infidels*

11.15-11.45 Maria Husabø Oen: *Seeing and Feeling in Late Medieval Visionary Culture: Emotional Expressions as Representations of Visions*

11.45-12.15 Kim Bergqvist: *Tears of Weakness, Tears of Love: Kings as Sons and Fathers in Medieval Spanish Prose*

12.15-13.30 Lunch at *Enoteca*, Karlavägen 28

Session 2 Chair: *Erika Kihlman*

13.30-14.30 Claire Sahlin: *The Exultation of Contemplation, Tears of Intercession, and Sorrow of Compassion: Affective Spirituality in the Revelations of St. Birgitta of Sweden*

14.30-15.00 Magnus Källström: *Sighs and Sorrows – but no Laughter? The Expressions of Emotions in Runic Inscriptions*

15.00-15.30 Coffee

15.30-16.00 Jan von Bonsdorff: *Strong Expressions, Drastic Gestures: An Attempt to Explain Narrative Late Medieval Art*

16.00-16.30 Mia Åkestam

16.30-16.40 Break

16.40-17.10 Sofia Lodén: *Weeping Ladies in Arthurian Romance*

17.10-17.40 Roger Andersson: *"Prelati simie similes sunt": Emotional Imagery in Sermons*

17.40-17.45 Conclusion

19.00 Reception at Linnégatan 52, Stockholm

Friday, March 7

Venue: Kungl. Vitterhetsakademien, Villagatan 3, Stockholm

Session 3 *Chair: Per Förnegård*

09.00-10.00 Jean-Claude Schmitt: *The Demons of Emotions*

10.00-10.30 Elisabeth Wåghäll Nivre: *A Dangerous Place to Be: Fearing City Life in Georg Wikram's Von guten und bösen Nachbarn (1556)*

10.30-11.00 Coffee

11.00-11.30 Martha Bayless: *Laughter, Fear, and the Social Context of Emotions*

11.30-12.00 Wojtek Jezierski: *Tears, Sighs and Slaughter. Expressions of Fear and Disgust in the Baltic Missionary Historiography (11th-13th centuries)*

12.00-12.30 Corinne Péneau: *The Law and the King's Heart. Political Emotions in the Chronicle of Erik*

12.30-13.45 Lunch at *Enoteca*, Karlavägen 28

Session 4 *Chair: Anders Cullhed*

13.45-14.45 Wim Verbaal: *Bernard's Smile and the Conversion of Laughter*

14.45-15.15 Carin Franzén: *Joy d'Amor as Discursive Practice*

15.15-15.45 Coffee

15.45-16.15 Thomas Ekenberg: *The Longing for Happiness: Virtue or Vice?*

16.15-16.45 Alexander André: *"Tempus flendi et tempus ridendi": Manifestations of Emotion in Medieval Biblical Commentary*

16.45-17.00 Break

17.00-17.30 Claes Gejrot: *True Emotion or Convention? Sorrow and Joy in the Vadstena Memorial Book*

17.30-17.40 Conclusion

19.00 Dinner at Vitterhetsakademien

Saturday, March 8

Venue: Riksarkivet

10.00 Bus departure from Mornington Hotel, Nybrogatan 53, Stockholm

Session 5

10.30-12.00 *Claes Gejrot, Henrik Klackenber* and *Sara Risberg* present the Collections of the National Archives

12.00-12.30 Concluding discussion: *Anders Cullhed*, moderator

12.30-14.00 Lunch at Riksarkivet

Sunday, March 9

Excursion to Uppsala

09.00 Bus departure from Mornington Hotel, Nybrogatan 53, Stockholm

10.30 Visit to the Härnevi Church outside Enköping

12.00 Lunch at Gyllene Brunnen, Fjärdhundra

14.15 Guided tour in Old Uppsala

15.30 Departure for Stockholm

Roger Andersson, Stockholm University
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***“Prelati simie similes sunt”*. Emotional imagery in sermons**

Abstract

Many kinds of emotions were experienced and expressed in connection with medieval preaching, either by the preacher himself in the pulpit or by the listening audience. We do not have any Swedish equivalent to some of the most emotional popular preachers from southern Europe, such as the famous Bernardino da Siena. But a large number of sermons in the archives remain unedited so there are excellent opportunities to make new discoveries. My talk will deal with a Vadstena preacher from the first half of the fifteenth century. This outspoken but as yet unidentified priest brother is known to always add a personal touch to his sermons and he never hesitates fiercely to blame the sins of the audience and the vices of the clergy. He meets us in the quality of both scribe and preacher, and his two major collections of mixed *de tempore* and *de sanctis* sermons are preserved in the manuscripts C 317 and C 389 in Uppsala University Library.

Preaching in the Order of St Birgitta involved the obligation for the priests to follow the ideals for religious instruction laid down in the Rule of the Order. It thus gave the sermonist a possibility to transmit in his own words the spirit and theological profile of his mother saint. One of the things that made Birgitta famous by her contemporaries and continues to arouse fascination in our own time is her merciless criticism of unrighteous priests, cardinals, and even popes. Our anonymous preacher held the Revelations in the highest possible esteem, and, as a consequence, one of the more salient features in his sermons is precisely his anticlericalism, an anticlericalism which is definitely more emotional and rhetorical than theoretical or academic. His views on unrighteousness are conveyed mainly through an extensive use of images, obviously at least in part meant to evoke a variety of emotions. Some of these images are taken from the Revelations while others seem to have been invented by the preacher himself. Rhetoric teaches us that pictorial language can preferably be used for emotional appeal, and I hope to be able to demonstrate in what ways this is achieved by our preacher.

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Tempus flendi et tempus ridendi: Manifestations of Emotion in Medieval Biblical Commentary

Abstract

Medieval biblical commentary is not a literary genre usually associated with high emotions; rather it often appears dry, dull and factual, at least to our eyes. The books of the Bible, however, are certainly not void of emotional content. Indeed, throughout its many texts and varieties of literary genres, a host of feelings is seen expressed: it may be thought that grief, fear, anguish and similar negative emotions would dominate Scripture, but positive sensations such as of joy, satisfaction and gratitude are equally present on its pages. Sarah, for example, laughed mockingly at the prospect of becoming a mother at ninety (Gen. 18, 12), and Peter cried bitterly when he understood that he had betrayed Christ (Matth. 26, 75). Medieval commentators were acutely aware of relevance of the totality of the biblical message, of which not one jot or one tittle shall pass. Equipped with the fourfold hermeneutic tool for biblical interpretation, they expounded the sacred texts in minute detail, commenting on the emotions expressed by the main characters, and the importance these carried for the narrative and its understanding. Against this background, this paper seeks to explore the attitudes of certain medieval exegetes towards a selection of biblical manifestations of emotion. What value did they attribute to the feelings expressed? How did they measure them, and how did they choose to expound and explain them? The focus will be on the twelfth century, the great period of biblical interpretation, and on commentaries and commentators associated with the schools of theology in northern France.

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Laughter, Fear, and the Social Context of Emotions

Abstract

Of all the emotions humor is the arguably the most social. Fear, anger, and disgust are emotions of aggression and isolation; more positive emotions such as joy and love may occur alone or with intimates, but humor is the quintessential emotion of groups. Numerous studies have demonstrated that laughter is magnified in large numbers, is socially contagious, and indeed most likely originated among primates to promote social harmony and non-aggression. Medieval humorous texts foster this sense of social cohesion, depicting a world of abundance and satisfaction, and were themselves produced to be publicly performed. Yet it is striking that incidents of laughter in prominent texts are singular and isolating. To cite two, Chaucer's Troilus famously laughs at the end of *Troilus and Criseyde*, but his laughter denotes that he is detached from earthly human concerns, alone in the heavens. In Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Life of Merlin*, the magician Merlin laughs three times, each time conveying his superhuman and unfeeling nature in perceiving the delusions of his fellow humans, as when he laughs at a man buying new shoes who does not realize he is about to die.

This paper will analyze laughter as a social force and as a force of detachment in the light of "terror management theory," the view that much of what humans do and feel is an attempt to manage not sexual yearnings, as Freud would argue, but the fear of death. Chaucer's Troilus has transcended death; Geoffrey's Merlin demonstrates his detachment from it; and the utopian world of comic texts effaces it. I will demonstrate, with copious medieval examples, that medieval laughter and comic texts take their power from fear of death and bodily disintegration, reconfiguring the relationship of the individual to the group, and so perform a function unique to their status as social phenomena.

Tears of Weakness, Tears of Love: Kings as Sons and Fathers in Medieval Spanish Prose

Abstract

E quando el rrey don Alfonso vio en la carta que dizie que era muerto el jnfante don Sancho su fijo, tomó muy grand pesar et commo quier que lo non mostrase ante los que estauan ay et apartose en vna camara solo, asy que omne njnguno non osaua entrar a él et començo a llorar por el muy fuerte mente. (*Crónica de Alfonso X*, MS Madrid: Nacional, 829, fol. 61r.)

And when the King Don Alfonso saw the letter that said that the Prince Don Sancho his son was dead, he was very saddened and since he did not wish to show it in front of those that were present, he retreated alone to a private chamber, where no one used to enter, and he started to weep for him very intensely.

A striking example of the paradoxical relationship between the roles of king and father can be found in the *Chronicle of Alfonso X*, written by Fernán Sánchez de Valladolid in the 1340s, on behalf of the ruling King Alfonso XI of Castile and León. In the midst of political turmoil and civil war raging because of a succession crisis, Alfonso is reached by false news of the death of his second son, Sancho (later IV), and is struck by grief. His counsellors, upon seeing his reaction, are mortified. In all probability this particular scene is not principally based on written evidence but a product of the chronicler's imagination, and to understand this scene, we must consider what it was meant to convey to the intended audience of an historical discourse at court.

How are we then to approach the emotions of people in the Middle Ages, when they are so far away in time, and so ephemeral? Certainly we cannot be sure to reach anything more than an assumption of what this or that person may have felt in a particular situation. Nevertheless, the attitudes held towards emotive expressions and the ways in which they were interpreted are accessible to us. The shedding of tears is a constant human gesture, while its signification and cultural relevance are not. The meanings attributed to crying men and

women vary according to each historical situation, with each cultural context or emotional community (to use a phrase coined by Barbara Rosenwein). As historians we need to be sensitive to the particular context in which emotional expressions were constructed.

It is my intention in this paper to examine crying, the emotions connected thereto, and the portrayal of kings as fathers and sons in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Spanish prose, in varying literary genre. The aim is to offer some reflections on the attitudes taken towards lachrymose behaviour, and to reach some insight into the distinction between the public and the private, the political and the emotional life in said context.

Strong Expressions, Drastic Gestures: An Attempt to Explain Narrative Late Medieval Art

Abstract

At certain points in the *longue durée* of the Medieval Ages, Western artists have been said to stress “realistic” traits in art. Among other things, “realism” can connote exaggerated mimics, theatrical gestures, and vivid modeling of body and dress, i. e. strong emotions. Instead of the problematic concept of realism, I choose to use the term “drastic traits”, or “drasticism”. There exist manifold reasons for drastic story-telling. My interest concerns the vast increase of the amount of reredoses and winged altarpieces in the Baltic Sea area at the beginning of the 15th century – and foremost, why these new liturgical tools became so popular. The act of placing an altarpiece on the high altar and decorating it with paintings and sculptures using strong expressions, such as the tumultuous Mount of Calvary, or violent abominations, such as the martyrdom of Saint Barbara, evinces changes in religiosity itself. This can be the result of the teachers’ or preachers’ need to tell, paired with the audience’s need to see. The task at hand consisted of making a deep and lasting impression on the pious audience by means of narratives. But also were the devout to learn certain moods and emotions connected to the events for example, on the Mount of Calvary. It has been suggested that this change in story-telling came about at the middle of the 15th century, but I think I can trace the roots to certain 14th century reredoses.

The emerging visual practices and experiments of drastic story-telling differentiate the story told: Different aspects of temporality, everlasting moments ("Weltstunden") or snapshots, sequences and consequences, peripeties, and fruitful moments, are developed in the visual programs.

Narrative art worked as a tool for visualization of religious empathy, leading to deeper understanding of the exempla of the Saints and the history of Salvation. The Biblical events are transferred into a domain both of temporal as well as local and emotional presence and proximity – through drastic means of story-telling.

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The Longing for Happiness: Virtue or Vice?

Abstract

Medieval ethicists inherited from the ancient philosophical tradition a view of the morally good – the thing we ought to aim for in our life plans and our decisions and actions – as consisting in happiness (gr. *eudaimonia*, lat. *beatitudo*), or in a blessed and fulfilling life. The doctrine of the fall and of the required restoration of mankind complicates the picture, but thinkers such as Anselm of Canterbury and John Duns Scotus give the desire for the happiness and the satisfaction of that desire a perfectly pivotal – if ambiguous – role in their accounts of morality in creatures. In this talk, I will clarify some important aspects of the role of desire in medieval ethics by looking at St Augustine's discussion of the good will, together with certain developments in moral psychology which take place among his medieval followers. Is desiring one's own happiness a sin, or is it a crucial and necessary precondition for being moral?

Joy d'amor as Discursive Practice

Abstract

The vernacular and secular culture that emerged during the twelfth century at the feudal courts in the South of France has been compared to a Renaissance before the Renaissance, transforming a moral of warriors into refined manners. In comparison with the medieval Church and its endeavour to regulate sexuality through a narrative about sin and the institution of marriage, this “courtly” way of controlling sexual behaviour seems to offer a smother form of privation. Sexual pleasure is, instead of being condemned or repressed, articulated through a social play defined through a *joy* of love that in the nineteenth century gets the label courtly love (*amour courtois*) by the French historian Gaston Paris. This specific *joy* or *joi* (both spellings exist in Occitan) has been described as a mystic exaltation that has as its object, at the same time, the beloved woman and love itself (Jeanroy, Nelli), but the phenomenon is profoundly ambiguous. It seems, for instance, that the mystic union between self and other is lacking in this “secular mysticism” of distant love (*amor de lonh* according to the troubadour Jaufré Rudel), which has as its main condition the postponement, if not the impossibility, of fulfilment. It is a joy of love that exalts desire as such rather than its satisfaction. In fact, we are dealing with a paradoxical joy that Galmés de Fuentes calls a *sufimiento gozoso*, and its intensity is correlated to a regulated control or *mesura*. In my paper I try to highlight this complex phenomenon, not as a new feeling, as early writers on courtly culture defined it, not even as a sensibility in the sense of agreed-on modes of feelings, widely shared by consensus, as Jaeger has suggested, but rather in the wake of Foucault, as a discursive practice that poses the questions of power and of the formation of gender and sexuality in medieval culture.

True Emotion or Convention? Sorrow and Joy in the Vadstena Memorial Book

Abstract

The aim of this paper will be to present, discuss and analyse some expressions of emotions as recorded in the *Diarium Vadstenense*, The Memorial Book of the Swedish Birgittine house at Vadstena. The Diarium is written in a Latin and a style typical of its time. It covers internal and external events of different kinds in the late Middle Ages and also the first decades of the Reformation period (the oldest texts were written in the 1380s, the last entries in the 1540s). It was safely kept in the brothers' part of the monastery, and entrusted to one brother at a time. Consequently, the contents and way of writing are varying. The texts can be adapted after the context of the actual time and events they describe or after the style and preferences of the individual authors. The texts chosen for closer study may lead us to ask several questions. Can we see trends? Are personal opinions discernable? What are the demands of genre convention?

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Seeing and feeling in late medieval visionary culture: Emotional expressions as representations of visions

Abstract

In the later Middle Ages, one of the principal explanations of the experience of visions was in terms of a spirit's infusing or taking possession of the body of the visionary. Significantly, a range of emotions, and emotional-cum-corporeal, expressions, were treated as visible embodiments of the internal 'spiritual' or 'intellectual' images that visionaries claimed to experience. Some central examples of these were uncontrolled weeping and expressions of depression, as well as uncontrolled gestures and other forms of behavior transgressing the boundaries of the normative. Based on textual and pictorial sources I will argue that such forms of external visible behavior and emotional utterance were in fact the visionaries' *principal* means of communicating their inner experiences to others, by displaying them on their bodies or performing them. More precisely, the emotional expressions and behavior served to represent the inner images in either of two ways – as indexes, or by displaying structural similarity with the inner images.

Tears, Sighs and Slaughter. Expressions of Fear and Disgust in the Baltic Missionary Historiography (11th-13th centuries)

Abstract

This paper studies the way fear and disgust were expressed and perceived in the Christian missionary communities on the Baltic Rim. From the perspective advanced by this paper fear was one of the crucial emotions in missionary self-perception. It was a mechanism of social and religious integration both within the proselytizing community and with the newly converted pagans, as well as a procedure of choosing one's enemies. It will be therefore interesting to study through which facial, corporal, and textual means this simultaneously socializing and detaching emotion was expressed and whether there some particularly 'missionary' traits of these manifestations. By analyzing experiences collected in works of Adam of Bremen, Helmold of Bosau, and Henry of Livonia my ambition is to investigate how disgust and fear of the pagan danger could become defining components of the missionary endeavor.

Sighs and sorrows – but no laughter? The expressions of emotions in runic inscriptions

Abstract

The earliest indigenous sources in Scandinavia are written in runes and today about 6.500 individual runic inscriptions are known from this area. Compared to other ancient scripts this may not be a very impressive number of texts, but the runic script has a long and interesting history. The preserved material covers a period of nearly one and a half millennium, from the second century AD up to the end of the Middle Ages, and it offers invaluable contributions to cultural history in the Scandinavian countries. From the first half of this long period we have hardly any other written sources preserved in the original, and in the medieval period the runic inscriptions sometimes yield insights into realms, which are not recorded in other ways.

Finding expressions of emotions in runic inscriptions is not a very easy task. Since many of the runic texts occur on rune stones cut in memory of deceased persons, sorrows and losses are of course present in some way or another. These kind of emotions are, however, seldom expressed explicitly in the texts, although there are some exceptions as “He drowned in Båven (a lake in Södermanland), a death of great grief” or “She died young leaving under-age children”. Whether sighs are recorded in the runic material is a matter of definition and dispute, but according to some researchers there are least some possible examples.

The most troublesome assignment is to detect expressions of joy and laughter in this material. It is tempting to claim that writing runes was such a serious business that there was no room for laughter, but it is probably more due to our failure to understand these texts properly. Though there are inscriptions that the modern reader finds funny, it is very difficult to determine if a person in the Middle Ages was of the same opinion. When e.g. a building brick from Lösen church in Blekinge tells us in runes – and Latin language – *Ego sum lapis* “I am a stone” it looks like a joke to us, but was this really the rune carver’s intention?

Weeping Ladies in Arthurian Romance

Abstract

The Arthurian romance is centred on a set of stylistic and ideological ideals, all of which are embedded in the notion of *courtoisie* – a notion that refers essentially to proper behaviour at court. Female characters play a decisive role in the construction of *courtoisie*. Not only do the medieval writers describe women as more or less courteous; the presence of female characters is also a way to test the knight's courtliness. Whereas the lady is the object of the knight's love, the maidens repeatedly trigger adventures and thus lead the knight and the plot in new directions.

In my paper, I will look more closely at the role of weeping female characters in Francophone texts and some of their medieval Scandinavian translations. Translated into new languages, the courtly ideals tended to be adapted to new literary and historical contexts, so when analysing German translations of French romances, scholars have spoken of a "courtly adaptation" (for example Jean Fourquet, 1976). I will discuss in what ways female sorrow tended to be modified when translated into the Scandinavian languages.

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Medieval Emotions and Historical Change. Some unexpected uses of spiritual texts

Abstract

In this lecture I propose a reflection on emotions in medieval texts, crossing three great questions. Firstly, I shall address the question how emotions are related to change in historiography and will try to argue for a major change in the last decades. Secondly, coming back to the history of a recently studied cultural constellation particular to medieval times, the gift of tears, I shall argue that emotions, and not only their representation, change through time. Thirdly, using the example of two mystic women who died the same year, 1309, Angela of Foligno and Lukardis of Oberweimar, I would like to show that embodied emotions in the later Middle Ages had a transformative power which could go beyond what we imagine today.

The Law and the King's Heart. Political Emotions in the *Chronicle of Erik*.

Abstract

The *Chronicle of Erik* deals with kings, Swedish laws and political matters. Tears scarcely appear and laughter is even rarer, but some specific emotions can be studied in the political situations described in the chronicle, especially regarding the relationships between the king and his men or members of his family. A special attention will be paid to the verses 2028-2169 relating the visit of Duke Erik to the court of King Birger, a meeting that can be seen as the origin of the war between the king and his brothers. Its description is an occasion for the author to write a kind of *exemplum* about the emotions a king may or may not express. But those verses do not only intend to offer a “mirror of princes”, they show, through the use of emotions, what makes a law good or bad.

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The Exultation of Contemplation, Tears of Intercession, and Sorrow of Compassion: Affective Spirituality in the Revelations of St. Birgitta of Sweden

Abstract

The visionary writings of Birgitta of Sweden (1302/3-1373) abound with elicitation and expressions of emotion. Some portions of her Revelations appear to be designed to provoke laughter or even repulsion from their readers or listeners, not unlike the use of vignettes in sermons to deeply touch and move members of an audience through a well-crafted story. Although not autobiographical in any straightforward fashion, Birgitta's Revelations also sometimes expose the saint's heartfelt feelings associated with her family relationships – for example, grief upon the death of her husband or anxiety for the welfare of her children. Most especially, however, this textual corpus is striking for its references to Birgitta's emotions as intimately connected with her spiritual states and imbued with theological significance. Birgitta's Revelations clearly reflect well-known affective forms of medieval Christian spirituality, characterized by imaginative meditation on the humanity of Christ and the use of emotions for cultivating intimacy with God.

This paper will closely examine representations of Birgitta's emotions in selected passages of her Revelations, interpreting these emotions both within the context of late medieval spirituality and according to ideas about the significance of gender for emotional expression. Particular attention will be given to the exultation, or tremendous joy, that she experienced at moments of heightened spiritual contemplation; the copious tears that she shed for the sins of others; and the sorrow of compassion that she cultivated through her identification with the emotions of the human Jesus and his mother Mary. This paper, which is indebted to the view that emotions are at least partially "social and cultural practices" (Sara Ahmed), will utilize theological and gendered meanings of emotions within late medieval culture to offer insights into Birgitta's practice of devotion and contemplative spirituality.

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The Demons of Emotions

Abstract

In the past few years there has been a significant development concerning the history of emotions. It is possible to make a first overview of this historiographical current placing it in a long-term perspective of the history of passions (from the stoics to the Enlightenment philosophers), ethology (since Charles Darwin), and above all the recent anthropological and psychological investigations of emotions. It is also important to reflect on new openings for research. In the light of these remarks I propose a consideration – within the framework of medieval Western culture – on the connection between the emotions and the experience of the visible (the gaze on the exterior world and images in particular) and the visual (the inner gaze of dreams and nightmares).

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Bernard's Smile and the Conversion of Laughter

Abstract

Bernard of Clairvaux is mentioned to have affirmed that he could not remember having laughed since his conversion, i.e. since his entry into the monastic life, and that he needed more to stimulate his laughing than to refrain it. By this we get the impression of a sad man, living a dark and pessimistic view of man and of the world. Yet, reading Bernard's own texts does not confirm this impression at all. Actually, they seem to miss all defeatism or tragic. In them we get to hear a joyous voice with full confidence in man's capacity to overcome the burden of life. It sounds also plenty of humour and its laughing can be satirical and hilarious but also more melancholic. In most cases it is of a highly subtle sensitivity, showing Bernard's acute eye on the world and notably on the small sides of mankind. Bernard, however, never writes simply to amuse. His humour is a pedagogical one and aims at the inner conversion of his readers. In my contribution to the Symposium I hope to lay bare some of the rhetorical functioning of humour in Bernard's textual pedagogy.

Crying Crusaders – Pleasure and Pain among the infidels

Abstract

Crusaders, pilgrims, missionaries – all regularly burst into tears. Some cried of joy, when they reached the top of the mountain and caught the first glimpse of the holy city, be it Jerusalem or Trondheim. Others cried of joy, when at last they were granted the grace to be slowly and painfully tortured to death by infidels and thus honour the Divine Name. Armed crusaders cried in agony when they saw how Jesus was blasphemed and the holy cross desecrated, or when a brave warrior died and was lifted to heaven as martyr. And they rejoiced in hearing the mourning crying of the infidels burying their dead, who had been killed by the crusaders.

Tears and crying were provoked by varied sentiments, from anger to joy. They demonstrated empathy with fellow Christians, and they functioned as a sign or a proof that the crusader or missionary had become com-passionate with Christ and now shared in his pain, and therefore also got closer to the salvation He had promised those that took up the cross and followed Him. In contrast to later times, tears were not shed of fear (except perhaps by a few men with a womanish nature), and it was not considered shameful to cry.

The paper will present and discuss different kind of tears in crusader and missionary narratives of the eleventh to the thirteenth century, mostly from the Baltic area.

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A Dangerous Place to Be: Fearing City Life in Georg Wickram's Von guten und bösen Nachbarn (1556)

Abstract

“You should know / that also other Portuguese men from Lisbon are in this city of Antwerp / and not few of them / especially two shabby, evil lads / [...]” (Von guten und bösen Nachbarn, 1969: 143, trans. EWN). When the young Portuguese apprentice Lasarus comes to Antwerp to improve his skills as a craftsman he is immediately introduced to the evils of the city by a friend, thus quickly learning that the big city offers no safety and that people around him can be divided into “us” (good) and “them” (evil). The hero in Georg Wickram's prose novel from 1556 does not seek knightly adventures on his travels but rather security and a quiet place where he can live together with the woman he loves. Lasarus wants to make a living as goldsmith in an urban setting but he is constantly threatened by malicious characters in the text. He fears for his life and is heartbroken at the same time, far away from home and his beloved Amelia who made him speechless of sorrow when he had to leave her for his travels to foreign cities.

Hatred, crime and violence characterize life in the early modern city and Wickram's protagonists have to proceed tactically, adjust to the dangers surrounding them, and to work hard to create a safe haven in large, dangerous cities like Antwerp and Venice. They rarely show strong emotions in public but suffer quietly, worry, and cry when alone without friends and family. Wickram's text is one of the earliest prose novels in German language depicting city life and city dwellers and connecting the urban space with primarily dark sides of society. The presentation will investigate the quickly growing early modern city as a place for criminal behavior, violence, fear and force as expressed in Wickram's text. The aim is to show how the characters deal with situations of conflict and how they express and cope with their emotions.