APPROACHES TO COMPARISON IN MEDIEVAL STUDIES

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Medieval Worlds:
Introduction to the First Issue

Books, web-sites or university courses entitled ›The Medieval World‹ usually deal with Medieval Europe, sometimes only with its ›Latin‹ or Western parts. The name of the present journal, ›Medieval Worlds‹, underlines the diversity of our global past, while maintaining that common approaches are possible. ›Global History‹ often concentrates on the contemporary and modern history of a globalized world; but global perspectives on pre-modern periods are also possible before or beyond processes of globalization. Many fascinating projects explore wide horizons of the global past, both temporally and spatially. These new lines of research depart from many disciplines and reach out across disciplinary divides; arguably, this is one of the most dynamic fields in the heterogeneous academic landscapes of the study of the past. For those who are interested in engaging with current developments and advances in this type of research, however, it is still hard to get an overview of its progress. The present journal is intended to become one of the intellectual »hubs« in this regard: exploring new approaches, stimulating comparative research, offering methodological debates, exchanging reports across disciplines, and presenting current large-scale projects.

The journal's name, ›Medieval Worlds – Comparative and Interdisciplinary Studies‹, is programmatic in several ways. Within broader debates of the Social Sciences and Humanities, the Middle Ages often are conspicuously absent, or figure as a simplified counterfoil against modernity. Therefore, the journal aims to help putting Medieval Studies on the map. We use ›medieval‹ as a rough chronological indication, which can be modified according to regional and disciplinary research traditions, and which should in any case include late antique and early modern periods of transition. The journal does not advocate any ›strong‹ concept of ›the‹ Middle Ages as a period defined by particular characteristics, which would hardly be tenable in a global context. We do not depart from any teleological idea which would limit the field and impose a choice of one explanatory model over another. Scholars may legitimately debate when axial or post-axial ages led to fundamental transformations across Eurasia, or whether or not the Middle Ages marked the beginning of a ›Great Divergence‹. The journal can host such discussions, but does not regard them as an obligatory starting point for research on the wide varieties of medieval forms of life. Medieval societies should not simply be studied as stages in a process that only became meaningful later. There is more to the Middle Ages than merely representing a prehistory of modernity – i.e. of the modern individual, state, nation, democracy, media, economy, or globalization. »Other« socio-cultural histories first have to be studied in their own right. Only thus can they contribute to a more general understanding of long-term social and cultural dynamics. In this way, they also may shed additional light on the inherent mechanisms of present-day societies.

Studying medieval worlds requires a critical caveat regarding Eurocentrism. Traditional world histories basically recounted how Europe unified an originally multiple world, first militarily and politically and then economically and culturally. Now, finally, a global view of history is gradually replacing Eurocentric perceptions of the past, not without controversial debates. The problem is not only that European history was often regarded as central to world history, but that the history of other regions was approached with a conceptual apparatus developed with regard to Europe. Post-colonial studies and the decons-

truction of generalized ›European‹ concepts have been useful as an antidote, but pushing them too far creates another set of problems. Certainly Europe should not serve as a ›standard‹ of comparison. However, we should not simply abandon the research tools and the critical approaches that the disciplines involved have developed and refined over a long time, but strive for a carefully balanced and transparent approach. In addressing ›medieval worlds‹ (in the plural), we wanted to stress the multiplicity of the medieval universe without essentializing its cultural differences.

The focus of the journal is on comparative studies and reflections. The challenge here is to find ways of doing comparative history that do not depart from preconceived models or units, and thus avoid essentializing cultural or other objects of comparison. Issues of comparison are addressed in a growing body of methodological literature, together with a number of innovative propositions and designs: these have ranged from qualitative comparison in its basic dimensions to various forms of middle-range comparison, from ›thick‹ comparison across comparing networks and comparison by ›big data‹ quantifications up to ›comparing the incomparable‹. Both the theoretical framework and, perhaps even more importantly, pragmatic methodologies of some among the more promising of these endeavours wait to be further differentiated, refined, exemplified, and developed. The first issue of ›Medieval Worlds‹ is intended to contribute to these efforts, both from theoretical and from pragmatic angles. In some of its social science legacies in the narrow sense, comparison has been linked to general and transhistorical concepts. From the outset, this frequently was intended to establish general models or typologies. That is a legitimate social-science approach that can provide fundamental impulses for research. Yet we also need genuinely processual and historical methods that allow to historicize our concepts, and to address issues of middle-range comparison. ›Medieval Worlds‹ explicitly invites source-related research as long as it can be used to address comparative issues. These efforts can then provide a basis for further model-building in dialogues with scholars from all historically engaged academic disciplines.

What makes comparative historical studies so fascinating, but also difficult, is the multiplicity of disciplinary approaches that one needs to take into account: the disciplines of Historical Studies, Socio-Cultural Anthropology, Sociology, Religious Studies, Archaeology, Philological and Literary Studies, Linguistics, History of Art, Cultural/Transcultural Studies and others; and within them, various fields and schools that also diverge in their methods and approaches. Scholars from many of these research environments have already made substantial experiences in interdisciplinary research. Yet this still presents a challenge. To put it bluntly, the more you know about the cases to be compared, the more difficult does it get to establish clear distinctions and convincing typologies. This can also be exemplified by the experience of the editors. ›Medieval Worlds‹ was created by an interdisciplinary team including medieval historians of Europe, social anthropologists combining field-work with the study of historical sources, scholars of Islam and of (philological and cultural) Asian Studies working in a joint long-term project, ›Visions of Community‹ (VISCOM, see the presentation in this issue). Work in the VISCOM project started with the experience that scholars from different disciplines often speak different languages even when they use the same terms and concepts, and in occasional contact rarely realize that. It is therefore essential to develop an in-depth understanding of the sources, the problems of their interpretation, and the established approaches and paradigms in the different fields and disciplines involved. Comparative and interdisciplinary studies should go beyond using each other's results and conclusions, and be more attentive to the intricacies of disciplinary work with the sources and to the con-

ceptual tools current in other fields. The first issue of ›Medieval Worlds‹ addresses problems of methodology and presents approaches by senior scholars that will hopefully encourage both senior and junior scholars to propose their own studies in future issues.

›Medieval Worlds‹ does not aim to offer a mixed bag of wide-ranging studies from all areas of global history. The journal proposes a more specific design to accommodate diversity, comparison, and debate. The online, open-access format allows a more flexible, to-the-point collaboration between different fields and disciplines than previously possible. We would like to promote a better understanding of the problems of interdisciplinary exchanges, and ultimately enable a gradual convergence of scholarly languages. Therefore, we will offer the following formats for publication:

* Comparative articles by individual authors or clusters of articles by groups of authors, provided that they represent different disciplines or approaches, or address different macro-regions. ›Medieval Worlds‹ will be open to regular submissions on comparative topics.
* Thematic issues ranging across different fields and disciplinary boundaries, announced by the editors by means of a call for papers, or also proposed as a whole by groups of authors.
* Presentations of larger comparative projects and their results and review articles addressing relevant issues or current debates in comparative medieval studies. At least initially, there will be no reviews of single publications.
* A specific format will allow searching for matching or complementary studies from different fields. Papers that address topics relevant for comparison can be submitted for a call for (a) matching paper(s) from other fields. For this purpose, a discussion forum has been set up on the website http://medievalopen.oeaw.ac.at : ›Medieval Open‹ can serve to put people working on related topics in different academic environments in touch with each other, and provide a moderated forum for debate and for developing comparative perspectives. Additionally, a search for matching articles can also involve the Advisory Board of the journal.

›Medieval Worlds‹ will thus explore ways to bring together scholars from different disciplines interested in comparable topics, and encourage interdisciplinary groups to publish focused sets of articles.

The editors
Walter Pohl and Andre Gingrich

The Discourse of Herrschaft as the Practice of Herrschaft in the Fifth Century[1]

Patrick J. Geary*

This essay examines the spectrum of political action and dominance from Constantinople to the frontiers of Noricum and Gaul at the end of the fifth century by comparing the lives of Zeno the Isurian, Theoderic the Great, Severinus of Noricum and Genovefa of Paris.

Keywords: Herrschaft, ethnicity, Zeno, Theoderic, Severinus, Genovefa

Max Weber famously defined *Herrschaft* as »die Möglichkeit, den eigenen Willen dem Verhalten anderer aufzuzwingen,« and further distinguished on the one hand »die *Herrschaft* kraft Interessenkonstellation,« and on the other »die Herrschaft kraft Autorität.«[2] One way to compare the nature of power from the center of the late Roman Empire to its periphery in the last half of the fifth century is to take Weber's two »ideal types« of *Herrschaft* as a point of departure, even if, as he recognized, boundaries between the two are fluid. They are, after all, only models, but as George Box famously observed, »essentially, all models are wrong, but some are useful.«[3] Moreover, the discourses within which the practice of *Herrschaft* is presented and grounded is anything but transparent: tropes and genres both provide a way into understanding the exercise of power but can also obscure, for cultural reasons, this exercise. Europe in the fifth century experiences a spectrum of formal and informal modes of *Herrschaft*, from long-established imperial authority to ad-hoc moments of what seem to correspond to Weberian charismatic *Herrschaft*. Weber's models are wrong when considering *Herrschaft* in its myriad manifestations in the fifth century, but they are indeed useful.

In order to explore the varieties of *Herrschaft*, which is often translated as »dominance« in English,[4] this essay will consider how four very different figures came to exercise a power that made it possible for them to impose their own will upon the behavior of their contemporaries. Drawing primarily on recent reappraisals of these individuals and the sources by which we know them, we will see how the neat categories of domination by virtue of a constellation of interests and domination and by virtue of authority were intimately bound together; but also how impossible it is to distinguish between Weber's further distinctions among patriarchal, charismatic, and bureaucratic dominance. Finally, we will also see that the distinction between practice and discourse is equally problematic.

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1 A preliminary version of this paper was presented at the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation's 4. Bonner Humboldt-Preisträger-Forum »Herrschaft in der Antike – Praktiken und Diskurse« in Bonn, October 8, 2014.

2 Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft,* 128.

3 Box and Draper, *Empirical Model Building,* 424.

4 Weber, *Economy and Society.*

The lives of our examples, an Isaurian soldier named Tarasis (c. 425-9 April 491) who became the Emperor Zeno;[5] the Gothic general Theoderic (454-526) who came to hold virtually the same, if unnamed office in the West;[6] the *vir dei* Severinus (c. 410-8 January 482) active at the end of imperial presence in the provinces of Noricum and Raetia;[7] and the *virgo sacrata* Genovefa (ca. 420-ca. 502)[8] span a fairly narrow but significant chronological spectrum – essentially from the middle to the end of the fifth century.[9] They represent however a wide range of human dominance, from the Roman Emperor to a relatively minor provincial woman. They lived, as goes the Chinese curse, »in interesting times.« Severinus was probably born around the year of the sack of Rome by Alaric; they all saw the violence of civil war both in the east and west of the Empire and had their lives fundamentally affected by the violence and threat posed by Attila and his Huns at mid-century. All lived through the deposition of Romulus Augustulus in 476, although this may or may not have seemed as momentous to them as it came to appear to subsequent generations. And by the time of the deaths of Genovefa ca. 502 and especially Theoderic in 526, the world of Late Antiquity was fundamentally different from that in which each was born: the East had endured but survived major crises that might have ended its existence; the West saw the definitive end, if not of Roman culture, then certainly of the Empire as a dominant political factor.

Two of these individuals ultimately assumed the reins of the bureaucratic apparatus of Empire, one in the East, one in the West; two struggled without office, official sanction, or indeed, in the case of Genovefa, without the possibility of gendered, patriarchal authority on the edges of a crumbling Empire. Each can be perceived only through a highly elaborated discourse that in part may obscure their rise to dominance in their individual spheres, but rather than retreating into the solipsism of post-structural ideology, these very discourses can be understood as part of what constituted their ability to impose their wills on their contemporaries.

Each of these figures, too, has been the subject of enormous scholarly interest and debate concerning the ideological, cultural, and political matrices in which they achieved their power. One of the primary tropes to understand the power exercised in the fifth century has

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5 The traditional characterization of Zeno that relies on his ethnic identity as Isaurian and the opposition between Goths, Isaurians, and Romans in the Byzantine court is found in such works as Brooks, The Emperor Zenon, and is continued by historians including Jones, *The Later Roman Empire,* 217-229. This ethnic interpretation is being reassessed and this essay relies on the reinterpretations of Croke, Dynasty and Ethnicity and Wood, Multiple Voices in Chronicle Sources.

6 The changing approaches to the study of Theoderic and Ostrogothic Italy are well summarized in Arnold, Theoderic and the Roman Imperial Restoration, 5-7. Traditional views of Theoderic as a barbarian ruler such as that still present in Ward-Perkins, *The Fall of Rome and the End of Civilization,* are generally much more nuanced in the past decades including Burns, Theoderic the Great and the Concepts of Power; Burns, A History of the Ostrogoths; Heather, Theoderic, King of the Goths; Heather, *The Goths*; Wolfram, History of the Goths, and many of the essays in *Teoderico il Grande e I Goti d'Italia.*

7 Friedrich Lotter's *Severinus von Noricum*, the most important studies on Severinus and his hagiographer Eugippius have appeared in Pohl and Diesenberger, *Eugippius und Severin*. See also Hammer, ›The Example of the Saints‹.

8 The fundamental studies of Genofeva are Heinzelmann, Zum Stand der Genovefa-Forschung, and Heinzelmann and Poulin, *Les vies anciennes de sainte Geneviève de Paris.* On the cult of Genovefa see also Hartmann-Petersen, Genovefa von Paris.

9 General surveys of the fifth century include Jones, *The Later Roman Empire*; Demandt, *Die Spätantike;* Cameron, *The Mediterranean World in Late Antiquity;* Drinkwater and Elton, *Fifth-Century Gaul: A Crisis of Identity?*; and Halsall, *Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West.*

been ethnicity.[10] Within the Empire as without, the ethnic background of individuals and parties has been seen as a major explanatory trope in political solidarities and the exercise of authority. Certainly the rise of Tarasis/Zeno, has traditionally been understood primarily in ethnic terms: Tarasis was after all an Isaurian, a population known for its military valor and that had long played an important part in the Imperial army.[11] His rise in the court of Leo took place at the expense of the Roman general Aspar and his Thracian Gothic allies. Indeed, this is how the events were portrayed in the abridgment made by Photius of the lost account of Candidus, secretary to the highest ranking Roman officers in Isauria under Leo and Zeno, and the assumption that Leo sought to counterbalance Gothic power in his court by supporting another ethnic group, the Isaurians, has been long a part of the master narrative of the fifth century imperial history.[12]

Theoderic, of course, was famously a Goth, a member of the Amal family that claimed fifteen generations of rule over his people.[13] He spent his youth as a pampered hostage in Constantinople, during the reign of Leo during the years of Gothic influence at the imperial court, and his return to the Goths may have followed and resulted from the murder of Aspar who was finally ambushed and murdered in 471 on Leo's orders. Within eight years he was leading a Gothic army reputed to be 10,000 strong on Constantinople. Then, after years of complex fighting, maneuvering, alliances and betrayals in Thrace, Theoderic turned his army toward Italy with the blessing of Zeno, destroyed the strong man Odoacer, and created his Ostrogothic kingdom.

If the traditional views of Zeno and Theoderic place an emphasis on their ethnic background to explain the source of their power, the situation is less clear with our other two examples, Severinus and Genovefa. One might assume that the hagiographical conventions that structured our primary sources on these two individuals intentionally edit out the ethnic or social foundations of their authority. The regional or ethnic origins of Severinus are unknown. According to his biographer Eugippius, when Primenius, an Italian priest who had sought refuge with Severinus, asked him about his origins, Severinus refused to say, asking rather his interlocutor what use it was for a servant of God to boast of his place of origin or his ethnicity (*locus vel genus*), when by keeping silent on these he could avoid vainglory.[14] His terrestrial country of origin did not matter: what mattered was the celestial country he sought. How an unknown holy man could suddenly appear in Pannonia shortly after the collapse of the Hunnic empire and manage with apparent ease to command and counsel not only the remnants of Roman administration in the remaining towns along the Danube but the Arian kings of the Rugii as well, has confounded generations of scholars who assume that Severinus must have held high government office before retiring to the life of an ascetic. Friedrich

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10   Of the vast, growing, and controversial literature on ethnicity and its role in late Antiquity see above all Pohl and Reimitz, *Strategies of Distinction*; the highly polemical attacks on Pohl in Gillett, *On Barbarian Identity*; and, in a wider and more intelligent perspective, Pohl, Gantner and Payne, *Visions of Community*.

11   On the ethnic approach to understanding these conflicts see Croke, Dynasty and Ethnicity, notes 147-148 as well as Elton, Illus and the Imperial Aristocracy under Zeno.

12   Candidus Isaurus, *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum,* 135-137. See Croke, Dynasty and Ethnicity, 161. See also Wood, Multiple Voices in Chronicle Sources, 302-303, who argues that Malalas's emphasis on ethnicity is part of the rhetoric that dichotomies as a competition between Goths and Romans what is actually intense political competition between leaders.

13   On Theoderic's construction of Amal geneaology see Wolfram, *History of the Goths,* 36-38; Heather, *The Goths,* 233; and Arnold, *Theoderic and the Roman Imperial Restoration,* 165-170.

14   Epistola Paschasii diaconi ad Eugippium presbyterum, *Vita Severini*, 3-4.

Lotter even argued that he should be identified as Flavius Severinus, western consul in the year 461, a suggestion now largely rejected.[15] Whatever his background, he held no office in Noricum, refusing, according to Eugippius, election as bishop, even while continuing to exercise enormous authority over Romans and barbarians alike. For Eugippius, of course, the power of Severinus lies precisely in the title that he uses for him, and that Severinus seems to have preferred: *vir Dei*. What are we to make of this foundation of *Herrschaft*?

Genovefa, of course, was no *vir*, and her ability to exercise her own will to direct the behavior of her contemporaries in northern Gaul is even more remarkable. That is, of course, if she did so at all: Until the pioneering studies of Joseph-Claude Poulin and Martin Heinzelmann, it was generally thought that the Vita S. Genovefae was a late and generally fabulous creation.[16] We now know that the earliest version was indeed written in the early sixth century and as such provides a close image of the saint as she was remembered in the decades immediately following her death. But who was this enigmatic figure? Assigning her to an ethnic group is much too simple: her name is Germanic, but her parents Severus and Geronica, bore Roman names. In terms of social prominence, they were sufficiently important in Nanterre that when Germanus of Auxerre passed through the region on his way to Brittan, he apparently spent time with them and their young daughter. But none of this explains how, after the death of her parents and her move to Paris, she would become someone who could organize the resistance of the Parisians during the invasion of Attila, effect the construction of the basilica of St. Denis, travel to neighboring towns in the style of a public official, negotiate the release of condemned prisoners with Frankish kings, and organize the delivery of the annota to a besieged Paris. Indeed, the Genovefa of the *Vita* seems, as Krusch ironically suggested, almost the »Mayor of Paris.«[17] What indeed is the source of her *Herrschaft*? Can we simply credit both Genovefa and Severinus with Weber's charismatic *Herrschaft* while Tarasis and Theoderic represent his patriarchal form?

Let us begin with Tarasis and the ethnic explanation of the events leading to the murder of Aspar and the rise of Zeno. If we could simply credit a Germanic vs. Isaurian power struggle in the court of Leo as generations of scholars have done, our job would be much simpler, and the resulting image would reify the long-held assumptions about the importance of ethnic identities in the struggles for power in the late Empire. However, as Erich Gruen has recently argued, ethnicity was a weak and ambiguous category for social categorization or political organization generally in Antiquity,[18] and we would be well advised to take this into consideration when looking at the events in the court of Leo. One need not go so far as to discount ethnicity as a significant category altogether – the very instances that Gruen investigates indicates that it was an often invoked trope, even if it was seldom determinant, and thus held meaning in classical discourse. However one must be cautious about accepting ethnic identity as determinative in the creation of collations and in the exercise of dominance with-

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15 Lotter, *Severinus von Noricum.* See Schwarcz, Severinus of Noricum between Fact and Fiction. For an early critique of such theses see Averil Cameron's review of Lotter.

16 Heinzelmann, Zum Stand der Genovefa-Forschung; Heinzelmann and Poulin, Les vies anciennes de sainte Geneviève, esp. 3-10. On the importance of Heinzelmann's and Poulin's work see Hartmann-Petersen, *Genovefa von Paris,* 17 and 50-54.

17 »Die Gott geweihte Jungfrau benimmt sich wie ein Mann und vollbringt Thaten, welche einem Maire von Paris zur Ehre gereichen würden, sich aber für ein Mädchen wenig schicken«, Krusch, Die Fälschung der Vita Genovefae, 21. See Heinzelmann, Zum Stand der Genovefa-Forschung, 546.

18 Gruen, Did Ancient Identity Depend on Ethnicity?

in ancient societies. Brian Croke has done just this, overturning the way that we should understand the competition for power in Constantinople in the fifth century.[19] Aspar may have been of Alan descent closely allied with important Gothic commanders, but as Croke has shown, his rise and long term exercise of power, including making possible Leo's own imperial ascendency, was not the result of his ethnic background but his effective role as a military commander and his judicious marriage policies, both for himself and his sons. It was military commands, held by Aspar himself and his son Ardaburius, that was the source of his power, not his ethnic background or the ethnicity of his wives and daughters-in-law. This is not to discount the importance of his close alliance and support with military factions, many of whom were Goths, but to reduce his authority simply to his Gothic support would be to ignore the importance of traditional power politics in the Imperial court. But if his ethnicity did not account for his rise, his religious adherence accounted for the glass ceiling that he and his family ultimately hit up against: his Arianism. Today we recognize that Arianism was not a unified religious movement: in late Antiquity – there were many Arianisms, and doctrinal differences separating orthodox and Arians were often minimal at best.[20] Nevertheless in the courtly world of the fifth century, Arianism did matter greatly, and an Arian emperor could not possibly have gained *»die Herrschaft kraft Interessenkonstellation.«* Aspar could hold to the *de facto* status of the most powerful man in the Empire, but he could never aspire to the *de jure* position, and thus was ultimately dependent on his own creation, the orthodox Leo.[21] But of course Aspar sought the imperial throne, if not for himself then for his family. The weakness of his position and the significance of his confessional identity were demonstrated by the late agreement of his younger son Patricius to convert to orthodoxy upon his marriage to Leo's daughter as a means of securing the position of Caesar and presumptive successor to the aging Emperor. Confession, not ethnicity, was the major obstacle, and a formidable one, particularly with the rising importance of Tarasis.

That Tarasis was Isaurian was no more significant than Aspar's ethnic background and alliance. Many of Constantinople's military figures were also from Isauria, but this was no key to advancement and, as Croke has shown, Tarasis had had risen steadily in imperial service. Famously it was he who, in 465, produced documents that incriminated Aspar's son Ardaburius, who had been commanding in Antioch, in a conspiracy to enter an alliance with Persia.[22] This was no accident: Tarasis had probably been one of Leo's agents sent to investigate Ardaburius's behavior, although his success in exposing Ardaburius and thus putting Aspar and his allies on the defensive led to a dramatic rise in his standing at court.[23] In Croke's careful analysis, the fall of Aspar and the rise of Zeno have nothing to do with ethnicity or anti-Germanic sentiment in Constantinople and everything to do with good, old-fashioned dynastic politics. But there is one other aspect that Croke mentions but that needs further emphasis: Tarasis/Zeno could rise further than Aspar because, unlike the powerful patrician, he was orthodox. Zeno's rise, and the circumstances that made it possible, are best chronicled in the Life of Daniel the Stylite, which describes his service to Leo, his appointment as

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19 Croke, Dynasty and Ethnicity.

20 See Hen, Conclusion: the Elusive Nature of an Orthodox Heresy.

21 On Arianism as a potential boundary see Wood, Multiple Voices in Chronicle Sources, 305-308.

22 *Vita Danielis Stylitae* 55. See Croke, Dynasty and Ethnicity, 160-168.

23 Croke, Dynasty and Ethnicity, 167.

Domesticus, his marriage to Leo's daughter Ariadne, the birth of his son Leo, and following Emperor Leo's death, the succession of the infant and the appointment of Zeno as regent, and his succession as Emperor following his son's death. But more than chronicling Zeno's rise, the *Vita* emphasizes the alliance between the Stylite and Zeno, based on the latter's orthodoxy. As Daniel promised Leo when the Emperor sent Zeno on an military expedition, »as he has the holy Trinity and the invincible weapon of the Holy Cross on his side he will return unharmed.«[24] Zeno's orthodoxy, and the public support this assured him from the wonder-working stylite as well as from the elderly Leo, were central to the ideological foundation of his rule and his ability to achieve what Aspar and his clan could not.

Theoderic, his whole life an Arian, could never be Emperor. Or could he? It is too easy to see his rule in Italy as that of an Arian barbarian king supported by his Gothic army, a rule given but a veneer of *Romanitas* by his secretary Cassiodorus. His early career following his departure from Constantinople and his complex maneuvering in the Balkan provinces prior to reaching an agreement with Zeno that turned him toward Italy, is similar to the intrigues of other generals, Arian or orthodox, around the court. Once in Italy, however, Theoderic's situation changed dramatically. With the elimination of the western general Odoacer, Theoderic was prepared to fill a role desperately desired by the Italian elites, that of Emperor in the West. Of course his Gothic army, actually as heterogeneous as were all other fifth century armies, was essential to his power. But his ability to make himself the center of a constellation of the interests of western Roman elites was what made possible the consolidation of the more significant portions of the Western Empire for decades. The image that emerges from his correspondence penned by Cassiodorus is not just the projection of his learned secretary: it also corresponded to what Italian elites wanted desperately to believe. Thus, as Jonathan Arnold has recently argued, Theoderic was not just another barbarian commander but widely perceived as the restorer of the Empire in the West, a *princeps Romanus* whose martial abilities, embodied in his victorious army, completed the image of a Roman emperor, combining military valor (seen to have been lost in the effeminate East) with the civic virtues of an ideal Roman Augustus.[25] The ideologically balanced and gendered language at Theodoric's court, as well as the panegyrics composed for him by Ennodius, drew on the whole repertoire of imperial ideology. As Procopius wrote, »in governing his own subjects he invested himself with all the qualities which appropriately belong to one who is by birth an emperor.«[26] And yet, as Arian, he could continue to represent himself to his military as other than the effeminate rulers in the East. In this process, practice of power and discourse were inseparable: his ability to practice power was intimately connected to the discourses of imperial power as understood and earnestly sought in the West for over a century.

At the same time that Zeno and Theoderic were dominating their respective empires through the command of complex ideological and religious discourses backed by overwhelming force, dominance on the peripheries of the empire responded to different and less unitary rhythms. The reach of Roman domination did not mean much to the

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24   *Vita Danielis Stylitae*, 65.

25   Arnold, *Theoderic and the Roman Imperial Restoration.*

26   Procopius, *History of the Wars,* 5, 1, 29. Procopius also claimed that Theodoric never assumed the dress (*schematos*) or name of emperor of the Romans, but as Arnold suggests, while he used other titles that harked back to the principate rather than that of Imperator, Procopius may have been mistaken about Theoderic's refusal to wear imperial dress and insignia. See Arnold, *Theoderic and the Roman Imperial Restoration,* chapter 4: The Imperial Image.

beleaguered cities along the Danubian frontier, just as they were of little practical meaning to the threatened cities of northern Gaul. Here very different forms of *Herrschaft*, of domination, mattered, forms that are very difficult to perceive, but which we can perhaps glimpse in the extraordinary careers of Severinus and Genovefa, at least as mediated through the discourses woven by their biographers. It is perhaps best to consider first what these texts do not describe. There are no emperors, no *principes Romanorum*, in the worlds of Gaul and Noricum. Roman officers of any sort are notable primarily by their absence. In Noricum we still find *Romani*, and the rare *tribunus* commanding inadequate troops of frightened soldiers.[27] Odoacer appears briefly, but at the beginning of his career, long before he is *rex* in Italy.[28] An ecclesiastical hierarchy is dimly present, but while various bishops are mentioned, they are mostly individuals who are said later to become bishops: the bishops of Severinus's own day seem to be but shadows.[29] Much more present are the kings of the Rugii and other barbarian tribes pressing on the Roman world, but they too are in fragile situations, as much under threat from their neighbors as are the Romans themselves.

Likewise in Genovefa's Gaul, religious and secular authorities are only dimly present: The bishops she encounters, from Germanus of Auxerre who blesses her on her journey to Britain, or Vilicius of Bourges who consecrates her, are not local to Paris.[30] Indeed, no bishop of Paris is ever named and, apart from a few priests and deacons, Genovefa's interactions are exclusively with the laity.[31] Nor are Roman officials in evidence: in the *Vita Genovefae*, just as in the *Vita Severini*, the only Roman official named is a single *tribunus*, and he is a supplicant to Genovefa.[32] Very much present are barbarian kings, Attila who threatens Paris, and especially the Frankish kings Childeric and his son Clovis, with whom Genovefa negotiates and whom she outmaneuvers. Here she is like Severinus, who could cause the Alemannic king Gibuldus to tremble and secure the release of the king's Roman hostages. Genovefa's world, as constructed by her biographer, is one notably lacking in institutional authority: like Noricum, it is composed of communities of isolated towns, threatened by hostile forces, and largely left to themselves. They are in need of a defender, but no individual can command these hostile forces simply by authority. Severinus and Genovefa step into this vacuum.

True, both are from elite backgrounds, even if it is impossible to know them exactly: While certainly not the Consul Flavius Severinus, Severinus of Noricum came from a noble, senatorial background; he was versed in Roman law and in the niceties of diplomatic ceremonials; his Latin was that of an educated Italian.[33] Genovefa, too, was from an elite background of Gallo-Roman aristocrats, she continued in her adulthood to control estates and servants, had

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27 *Vita Severini,* 4.

28 *Vita Severini,* 7.

29 The tribunus Mamertinus is said to have later become a bishop, *Vita Severini, 4;* Paulinus, later bishop of Tiburnia, came to Severinus as a priest, *Vita Severini, 25*; Severinus orders bishop Constantinus of Lauriacum and his citizens to guard their city and thus they are able to defend against an attack. *Vita Severini,* 30. See Rosenberger, The Saint and the Bishop.

30 Germanus of Auxerre who blessed Genofeva as a child *(Vita Genovefae* 4) and Vilicus of Bourges who consecrates her are the only bishops with whom she has any direct contact *(Vita Genovefae* 6).

31 On Genofeva's interaction with local clergy and the singular absence of bishops see Bitel, *Landscape with Two Saints,* 64.

32 *Vita Genovefae*, 35.

33 *Epistola Eugippii*, 3.

access to public transport, and had what we would call today »access« to the important people of her time.[34] These backgrounds may indeed have been necessary preconditions to their ability to mobilize the communities through which they moved and to negotiate on their behalf with the barbarian kings who increasingly impinged on them, just as Theoderic's Gothic army was a necessary precondition to his dominance of Italy. However elite backgrounds were insufficient to explain their power in the rapidly shifting world of the imperial frontier. Here I think that we must take seriously the authority they derived, not from their inherited status, but from their twin positions as outsiders and as people of God, but people of God outside the disputed hierarchy of the age. Neither had substantial, existing networks in the communities where they were most active: Severinus simply appeared, and in spite of speculations to the contrary, there is no reason to assume a previous period of activity in Noricum. Genovefa arrived in Paris after the death of her parents and initially met determined opposition from within the city. Both became effective by offering the same radically different solution to the crises facing their adopted communities: faced with imminent destruction at the hands of barbarian armies, Severinus counseled prayer, fasting, and works of charity along with military tactics; Genovefa urged the same when Paris feared sacking by Attila[35] but later, when the region is threatened by famine, she personally undertakes to transport of the annona.[36] Traditional responses to external threat: reliance on Roman protection or simple flight, no longer offered security. Instead, these two wonder workers urged an internal response that combined locally organized resistance to external force with a transformation of the local community that was both spiritual and material. Whether this would have worked on Attila is questionable, and Paris's escape from destruction may simply be because it was never Attila's target. But certainly the evocation of a spiritual authority, along with the courage to face barbarian powers, be they Rugian or Frankish kings, and to accept their legitimacy even while demanding their protection, represented a very different approach.

And throughout their careers, neither figure sought to use the credit they received for their political interventions to create a more institutionalized form of power. Severinus, the *vir dei*, rejected the office of bishop and was neither fully a monk nor a hermit:[37] as Ian Wood has argued, he existed on the margins of acceptable religious tradition, closer to the much despised *girovagus* than the kind of reputable abbot as would be demanded within a more settled world.[38] And Genovefa, the *virgo sacrata*, also eschewed the normal behavior of sanctified women who were expected to live as confined anchorites under religious authority, but rather traveled every bit as much as Severinus. Her role was closer to that of the *de facto* bishop of Paris, and yet as a woman there was no possibility of her assuming such a post.[39] Nor did it matter: episcopal office didn't count for much on the edges of an empire. What counted was the ability of leaders to demonstrate their divine authority, then to turn this authority into action in their negotiations with the rising barbarian powers and the waning Roman communities of their day. Miracle working figures, who held no religious office, claimed no imperial authority, and adhered to no doctrinal faction, were best suited to this role.

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34 *Vita Genovefae*, 34. See Heinzelmann and Poulin, 44-46 and 98 on her role in directing the collection and distribution of the annona.

35 *Vita Genovefae*, 10-12.

36 *Vita Genovefae,* 34.

37 *Vita Severini,* 9.

38 Wood, The Monastic Frontiers of the Vita Severini.

39 Again Wood makes the same comparison, Wood, The Monastic Frontiers of the Vita Severini, 49-50.

In conclusion, we have seen the exercise of power at the two poles of the Roman world at the end of antiquity: in Constantinople, dominance continued to work through military force, dynastic politics, and institutional structures, but its limits were defined by the ability to conform to a community's vision of how that power should be exercised, a vision permeated by orthodox opposition to Arianism. In Italy, many of the same rules still applied – the elites still wanted a *princeps*, a Roman emperor who could embody both military and civic virtue, but the troubles of the first half of the century had left a much wider realm for manoeuver in confessional and institutional terms. On the frontier, the remnants of institutional, dynastic, and military power were perceived as inadequate to face the challenges of supporting barbarian power. Rather than imperial office holders supporting legitimate Roman lordship against illegitimate barbarian aggression, or even bishops defending orthodoxy against Arian barbarians, figures such as Severinus and Genovefa drew strength from their very marginality, but used this strength to win the respect and, for a while at least, the protection that they sought for their isolated and threatened communities. This, at least, is how contemporaries wished to understand them, this is how the discourse of power could be represented and operationalized at the end of the Ancient World.

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The First Great Divergence?[1]

R. I. Moore*

The ›Papal Revolution‹ in late eleventh and early twelfth century western Europe and the un-successful campaign by Wang An Shi and his followers to reform the imperial administration of Song China at just the same time are regarded as critical turning points in their respective histories. They are strikingly similar in some crucial respects. Both represented the respon-ses of dominant elites to fundamental challenges to their traditional positions. Similar crises seem to have occurred at the same period in other citied regions of Eurasia. Each resulted, to varying degrees, in the emergence of a new or newly defined learned elite which drew its authority from its role as custodian and interpreter of a body of texts and associated ritual practices held to have been inherited from antiquity or late antiquity. The cultural hegemo-nies thus established in their respective regions endured until c. 1800 or later, constituting the ›civilizations‹ which are seen as the building blocks of modern world history.

I have argued that in Latin Europe the crisis gave birth to an enduring clerical elite whose members accorded over-riding loyalty to nascent governing institutions in church and state rather than to their kin. Elsewhere the cultural power of the learned was essentially direc-ted to sustaining the interests of their kingroups. In 2009, borrowing the phraseology of Kenneth Pomeranz, I suggested that these contrasting outcomes constituted a ›First Great Divergence‹ between western Europe and the other Eurasian ›civilizations‹. In this paper the appropriateness of that description is reconsidered and dismissed, as embodying a sim-plistic teleological polarisation of the kind that Pomeranz had rightly rejected. Rather, it is suggested that the outcome of the general – though not universal – crisis of elites in early second-millennium Eurasia would be better described as a Great Diversification.

Keywords: Rise of the West; East-West Divergence; Europe and China; Middle Ages; bureaucracy; clerical elites; gentry.

A couple of generations ago every student of western European history was taught that one of its formative episodes was the scene at Canossa in 1077, when the Emperor Henry IV knelt in the snow to seek absolution from Pope Gregory VII. This, they were told, was a decisive moment in the struggle of the church for freedom from the lay control which had irredeemably corrupted the clergy and reduced the sacraments to objects of commerce. Car-dinal Humbert of Moyenmoutier had written the manifesto for that struggle in his *Three Books Against the Simoniacs* of 1058; the Roman papacy had been irrevocably committed to it by the pontificates of Alexander II (1062-73) and his successor Gregory VII. Gregory died in 1085, defeated and driven from Rome despite his triumph at Canossa. The bitter strug-gle in which he had embroiled most of Europe, remembered by posterity as the Gregorian

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(or papal) Reform raged on. It was a close-run thing, but by the middle of the twelfth century the reformers had secured control of the papacy. Their goals and the conception of the nature and conditions of clerical office which they embodied thenceforth prevailed unchallenged. In 1215, at the Fourth Lateran Council, their successors drew together the programme, doctrines and achievements of the past century and a half, consolidating and greatly extending the role of the clergy in every aspect of personal life and public affairs.[2]

1077 was also the year in which Wang An Shih, first Counsellor to Emperor Zhao Xu, was forced into retirement by the opponents of the New Policies which he had outlined in his *Myriad Word Proposal* of 1058, and begun to implement vigorously ten years later when he acceded to the highest office. Zhao Xu, like Gregory VII, died in 1085, and under his successor the opponents of the New Policies, led by the historian Sima Guang, consolidated their ascendency at court. But Wang's disciples, like Gregory's, kept up the struggle, and several times regained the advantage, until the death of their last effective leader in 1155.[3]

The chronological coincidences between the two conflicts are alluring, and could easily be multiplied, but the coincidences are much more than chronological. The key goal of the European reformers was to restore the fitness of the clergy for its office. The church, they insisted, could fulfill its mission only with a clergy freed by celibacy from worldly ties and passions, and appointed, ordained and beneficed not by lay magnates but by its ecclesiastical superiors, on the grounds of spiritual fitness alone.[4] Wang An Shi's goal was to mould the *shih* (the learned elite, constituted and defined by success in the examinations for positions in the imperial bureaucracy) into a closely knit managerial corps, co-extensive with an imperial government whose functions would be greatly extended at all levels. Only through such a body, trained and carefully selected for the purpose, he maintained, could general well-being be created and the security of the empire guaranteed. Sima Guang and his supporters complained that Wang's policies destroyed traditional divisions of responsibility, both within the imperial government and, more importantly, between the imperial government and the private domain. Government had no business to interfere in subjects' pursuit of their material interests, Sima insisted, and in doing so threatened the social order, weakened the mutually advantageous inter-dependence of rich and poor, eroded the responsibilities of the family, and undermined the traditional elite whose stability maintained order and underpinned the imperial regime itself.[5]

The eventual success of the papal reforms, including a dramatic sharpening of the theological and political differences between the Latin and the Greek churches, has made their objectives appear to historians as a natural, almost an inevitable step in the unfolding development of Christendom, or Europe, or the West. In the eleventh century, however, ›reform‹ had posed just as radical a threat to the existing social and political order as Wang's New Policies. Church lands and the offices that controlled them formed a substantial proportion of the wealth of every region. At the millennium the concentration and interchangeability of these resources in the hands of magnate families constituted the indispensable basis of local hegemonies throughout western Europe. Conversely, the demand for ›reform‹ threatened the destruction of such hegemonies, entailing a clear and absolute division between secular and

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2　For modern accounts, Morris, *Papal Monarchy*; Robinson, Reform and the Church.

3　Bol, *This Culture of Ours* 212-218, 246-253.

4　Miller, New Religious Movements and Reform; Miller, *Clothing the Clergy*, 177-206.

5　Bol, *This Culture of Ours*, 218-222.

ecclesiastical lands, offices and revenues. Resolution was achieved only after two centuries of bitter and often bloody struggle at every level, through acceptance of the celibacy of the clergy on the one hand, and on the other of strictly monogamous marriage and the severe restriction of rights of inheritance, for example (but by no means always) to the eldest legitimate son alone. The consequent transformation of the family structures and way of life of the nobility were sustained by the promulgation of new forms of piety and spirituality and the development of a new vernacular culture.[6]

The subordination of local hegemony to larger political and ideological structures thus forms the central, and revolutionary, theme of western European history in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. It was just such a hegemony that Sima Guang and his followers defended successfully against the claims of imperial government in China. In both cases the issue was between the proponents of centrally promulgated and directed ›reform‹ and the defenders of traditional local domination, which is to say the family or kingroup, however defined. The question, ultimately, was whether the dominance of and loyalty to the kin could or should be subordinated to a ›higher‹ or transcendent ideal or institution – Church, Empire or State. Sima Guang was perfectly clear that it should not, though he also maintained that the Empire itself depended on the strength and stability of the family.[7] The prevalence of his view meant that the imperial government made no serious attempt before the twentieth century to extend its scope or functions in ways that might undermine the local dominance of the gentry. For historians of China the failure of the New Policies has been the turning point that did not turn, quite as controversial and quite as momentous as the triumph of Gregorian reform for their European counterparts.[8] It did not, however, produce the articulation of such power as an overt political challenge to the imperial regime, or as an alternative to it, in the manner that historians of Europe understand as statebuilding, actual or potential.

Both in Latin Europe and in China the outcomes of these great crises included a comprehensive and authoritative standardisation of the interpretation of their canonical texts, the entrenchment of the position of the learned elites as the interpreters of those texts, and the wider and deeper social diffusion of their interpretations. In Latin Europe these effects were secured, in the wake of Lateran IV, in the first place through the creation of universities, of which the first, at Paris, was granted its first charter in 1215. The regime and culture of the *magistri* they trained spread by way of the courts and chanceries of the national monarchies, and of other lords, both ecclesiastical and secular,[9] as well as through the church itself, even to the level of the parish system for which the Lateran decrees established a comprehensive framework. That in turn contributed to the further concentration of local power and a marked intensification of governance, and of cultural values and expectations associated with it, which nobody had planned.

In China a similar effect was produced by headlong growth in the popularity of the imperial examinations. The number of candidates grew exponentially throughout the period, even though the chance of success – that is, of employment in the imperial administration – declined from about one chance in two in 1023 to one in 100 in 1156 and one in 200 by 1275.[10]

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6 Derived from Duby, *Chivalrous Society; The Knight, the Lady and the Priest; Three Orders*; as developed by, among many others, Moore, *First European Revolution*.

7 Bol, *This Culture of Ours*, 251-252.

8 E.g. Fairbank, *China*, 96-8; Huang, *China*, 118-121; Rossabi, *History of China*, 184-188.

9 Best approached in English through Murray, *Reason and Society* and Southern, *Scholastic Humanism*.

10 Fairbank, *China,* 95.

The imperial bureaucracy, however, was not the only source of employment and influence. To become educated to the extent of sitting the examinations (which presupposed the support of family or patron for many adult years) was in itself a certificate of status and even a degree of competence. The rewards of failure, correspondingly, included those of participation in the establishment and consolidation of local and regional elites.[11] Since the imperial bureaucracy controlled the examination, and with it the goals and curriculum of education at every level throughout the empire, the canon of writings and approved interpretations, established in the century or so before the Mongol conquests and known today as neo-Confucianism, now dominated traditional Chinese literary culture in much the same way that scholasticism did that of Latin Europe, and for even longer. In combination with commercial growth this cultural intensification helped to underpin formidable concentrations of local power.[12]

These dramatic and momentous episodes in the history of China and Western Europe may be seen as part of a wider crisis of the learned elites of eleventh-century Eurasia.[13] It has been suggested that the Comnenian emperors, in Byzantium, tried to create an enhanced official cadre in the twelfth century and were frustrated by noble resistance.[14] The families that provided the rulers of the late ancient and medieval Middle East with their secretaries, clerks and tax collectors had been remarkably successful in maintaining their positions through the Arab conquests and in the Abbasid Golden Age. The Turkish mercenaries to whom the Abbasids began to give way from the late tenth century, however, had both the will and the power to block the independent accumulation of property by their subordinates. To the real and urgent threat of arbitrary and brutal deprivation of both property and office the civilian elites responded by transferring their property to charitable foundations (*waqf*) which became the informal but indispensable means of access to administrative positions as well as to wider social influence. The endowment of mosques and *madraseh* and the investment of authority and prestige in transmission from master to pupil, assertedly traced back to the earliest Islamic times, produced, despite the absence of a centralised supporting political structure, a firmly entrenched clerical caste, the *ulema*, and a sharper and more clearly defined, socially pervasive and effectively enforced Islamic orthodoxy.[15] Though the Turkish conquests of the eleventh century and after in northern India did not produce mass conversion to Islam, the Brahmans were deprived of the patronage and the intimate relationship with political power hitherto afforded by independent Hindu kingdoms. In the southern part of the sub-continent, on the other hand, temple building on an ever more magnificent scale marked intensifying political competition, and hence a central role for the Brahmans in the articulation and leadership of expanding and increasingly sophisticated regional hegemonies.[16]

With these cases chiefly in mind I concluded that the eleventh and twelfth centuries saw a series of crises among the traditional elites of Eurasia. In response cultural frontiers were sharpened and defined within as well as between the macro-regions, as in Christendom between Latin and Greek, and in Sunni Islam between its four great legal traditions. A reinvigorated Brahminism became prominent in South Asia and what is now called neo-Confucianism

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11 Hymes, *Statesmen and Gentlemen*; Bol, *This Culture of Ours*, 58-76.

12 Ebrey, *Family and Property*, 267-8; cf. Bol, *This Culture of Ours*, 8-10.

13 Moore, Eleventh Century in Eurasian History.

14 Kazhdan and Epstein, *Change in Byzantine Culture*, 120-133, 192-195; Magdalino, Enlightenment and Repression.

15 Lapidus, *Islamic Societies*, 273-288.

16 Stein, *History of India*, 116-129; Stein, *Peasant State and Society*, 216-253; Heitzman, *Gifts of Power*, 121-142.

in China. Each region became dominated culturally, and in varying degrees governmentally, by a learned elite which drew its authority from its role as custodian and interpreter of a body of texts held to have been inherited from antiquity, or late antiquity, and, again in varying degrees, of associated ritual and other social practices. Their authority was underpinned by the proclamation and diffusion of new teachings and values, often represented as reform or renewal of the old ones. Accordingly, the learned or clerical elites were differentiated with increasing clarity both within their respective societies and cultures and from each other. In the process the great cultural divisions of settled Eurasia, the world civilizations as we call them, took root and crystallised as the building blocks of modern world history.

That, broadly, is why I wrote in 2009: »Eurasia experienced a Great Divergence in the twelfth century as well as in the nineteenth. The obvious difference is that the first was a divergence of societies and cultures founded on economies in their essentials similar, while in the second rapidly increasing divergence of the economies, with all its consequences, has eroded the differences of culture, to replace them by widening global disparities of wealth and power. Together, however, the two divergences mark an epoch in world history that both made and was made by the complex and changing identities of the citied societies of Eurasia…«[17]

I did not know, of course, that in the same year Walter Scheidel would write, in *Rome and China*: »In terms of state size, state capacity and state institutions we observe a prolonged process of long term convergence that lasted for many centuries but was eventually replaced by a process of increasing divergence that continued into the early twentieth century. I argue that this allows us to speak of a ›Great Convergence‹ that spanned the entire first millennium BCE and the first half of the first millennium CE, until a ›(First) Great Divergence‹ began to unfold from about the sixth century CE onwards.«[18]

The difference of chronology between Scheidel's divergence and mine is of no account. He is no more likely to insist that the contrast he identified developed at an unvaryingly uniform pace than I am to deny that mine had long and tangled roots. More important are the questions begged by both of us, whether Pomeranz's coinage can be appropriately applied to Eurasian history at all in any part of what we still call the medieval period, and what are the implications of doing so.[19] *The Great Divergence*, after all, is the title of a book which not only denied that Europe (or ›the West‹) had an advantage in development over the citied Asian societies before 1800, but argued that the general antithesis between European and Asian societies – ›the west and the rest‹ – which underpinned all assertions and explanations of such long-term advantage is unsustainable both empirically and in principle. In doing so Pomeranz showed that explanations of the assumed superiority of European to Asian development have arisen from the comparison of grotesquely over-generalised spatial units – continents and ›civilizations‹. Comparison, he demonstrated, is meaningful only between carefully selected regions, and even micro-regions. He drew on an immense range of recent scholarship to show how far the traditionally alleged advantages of ›the west‹ depended on

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17   Moore, Medieval Europe in World History, 577.

18   Scheidel, *Rome and China*, 11-12.

19   Pomeranz, *Great Divergence*. I make no attempt here to consider the extensive discussion to which Pomeranz's thesis has given rise, still less the wider debate on the appropriateness of the ›west and the rest‹ dichotomy and Weberian analyses of it.

ignorance of ›the rest‹. He demonstrated consistently and remorselessly that even where an apparent European advantage can be established – in numbers of livestock per capita, for example, or ease of migration from labour-glutted to capital-rich areas, or in access to capital for small enterprises[20] – it remains difficult to show that there were no compensating alternatives. In short, all claims of long-term cultural advantage are vulnerable to two simple questions: given the length of time and the number of variables involved, does this phenomenon necessarily and inescapably lead from **A** to **B**? Even if it did, would it be the only way of getting there? Obvious enough, we may think, for it amounts to the repeated demonstration of a very familiar pedagogic truism, that ›if you change one thing you change everything.‹ It should not have been necessary to reiterate that we cannot assert that one observed difference or set of differences at the beginning of the second millennium led ineluctably to another at its end, but Pomeranz's relentless exposure of the persistent failure of scholars to remember it makes sobering reading.

In adopting the phrase Great Divergence I had been particularly impressed, as we so often are in the early stages of comparison, by the dramatic contrast between, on the one hand, the seductive similarities between Latin Europe and imperial China, whatever period may be under observation, and, on the other, the great differences that subsequently became apparent. That clerical celibacy and the institutions associated with it produced a group of people committed to the development of state institutions at the expense of the local power of their families, not just at the time but as an enduring feature of Latin, or western, European society, seemed especially telling, since exactly the opposite appears to have happened in China, and (despite all the other differences among the three) in the central Islamic lands as well.[21] I identified this as the source of a Great Divergence because it appeared to be at least a condition, perhaps a necessary condition, of the emergence (in Weberian terms) of bureaucratic as opposed to patrimonial government, and with it of the rationality and efficiency that eventually characterised European thought and government. Given the prominence of Weberian rationality in theories of long-term European advantage, and given also that virtually every aspect of ›modernisation‹ as Weber and his followers understood it involved the over-riding of kinship ties and loyalties by wider considerations of responsibility and efficiency, Latin Europe's precocious discovery of an enduring antidote to the iron grip of the family on its ablest siblings was irresistibly seductive.

I still think that the fortuitous creation of a clerical elite whose members were harshly compelled to look to their patrons rather than to their birth-families for sustenance and advancement was at the root of the astonishingly aggressive growth of governance, secular and ecclesiastical, and at all levels, in the Latin Europe of the high middle ages, and that it contributed indispensably to the shaping of European society and culture, as I argued in *The First European Revolution.* I still think that in this respect Latin Europe was different, and as far as I can see uniquely different, from other Eurasian civilizations at that time. Nevertheless, subjecting my proudly hatched Divergence to the cold shower of Pomeranz's logic exposes the term as a fatally flawed description of the trajectories of change in twelfth-century Eurasia. The simple antithesis between family solidarity and centralising institutions obscures a richer spectrum of relationships among family structures, elite formation and cultural and political development.

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20 Pomeranz, *Great Divergence*, 32-36, 82-85, 180-184.

21 Moore, Property, Marriage and the Eleventh-Century Revolution; Moore, *First European Revolution*, 65-146.

In Japan, for example, the old order of Heian was steadily undermined by increasingly assertive local power until it collapsed in the half century following the establishment of the *Kamakura bakufu* in 1185 into a militarised and fragmented polity.[22] In this case, however, the structural political changes seem to have preceded, rather than as elsewhere been precipitated by, the dramatic economic growth generated by a shift to more intensive agriculture, which in Japan is associated with the mid-thirteenth century and beyond.[23] In this case too it is much less easy to discern a cultural leadership as an independent or assertive component of the social order than it is in the cases discussed above.

In Southeast Asia burgeoning agricultural wealth and population growth supported the spectacular development of mighty temple complexes at Pagan and Angkor from early in the eleventh century, to bolster the ritual power of their kings and extend it over hinterlands which formed the cores of modern Burma and Cambodia.[24] The creation of the elaborate irrigation works that supported them, however, seems not to have been the product of any bureaucratic structure, let alone a centralising one, and the extension of royal influence apparently did not entail attempts to undermine or constrict the power of provincial families.[25] Nor is there evidence of a crisis among the elites such as I had postulated, in effect by extrapolation from the consequences of intensive growth in China and Western Europe.[26]

The example of Southeast Asia illustrates very well that particular aspects of a society or culture are not always best accounted for by reference to a formal structure of ideas or institutions. There is indeed good reason to consider that the assumption that they will be is Eurocentric in itself, when it is applied for instance to the diffusion of technological improvement through learned academies or societies for the advancement of knowledge,[27] or to the social influence of ›religion‹ and the nature and operation of beliefs about the supernatural.[28] The variety of formal and informal combinations of connections between and influences among economic, social and cultural change during the Great Transformation of Eurasia at the beginning of the second millennium is too rich, and the variety of their permutations too numerous, to accommodate a simple dichotomy. The differences between the ways in which they contributed to the articulation and consolidation of power at local, national and supra-national levels cannot be said in themselves evidently to confer decisive advantage or disadvantage in a fictional race to modernity. That conclusion will not surprise those who are persuaded, as I am, by Pomeranz's rejection of the traditional presumption that in one way or another Europe ›had accumulated an internally generated economic edge before 1800.‹[29] They will agree that what can be claimed for the transformation of Eurasia that took place between 1000 and 1300 is not a Great Divergence, but rather the beginning of Pomeranz's ›world of surprising resemblances‹ which might be both more accurately and less tendentiously described as a Great Diversification.

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22   Souyri, *World Turned Upside Down*, 29-46.

23   Totman, *History of Japan*, 107-160; Lieberman, *Mainland Mirrors*, 398-406.

24   Lieberman, *Integration*, esp 112-119 (Pagan); 216-33 (Angkor); Reid, *Southeast Asia*, chapter 2.

25   Lieberman, *Integration*, 228-230.

26   Lieberman, *Mainland Mirrors*, 552-553.

27   Pomeranz, *Great Divergence*, 47.

28   Lieberman, *Beyond Binary Histories*, 20-21; Moore, Medieval Christianity.

29   Pomeranz, *Great Divergence*, 16.

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Comparing and Connecting: The Rise of Fast Historiography in Latin and Vernacular (12th-13th cent.)

Lars Boje Mortensen*

This contribution proposes to compare, but also to connect, the rise of a new type of un-learned historical report, ›fast historiography‹, in Latin and vernacular in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Connections are suggested by combining the characteristics of such writing with book and library history as well with social history. New roles of book writing coincided with a larger social spread among authors as well as with a new library horizon – books now began to circulate at higher speed, in greater numbers and in less solemn circumstances. These possibilities were exploited and pushed forward both in Latin and vernacular historiography. This connection has been overlooked for several reasons, primarily because Latin and vernacular literatures are often considered each on their own terms, compartmentalized into two ›traditions‹ in which Latin seems to bear an automatic tag as learned and ecclesiastical. But this is not the case with Gesta Francorum, Galbert of Bruges, Raol (on the conquest of Lisbon), Caffaro, Henry of Livonia etc. – they all resemble the simple account in French of Robert de Clari and others. Related to this argument, the article opens with reflections on canons and paradigms of European medieval historiography (in papal Europe) and suggests that comparisons and connections always spring from certain strong national canons and that the questions they are devised to answer are to a large degree determined by such canonical series. Indirectly the article is therefore also an experiment with comparisons outside the dominant national canons and between non-canonical pieces.

1. Canons and paradigms of the study of medieval historiography

The twelfth and thirteenth centuries were a golden age of historical writing in Europe – and very much so in papal Europe which is our concern here. Chronicles – in the broad sense – proliferated in radically new numbers, new languages, new regions and new forms.[1] This embarassment of riches has had the somewhat surprising effect that both within the fields of history and literature there are fewer household names on a European level than for the early medieval period. The works by Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Isidore, Bede, Paul the Deacon, Widukind, Richer, Liutprand, Dudo and anonymous compilations like the *Liber Pontificalis*, the *Royal Frankish Annals* and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* are iconic for most scholars of the early Middle Ages; this is due to their inherent qualities, but also simply to their preciousness

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1 The range of European medieval historiography, with a spacious definition of chronicle, is now impressively presented in Dunphy, *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle* and in Bak and Jurković, *Chronicon*.

in a period with few grand narratives and to their often decisive structuring impact on historical discourse of the given regions, peoples and institutions in the Middle Ages and beyond.

The lack of a common European canon and the sheer amount of historical writing in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries are two factors which have strongly favoured national, local research on historiography (historical and philological) over general theorization of this striking phenomenon of growth in the written European cultural memory. The bigger picture has also to a large extent been obscured by entrenched research traditions which either concentrate on works in only one language, or which make an *a priori* sharp distinction between Latin and vernacular ›tradition‹.[2] Finally national institutions and academic fields and grant structures continue to attract a main focus on modern national canons of medieval historiography.

This means that the theorization of the field of European medieval historical writing which has to some extent been developed since the 1950s is usually tied to one national set of highly valued texts, particularly Latin and German chronicles from the Empire by German scholars, Latin and French chronicles from France (and beyond) mainly by French, Belgian and American scholars, Latin, English and French chronicles from England mainly by English and American scholars. With the partial exception of a few northern Italian city chronicles (especially if the Early Renaissance is included), the rich historiographies in Iberia, Italy – not to speak of more peripheral ones in Outremer, Central Europe, Ireland, Scandinavia and the Baltic – have had little if any impact on the main theoretical trends which have been concerned with material perceived to be ›English‹, ›French‹ or ›German‹ (even if much of it is written in Latin).[3]

This state of affairs must be kept in mind when we consider questions of comparison and connection. The objectives of comparison as well as the search for new connections are still overwhelmingly being defined by national canons of medieval historiography in which the academic capital inherent in re-contextualising Geoffrey of Monmouth (and Wace), William of Malmesbury, Matthew Paris, Villehardouin, *Grandes Chroniques de France*, Joinville, *Kaiserchronik*, Annalista Saxo, Otto of Freising and Giovanni Villani tend to reproduce existing systems of relevance and to explain series of historical writings.[4] On the other hand, the emerging dominance of English as a scholarly language and a number of excellent series of editions and translations potentially pulls in the opposite direction by making a much larger set of texts from all of Europe (and beyond) available for non-specialists.[5]

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2 Brandt, *Shape of Medieval History* presented a clear formula for this dichotomy, perhaps more symptomatic of a widespread practice than theoretically influential.

3 This does not imply that dissatisfaction with receding approaches and experiments with new ones did not appear independently in local research traditions in these ›peripheral‹ scholarly environments. The strong bias towards modern empires/dominant nations is codified in Denys Hay's influential *Annalists and Historians* from 1977.

4 Guenée, *Histoire et culture historique*, Deliyannis, *Historiography in the Middle Ages*, and Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History* are partial exceptions to this – all making excellent pleas for the importance of (western) medieval historical writing in its entirety – but the weight is still to a large degree on ›French‹, ›English‹ and ›German‹ examples. Kersken, *Geschichtsschreibung im Europa der »nationes«,* is a comprehensive study of a historiographical genre ("national history") which addresses historiographical canons in central and northern Europe; Mortensen, *Making of Christian Myths,* Garipzanov, *Historical Narratives and Christian Identity*, and Agapitos and Mortensen, *Medieval Narratives between History and Fiction,* are examples of collective volumes which try to counterbalance the dominant nations' perspective. The series edited by Kooper, *The Medieval Chronicle,* has done much to open up a wider European space in the field.

5 The rapidly increasing availablity of first class editions with English translations is to a large degree due to Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford), Central European Medieval Texts (CEU), and Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library (Harvard). A new series of monographs on medieval historiography is being initiated as York Studies in Medieval Historiography (Boydell and Brewer).

The conceptual frameworks and the ultimate epistemological targets for studying medieval historiography (again and in the following shorthand for the chronicles of papal Europe) has undergone several main shifts since nineteenth- and twentieth-century historicism and source criticism. By outlining a few main characteristics of these trends I aim to contextualize one particular dynamic of European historical writing of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries which I think remains undertheorized.

None of the theoretical frameworks – including the original systematic study of medieval historical ›sources‹ – are exhausted, although from a 2015 perspective they cannot help falling into the categories of residual and emergent paradigms. In a perceptive introduction to a collective volume on the remarkable early twelfth century chronicler Galbert of Bruges, Jeff Rider and Alan Murray venture to call the positivistic approach to chronicles an ›aberration‹; they date this approach to the period c. 1870-1970 and rightly characterize it as viewing the relationship between the representation and the ›reality‹ behind it as completely arbitrary: the ›reality‹ behind the narrative could have been provided by any other narrative and it remained a firm epistemological substance in spite of our limited access to it.[6] The rhetoric, the partial viewpoint and interests of the author, the language, the key concepts, the medium and the art of representing can all, in principle, be peeled away methodically to reach real history. While perhaps few today would subscribe to such a procedure in which neither individual or communal memories and interests nor language have a place, I still think there is an important distinction to be made between individual references in a medieval text to dates, persons, places and events that can easily be translated into modern textbook ›facts‹ and the status of fully composed textual representation. In the analysis of Frank Ankersmit, an entire history book (or medieval chronicle we might add) does not *refer* to an exisiting past object like a simple reference to an event – it rather defines it and argues for its relevance in a specific historical discourse. The relationship holding between the full representation (say, of the First Crusade) and the represented (the First Crusade as a historical sequence) is one of verisimilitude and persuasiveness rather than of truth as in the case of single references in the text. The First Crusade is not a thing which can be neutrally signified but is both constituted, delimited and valorised by (differing) linguistic representations; while single statements of a contemporary chronicle or a modern monograph on the First Crusade are falsifiable, the complete representation is not – it serves to persuade, combine, evoke, not to be ›true‹ like a disconnected list of facts.[7] On the level of reference the positivistic approach is as valid as ever, but on the level of representation and relevance it has indeed turned out to be an ›aberration‹.

When a new epistemological object for the study of medieval historiography began to emerge especially in German scholarship in the 1950s and 1960s – the medieval mind behind the chronicles – it should not only be ascribed to new and better hermeneutical thinking, but also to the saturation of a perfectly successful paradigm which endeavoured to extract all the facts from a fragmentizing study of medieval historical texts in order to *substitute* medieval narratives with modern ones. This substitution of narratives had been the primary goal since the beginning of historicism in the early nineteenth century – and it brought with it a renaming of the medieval texts away from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century learned editions as *monumenta* (although these are still conserved in the Monumenta Germaniae Historica (MGH) which began in the 1820s.) into the later nineteenth-century ›sources‹.[8] When the

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6   Rider and Murray, *Galbert of Bruges*, 9.

7   Ankersmit, *Historical Representation.*

8   Cf. Mortensen, Nordic Medieval Texts.

gain of modern scientific historical narratives was large enough, the tide turned and scholars could again afford to see medieval chronicles as meaningful complete entities composed with a rhetorical and artful purpose. The previously primary interest of establishing facts on the reference level did not go out of fashion because of failure, but because of overwhelming success.

As the history of mentalities became trendsetting in the 1970s and 1980s it gave rise, in the study of medieval historiography, to numerous illuminating studies of the type »the world of [medieval historian]« and medieval chronicles were now, and continue to be, read in their entirety for their contribution to the history of ideas. The medieval texts revealed a *Geschichtsbild*: the sum of historical imagination (*Vorstellung*), already structured, although not in a reflective way – a spontaneous view of the past one might say, in principle individualized but with many common elements. On the more intellectual and reflective level – again following Hans-Werner Goetz – we find the historical consciousness (*Geschichtsbewusstsein*) which incorporates both concrete historical knowledge, a conscious ordering of it and a meta-level of reflection on the purpose of history. Medieval historiography is always an excellent source for the historical consciousness of the writer, and it may be studied with great profit for instance for the comparative history of political ideas and attitudes.[9]

One of the many important theoretical inputs for the characterization of European medieval historiography that was produced by this paradigm was the elaboration of biblical typology and its pervasive presence in all types of chronicles, ecclesiastical as well as ›secular‹ (in effect defying this category). Although it remains debated whether typology should be defined exclusively from its transfer from Biblical exegesis into historical writing or whether the importance of distant models for later figures, events etc. reflects a more fundamental (perhaps even not specifically Christian) way of embodying past, present and future in one image, it is certain that typology with its biblical inspiration and confirmation was a primary structuring device in medieval historical consciousness.[10]

Two important and related theoretical developments beginning in the 1980s and 1990s, whose force has certainly not abated, were the new interests in literacy (including new philology and manuscript studies)[11] and in rhetoric. These brought both another body of fundamental texts – classical rhetoric and historiography – and a new emphasis on communication and audience into medieval historiographical scholarship.

The classical frame of reference (especially from ca. 1050 and onwards) was shown to be much more solid and pervasive than previously assumed in 19th and early 20th century classicist/positivist disdain of what was perceived as subaltern medieval (Latin) writing. Second only to biblical studies and typology, the presence of classical historiography and rhetoric has now been firmly established as a distinctive element of medieval European historiography.[12]

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9   Goetz, *Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbewusstsein*, 26; comparative history of political ideas through historiography: Bagge, Medieval Societies and Historiography (which deals with the most canonical works only but from a wide geography, including a Byzantine example); Bagge, *Kings, Politics, and the Right Order*.

10 The present status of research in typology and historiography is excellently summarized and covered in Kretschmer, *Typologie biblique*.

11 Cf. Mortensen, Change of Style.

12 Recently presented and summarized magisterially in Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History*, who also integrates Jewish (Josephus) and late antique Christian historiography and learning into the medieval heritage from antiquity. Key works on the rhetorical and classical impact on medieval culture were Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics and Translation*, and Munk Olsen, *Étude des auteurs classique latins*.

In fact one might argue in a broader comparison that it is more distinctive of Europe than Scripture because a similar wealth and sustained input of distant ›pagan‹ resources were not available in Arab, Persian, Indian or Chinese written culture.[13]

As stated, emphasis on literacy and rhetoric has shifted the focus from authorial mind-set to ways of communication and the impact of audiences, addressed, real and imagined. This tendency to view medieval historical narratives as expressions and negotations of and by (mainly elite) communities has been strengthened by the interest in collective identities and cultural memory since the turn of the millenium. These trends were in important ways prepared by research strands already developed previously, talking about the ›social logic‹ of historiographical texts (Spiegel) and the horizon of expectation decodable in medieval texts in general (Jauss). Where the history of mentality had to exclude both the production and the reception side of the equation in order to establish the firm and unmoving object of the ideas and mentality of the author, collective identity studies have to a certain extent dissolved this solid entity through a new sensitivity to how socially determined everything about writing history must have been: the education of the author, the resolve to write (very rarely a private matter),[14] the readings, the formative aspect of the writing process itself (deemed irrelevant in mentality history as the writing was a reflection of a state of mind), dialogues and interviews informing the work, the authorial imagination of an immediate, and (often) of a more distant readership, the work as a speech act designed to come to terms with a crisis or to sketch out a space mediating between conflicting parties,[15] the material conditions of book production during all phases of composition, dissemination, storing, use and preservation. Finally, the interest in cultural memory opened the rich European historiographical record of the Middle Ages up to a field in which it must be seen as just one type of ›memory act‹ which is not so easily distinguishable from – and must be analysed together with – those made in liturgy, fictional or semi-fictional writing, art, archicture and other material culture.[16]

The following suggestion of what I think is an overlooked dynamic of twelfth- and thirteenth century historiography originally sprang from a random superficial comparison of two crusading chronicles, namely Robert de Clari's French Chronicle of the Fourth Crusade (completed c. 1216) and Henry of Livonia's Latin Chronicle on the German Baltic mission in the decades after 1200 (completed 1227).[17] The two chronicles have nothing to do with each other, ecxept their relation to contemporary vague common ideas of crusading, part of their *Geschichtsbild* which can be analysed better in other and more reflective crusading texts, nor do they belong to major national canonical series of texts in which they would be linked. But

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13   Cf. Arnason, *Civilizations in Dispute*, 329: »But the very novelty of Western Christian attitudes to traditions – from the twelfth century onwards—may, from another angle, be seen as evidence of uniqueness. The constitutive but contested and variously redefined role of a classical legacy is one of the most distinctive aspects of the Western European civilizational complex.«

14   Galbert of Bruges may be one of the few exceptions and even his work was conceived with a specific peer group in mind (Rider and Murray, *Galbert of Bruges*).

15   Historiography as an answer to crisis: Goetz, Religious Dimensions; and as the voice of a broker: Reimitz, Historian as Cultural Broker.

16   The opening towards fiction was already visible in Deliyannis, *Historiography in the Middle Ages*; for a full engagement with the relations between fiction, semi-fiction and history, see Agapitos and Mortensen, *Medieval Narratives between History and Fiction.*

17   Robert de Clari, *La Conquête*, ed. Lauer; a new introduction to Robert in English with references to recent scholarship and English translation of the chronicle is found in Beer, *In Their Own Words*, 57-68. Henry of Livonia, Chronicon, ed. Arbusow and Bauer; the study of Henry now rests on a very firm footing with the groundbreaking and very comprehensive English companion: Tamm *et al., Crusading and Chronicle Writing.*

by thinking about their common lack of classical and patristic learning and about their status as eye-witness reports written (or dictated) by non-intellectuals I realized that their communicative situation was very similar and that the key to this similarity must be theorized in terms of both book- and library history, of the changing status of authors and book consumption, and of a new horizon of writing which is gradual enough not to have been noticed by contemporaries but dynamic enough to be visible in a longer perspective. The two texts, in short, do not belong to two different ›traditions‹ but to the same fascinating moment when long historical accounts began to be written into books without clear pretensions of extending the Roman/Christian master narrative or being written for eternity. By combining the frameworks of rhetorical analysis, book and library history, with theories of literary communication emphasizing the social process of writing and its horizon (or intended/implied audience), a random comparison may turn into a historical connection after all.[18]

2. Medieval ›humanist‹ Latin writing – slow and intertextually grounded

The historiographical norm that writers like Henry and Robert differed from could be called learned or ›humanist‹, and up to this period it was almost exclusively in Latin. One important characteristic of this learned, ›humanist‹, Latin historiography of the eleventh and twelfth centuries was its firm relation to a set of old authoritative writings, pagan and Christian. Looking at monumental historical texts from the long twelfth century, from, for instance, Adam of Bremen (Hamburg, c. 1070) up to Saxo Grammaticus (Lund, c. 1200) we are first and foremost confronted with literary discourses which are in constant dialogue with a whole library of classical, patristic and earlier medieval books. This is obvious both on the level of direct quotations from Roman poets, references to learned treatises like Solinus, Pliny and others, but also quite clear in many instances in literary devices used by these medieval humanists. One could mention Adam's use of Sallust in shaping the character of archbishop Adalbert, Cosmas of Prague's conflation of biblical and classical models for his Bohemian people seeking a home, Geoffrey of Monmouth's, William of Malmesbury's, Otto of Freising's and Saxo Grammaticus' vast reading of ancient Roman history used as information about, model for, or contrast to their own national histories.[19]

This highly learned approach to the past operated through what one might label as a strong *intertextual grounding*. These authors were writing new monumental books to be placed besides existing authoritative books on the shelves of episcopal and monastic libraries. Every textual manifestation of this sort understood itself as an extension of biblical, patristic and Roman narrative books and they advertised this attitude in various ways. The new narratives belonged directly to the highest and most sacred level of historical writing, and they were composed to go into polished parchment volumes of the highest caliber – thus borrowing the ceremonial status and exclusivity of liturgical books.

This positioning of a new text within a horizon of heavily charged and foundational books was signalled from the very first words, namely through the exquisite game of exordial *topoi*. Here the authors are at their most subtle, the importance of their subject and themes is

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18   The argument of the present paper is closely linked to those made in two related papers, one in print (Mortensen, Latin as Vernacular), the other, on the sudden success of prose, in preparation.

19   Otto of Freising's learned writing is well contrasted to Henry of Livonia's in Arbusow, *Liturgie und Geschichtsschreibung*. Arbusow's analysis should be read now with the corrective by Undusk, Sacred History, but the general difference in the level of learning between the two remains.

explained and the relation between author, patron and primary audience is hinted at.[20] What complicates matters here are both the impact of models for the prologue as well as the indeterminacy of the communicative situation. On the one hand authors are delivering goods to their commissioners or are addressing themselves to their peers, on the other the Latin language and the monumental sacrality of their undertaking is placing their work in dialogue with ancient books and with eternity. The here-and-now of literary discourse is constantly fused with the universal pretensions of an author speaking about universal history in an eternal medium – the calligraphed Latin book.

The strong direct grounding on other books can also be seen in terms of Latinity and in the chronological and spatial framework. Although the authors mentioned in this category represent rather different styles, they all strive for a certain variation and richness (*copia*). Their subjects are worthy of a high style often leaning in the direction of one or two main models (*Leitautoren*). The level of execution and finish is usually very high – whether our authors have used most efforts on prose rhythm, alliteration, elaborate rhetorical figures, a fine-tuned purism of vocabulary, a subtle linking of narrative, argumentative and direct speech elements, poetic vocabulary and poetic word order in the prose, or indeed on all of them. All use typical devices of learned Latin which endow their narratives with significance and multidimensional meaning and which demand, on the part of the authors, an active mental library of authoritative biblical and Roman texts, a sophisticated linguistic sensibility, and a lot of time.

In terms of chronological framework these works also display a strong dependence on universal schemes learnt from canonical works. This can either be in explicit terms like William of Tyre's careful dating of Palestine history in relation to Papacy and Empire or in more implicit but elaborate schemes like that of Saxo.

Local geographical space is similarly strongly linked to the great Christian master narrative. The definition of missionary territory is carefully laid out in works like Adam of Bremen and the late twelfth-century anonymous *Historia Norwegie*. The *Historia Norwegie*, like Saxo's and many other national histories, contains an introductory treatise on geography which plays with both Roman and biblical geography. In sum it was clearly important to make an explicit case of continuity and contiguity with the language, the chronology and the geography of the old Roman and Christian canonical writings in order to share the same book shelves and make a bid for a similar authority in the future.[21] Or to put it differently, new works of this kind had to include and express the entire array of relevant learning. At some level an encyclopedic urge was behind such efforts: the old is contained in the new, and the new is really only an expression of the old. The ›Library‹ is made to be present in each new work and is represented by it.

Now it might be objected that such features are natural for monumental and foundational texts. But I would claim that many smaller eleventh- and twelfth-century histories are governed by the same rules. I shall only mention three Nordic examples from the last decades of the twelfth century, but the strong intertextual grounding in those texts are inspired by the trends set by Anglo-Norman, French and German learning of the time. Two pioneering national Nordic histories are almost contemporary around 1180 and 1185, namely the *Historia de antiquitate regum Norwagensium* by Theodoricus Monachus[22] and the *Brevis*

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20 Recent analyses of aspects of Saxo's and William of Tyre's complex prefaces are given by Friis-Jensen, Adhering to the footprints; Mornet, Saxo Grammaticus; Mortensen, From Vernacular Interviews; Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History*, 30-31.

21 Cf. Mortensen, Language of Geographical Description.

22 Theodoricus Monachus, *Historia*, ed. Storm; English translation with notes in Theodoricus Monachus, *An Account,* ed. McDougall and McDougall.

historia regum Dacie by Sven Aggesen,[23] probably both canons at the archiepiscopal sees of, respectively, Trondheim and Lund. Both works are unassuming in size and apologetic about their insignificance. Nevertheless they both flag up the libraries that went into them through elaborate exordial pieces and rich references to biblical and ancient history. Theodoricus writes a rather simple style but enriches the Norwegian past by numerous digressions which make out a small historical encyclopedia, and Sven Aggesen displays the potential of recent international learning by writing in a peculiar poetic style with a recherché vocabulary. The same can be said about a third text, the anonymous *Profectio Danorum in Hierosolymam* from around 1200. Although just a brief account of a failed Dano-Norwegian contribution to the Third Crusade, again the Latin style and the ambitious reproduction of high-level crusading discourse gives away the work as a typical twelfth-century humanist piece.[24]

3. The emergence of fast historiography

There is certainly a perceivable difference when considering a text like Henry of Livonia's peculiar Baltic crusade chronicle from the 1220s.[25] Where should we turn to find Latin historical narratives which read like him? By this I mean works with a weak intertextual grounding and without ambitions of representing the universal ›Library‹ in itself; a narrative which reads more like a report and which only uses one of the possible subtexts inherent in the Latin language – namely the liturgical expressions analysed by Arbusow – and discards to play with its long and charged history of gnomic expressions, rhetorical figures and literary devices.[26] Furthermore we are looking for a kind of historical narrative that is not averse to borrowings from one or more vernacular languages to find the right term and which is structured with more concern for linear story-telling than for the construction of literary themes and striking historical portraits.

The linearity itself would make one think of *Annals* as the place to look for this more one-dimensional type of historical writing. In terms of Latin style one certainly finds a simpler level in many annals all the way from Carolingian works and through the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. But they were usually written either directly into calendars related to liturgy or they were set up as extensions to world chronicles stemming from Jerome, Bede or Isidore. In this way most annals were very strongly grounded in the Library as they were not even new texts with a number of canonical subtexts, but rather texts written in the margins of the great works compiled in antiquity or the Early Middle Ages. Some famous annals do part from their marginal discourse (even if not from their physical book- or library connection to the authoritative point of departure). But those efforts seem to have been very open again to eleventh- and twelfth-century humanism, as in the celebrated case of Lampert of Hersfeld who composed his careful and eloquent work towards the end of the eleventh century by using Livy's first decade in a complex way as a stylistic and conceptual reservoir.[27]

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23 Sven Aggesen, *Historia brevis regum Dacie*, ed. Gertz; Sven Aggesen, *The Works of Sven Aggesen*, ed. Christiansen; on Sven Aggesen as a pioneer, Mortensen, *Historia Norwegie*.

24 *Historia de profectione Danorum*, ed. Gertz. The crusading discourse of the text has been analysed by Skovgaard-Petersen, *A Journey to the Promised Land*.

25 Henry of Livonia, *Chronicon*, ed. Arbusow and Bauer.

26 See note 19 above.

27 Lampert of Hersfeld, *Annales*, ed. Holder-Egger. For Lambert's authorial role see Mortensen, Rhetoric of the Latin Page. A comprehensive study of Lampert and his political thought is included in Bagge, *Kings, Politics, and the Right Order.*

Another promising set of texts is Henry of Livonia's two predecessors in describing Saxon mission towards heathens in the North, namely Helmold of Bosau and his continuator Arnold of Lübeck whose chronicles were composed respectively c. 55 and fifteen years before Henry of Livonia's.[28] They both write a more straightforward Latin style than the time-consuming prose to be found in a number of works mentioned above – and in this respect they point the way to Henry's mode of writing. But they still belong to a literature that wants to incorporate and display the internalized Library by way of exordial topoi, geographical and ethnographic description, interspersed verses of their own or of Roman making, literary portraits of main protagonists, and a number of inserts of letters and other thematic concerns which vie with the linearity of the account.

But there is a group of texts which can be likened to Henry of Livonia's chronicle. This new way of writing Latin historical prose – which I would characterize as narratives with a weak intertextual grounding – began to emerge in the twelfth century. The first text I can think of which would fit this category is the famous anonymous eye-witness account of the first crusade, the *Gesta Francorum*, written shortly after the events of 1096-99 by a member of Bohemund of Tarento's army.[29] The lack of context and intertext is very striking. There are no exordial topoi, a very one-dimensional style which at best incorporates a few commonpla-ces from the bible, no thematization of Jerusalem, no attempt to locate the important events in the geographical and chronological discourse prevalent in contemporary writing, and no literary portraits – in short a peculiar text obviously composed in haste by a man of little le-arning. The contradiction between the magnitude of the events described and the linguistic and rhetorical level of the text came as a shock to contemporary intellectuals in France, and within a short time no less than three proper histories were shaped from this material by Guibert of Nogent, Baudri of Bourgeuil and Robert of Reims.[30]

A few decades after the *Gesta Francorum*, Galbert of Bruges wrote the chronicle already mentioned which reveals many of the same features. Let me quote Jeff Rider and Alan Mur-ray again: »But for Galbert, Latin was first and foremost a working language, the language in which one wrote, rather than the vessel of a literary tradition. His work is written in Latin, but it does not belong to the Latinate tradition. It is a secular, popular work, written when one did not yet write in secular, popular languages.«[31] Though I would avoid the ill-defined term ›tradition‹ here, Rider and Murray effectively describe the phenomenon of ›fast‹ or ›un-grounded‹ historiography of which Galbert can be quoted as one of the first examples. The same lack of contextualization and intertextual grounding beyond the biblical and litur-gical also appears in yet another crusading eye-witness account from the twelfth century, namely the Anglo-French priest and crusader Raol's report on the Conquest of Lisbon from 1147/48.[32]

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28 Helmold of Bosau, *Chronica Slavorum*, ed. Stoob; Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, ed. Pertz.

29 *Gesta Francorum*, ed. and transl. Bréhier. An up-to-date introduction and analysis is given by Beer, *In Their Own Words*, 19-37. I would put more emphasis on the dictation (which is ›possible‹ according to Beer) – in fact there is no reason to presume that the author knew or ›wrote‹ Latin: he could have dictated in Romance (like Robert de Clari and probably Caffaro and others, see below) and the scribe could have spelled and morphologically corrected as he was taking it down.

30 The reactions to *Gesta Francorum* is discussed with further references in Mortensen, Change of Style, and Beer, *In Their Own Words*, 19-37.

31 Rider and Murray, *Galbert of Bruges*, 4.

32 *De Expugnatione Lyxbonensi, The Conquest of Lisbon*, ed. and transl. David.

A new type of annalistic reporting can fall into this category as well. Like Henry of Livonia, it is content to let the sequence of years be a very dominant textual feature with no apparent link to the Christian master narrative that other annals explicitly or implicitly continue. A chief example of this would be the Genuese consul, diplomat and chronicler Caffaro (1080/81-1166) who presented his *Annals* for the Genuese council in 1152.[33] Caffaro is often counted as the first lay historian in the Middle Ages, and this is an early form of merchant and city magistrate literature. Caffaro seems to have kept brief annual notes going all the way back to 1100, and the form in which we have them in now is mediated by a professional scribe. A syntactically simple Latin full of italianisms and minimal literary aspirations give away the merchant turned writer (or rather *dictator*). His work was officially acknowledged by the Genuese council, ordered to be copied, kept and continued as part of the city archives.

This type of historical writing, then, seems to have emerged during the twelfth century, but it became much more pronounced during the thirteenth century. As a final example I would like to mention another report – rather a travelogue then a piece of historical writing – written some 30 years later than Henry of Livonia's Chronicle. I am thinking of Rubruk's account of his journey to the Great Khan in Karakorum in the years 1253-55.[34] His language and narrative is almost the complete opposite of learned humanist Latin purism – full of loanwords from a number of foreign tongues and written in a simple, almost oral Romance syntax. Rubruk's complete lack of literary orientation and structuring may be one of his appeals to modern readers, but it also sometimes makes him difficult to follow because of missing introductions of persons and events.[35] There is a veneer of biblical quotations, but no intertextual grounding, geographical or chronological overview or other hints at learning derived from books.

How are we to contextualize the development of this way of historical writing which gradually shows up during the twelfth century but really becomes a trend in the thirteenth century and of which Henry of Livonia is a splendid Latin example and Robert de Clari one of the first vernacular instances? Several factors are interplaying.

(1) On one level the development of written culture in general is crucial. The explosion in the number of both books and charters during the thirteenth century was accompanied by faster reading and writing habits.[36] In this way writing in books was loosened from its primarily sacred connotations and practices which had been dominant up to c. 1200, and which favoured slow writing and reading and the exclusivity of a polished and intertextually grounded Latin. On a very concrete level this is evident in the organization of libraries and archives and, not least, in the history of script. Although Gothic *textualis* in its accomplished form is not necessarily faster to execute for a trained scribe than the preceding protogothic or carolingian bookhand, the development of a gothic cursive in the thirteenth century is clear evidence of this.[37] But even within the *textualis* bookhand one can point to better word division and increased number of standard abbreviations both of which save time and space.

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33 Caffaro, *Annales*, ed. Pertz, 11-39. Now available in a richly annotated English translation by Hall and Phillips (Caffaro, *Genua*, ed. Hall and Phillips).

34 William of Rubruk, *Itinerarium*, now available in a splendid edition with introduction, commentary and notes by Paolo Chiesa: William of Rubruk – Guglielmo di Rubruk, *Viaggio in Mongolia (Itinerarium),* ed. Chiesa.

35 The positive side for the modern reader is certainly also very striking as Rubruk writes in an immediate and personal tone, as well explained by Chiesa, *Viaggio in Mongolia*, xlvii: »Sopratutto, egli non si vergogna di manifestare le proprie sensazioni e i propri sentimenti, cosa non troppo comune nella letteratura in latino del Medioevo [...]. Questo sopratutto dà fascino al testo e costituisce la sua eccezionalità.«

36 Cf. Melve, *Med ordet som våpen*, 93-106, with further references.

37 Derolez, *Palaeography of Gothic Manuscript Books*, 69-70.

(2) Linked to this new, less sacred and more efficient attitude to the writing of books is the contemporary rise of vernacular literatures across Western Europe. By the thirteenth century historical prose accounts had developed or were being developed in Old Norse, French, German and other languages. The very existence of such works were also framing contemporary Latin chronicles in a new way. It is tempting to see the contemporary proliferation of Latin and vernacular fast writing as interrelated phenomena. As books of this kind began to fill a larger social space and to turn up in larger numbers outside monastic and episcopal libraries, the greater speed and volume was catered for both by vernacular writing and a new less ceremonial mode of Latin writing. What set Latin free, so to speak, were the same dynamics that favoured the development of vernacular prose.

(3) Another factor to be taken into account, although it did not influence Henry of Livonia or Robert de Clari in any direct way, is the mass of university writing that began being produced in the decades just around 1200. The world of school books and advanced theological, juridical, philosophical and scientific writings had become impossible to keep track of within a few decades. The scholastic mode of writing Latin called for precision and efficiency, not fine-tuned literary rhetoric. This partial change of Latin into a precise and speedy medium of communication happened in Henry's and Robert's lifetime; when they wrote, the lack of intertextual grounding would be much more natural than at the time of *Gesta Francorum* a hundred years earlier.

(4) Finally one should consider social factors. What shocked early twelfth-century French intellectuals about *Gesta Francorum* was no doubt the level of education of the author. Like Raol who reported about the Lisbon expedition, like Galbert of Bruges, Henry of Livonia and William of Rubruk we are here facing people outside the highest ecclesiastical echelons and institutions – with their inherent ideas about exclusivity of writing and intricate presence of authoritative texts in any new text. Caffaro did belong to the highest stratum of Genuese society, but the social context was new as a background for Latin historical writing: it was not connected to the landowning aristocracy or to ecclesiastical institutions. On the macro-level I think it is safe to say that the main stream of historiography during the twelfth century (of which 95 % or more was in Latin in papal Europe) was written by ecclesiastics of high aristocratic extraction or, at least, by members of the upper circles of episcopal or monastic institutions. The less exclusive and less educated mode of writing as exemplified by Galbert of Bruges, Raol, Henry of Livonia and William of Rubruk can therefore also be explained in terms of various lower strata conquering a voice in the definition of cultural memory. This mode emerged in the twelfth century but really came into its own, both in Latin and in the vernacular, in the thirteenth century.

A number of features would perhaps tempt us to classify this new fast writing as administrative rather than literary. The lack of a proper prologue can be accounted for by the letter-quality of their reports (also found in Raol, Robert and Rubruk for instance). They were composed in relative haste, and the words spoken at the delivery of the book (to the papal legate, king, aristocratic patron, city council etc.) would have filled the function of a prologue.

Whatever we want to make of the modern distinction into administrative and literary modes,[38] it was a new age for both Latin and vernacular historical writing – not through a complete substitution of the demanding mode of strong intertextual grounding, because it

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38 Benoit Grévin's masterly analysis of Pierre de la Vigne's highly literary ›administrative‹ letters sets a new standard for how careful we should be with that distinction (Grévin, *Rhétorique du pouvoir médiéval*).

continued to exist – but by adding a new way of going about writing about the past; it was a comparatively quick mode of enlarging the Library without too much concern for or knowledge about it. This efficient and less purist mode of writing made Latin – as did contemporary university culture – an even more vibrant living language which involved people more widely across the social spectrum; at the same time the emerging vernacular prose literatures provided yet another outlet for unlearned report writing, in the beginning catering for the landowning warrior class but with an inbuilt potential of larger social inclusion as well.

My claim in short is that there is *one* new fast mode of historical writing emerging in the period which can hardly be explained by one factor, but which needs to be theorized across Latin and vernacular in terms of a larger incentive and technological possibility of writing reports for immediate request and consumption operating together with a new horizon of writing beyond a specific learned mode and beyond the confines of solemn episcopal and monastic libraries.

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Historical Anthropology –
A View from »South China«

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This note summarizes key analytical themes that a group of us who works on Chinese culture and history have given much thought. They are 1) text and life worlds, 2) local and translocality, 3) the past in the present, 4) unity and diversity in Chinese culture, 5) structuring and human agency.[1]

In 1985, David Faure and I bonded with young historians from Guangzhou, China. At the time, we were concerned with the link between historical texts and their meaningful contexts. We were inspired by the French Annales School of historical research, in particular, the anthropologically oriented work of Marc Bloch. Just as French historians were exploring the multi-scalar factors in economy, society and culture that underlay the unfolding of historical events, anthropologists were moving away from evolutionary, functional or structuralist views of culture. These scholars began to stress culture's processual, negotiated construction in time and space. Anticipating synergy, we increasingly focused on purposeful, meaningful actions of individuals and groups who make history as they make their life-worlds.

Over the years, we have exposed our China colleagues to classic works in European historiography (Jacques Le Goff, Georges Duby, E. P. Thompson, Natalie Zemon Davis, among others). The works cover topics ranging from economy and class to contested worlds of meaning and moral imagination. We also explored works by social scientists who appreciate the interpretive and historically contingent nature of culture, power, and place. Their analytical lenses extend from individual human agents to non-Eurocentric world systems.[2]

Synergizing their insights, our historical anthropology combines critical social theories with careful scrutiny of ethnographic encounters and archival texts. We sleuth the marginalized and silenced voices hidden between the lines of seemingly hegemonic frames of mind and matter. A critical reading of texts helps us uncover multiple meanings in the narratives we come across in archives and in fieldwork.

Our walking the field in South China has earned us a label, the South China Gang. We have never identified ourselves as such because our work intentionally reaches far beyond a regional identity. We are deeply engaged with local history. However, we do not stop at pursuing micro empirical details of a particular place or event. Instead, we meticulously glean information from varying sources, be they official or popular, local or translocal, to illustrate the narrative

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1 This essay is a much abridged version of an essay published by *Cross Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review* 13 (2014) 174-188. Retrieved on 18 June 2015: https://cross-currents.berkeley.edu/e-journal/issue-13/siu). A long version was also published in Chinese entitled »反思历史人类学« (Reflections on Historical Anthropology), *Journal of History and Anthropology* 7/2 (2009) 105-137. It was also presented at an AAS-in-Asia panel in Singapore (17-19 July, 2014) on the historical anthropology of Chinese society.

2 See works by Clifford Geertz; Abu Lughod, *Before European Hegemony*; Goody, *Theft of History*; Trouillot, *Global Transformations.*

strategies and power play of actors occupying multi-scalar positions. Our understanding of local culture and society hinges on broad historical processes that constitute them.

In an essay entitled »The Original Translocal Society and its Modern Fate: Historical and Post-Reform South China«,[3] David Faure and I argue that village China was structured in layers of institutions and cultural ethos associated with the evolution of hierarchies of regional systems,[4] territorial lineage organizations,[5] popular religion and rituals,[6] and fluid ethnic identities.[7]

However, »the rural« (*nong*) was severed from towns and cities in the long twentieth century, and eventually »othered« by urbanized elites. Rural inhabitants were then seen as economically primitive, culturally backward, and politically unenlightened, thus marking them as targets for modern reform or revolution. Our perspective treats rural and urban communities, local and imperial institutions, folk and elite cultures as relational rather than dichotomous. These entities were mutually constitutive even when their separation was stark in empirical and discursive terms, and reached its height in the Maoist period.[8]

A historically sensitive analysis is useful to detect the past in the present. In the late 1970s, I was among a handful of social scientists who started fieldwork in rural China. The villages we saw were poor, isolated, with their residents administratively and physically »grounded«. One could easily be led to believe that village China had remained untouched by modernity or revolution. However, they were in sharp contrast to my historical knowledge of rural localities which had been connected to translocal institutions and rich cultural resources through marketing networks, kinship groups, popular rituals, and community festivals. In my subsequent monograph on rural revolution, I argued that socialist revolution under Mao had stripped village life-worlds down to a bare existence. What we saw were results of the socialist revolution, not an untouched primordial form. Decades of political campaigns turned local leaders from community patrons to agents of a powerful state, and villagers were complicit in the process.[9]

The point to highlight is that the socialist state apparatus and ideology gradually became the dominant language to define identity and life-chances, experienced as the social and cultural ›normal‹. What the Chinese people experienced during the Maoist revolution cannot be analytically relegated to history and ignored after thirty years of government-initiated economic reforms. Experiences in the socialist period still dominate mindsets and strategies today. This unintentionally reproduces the very structures of power that market reforms have tried to challenge. For scholars of contemporary China, historical anthropology should not just add a chapter as »historical background«, or uncritically glean historical documents for data. It is cultivating a keen sense of past processes to understand the ethnographic present.[10]

Our analytical efforts to connect locality with translocal forces has to do with understanding unity and diversity in China's long cultural, political history – intense identification with a »center«, but with deep-rooted regional diversity of cultural practices and values.

3   Faure and Siu, *Down to Earth.*

4   Skinner, Presidential Address.

5   Freedman, *Lineage Organization in Southeastern China*; Cohen, *Lineage Organization in North China.*

6   Wolf, *Religion and Ritual in Chinese Society*; Feuchtwang, *Imperial Metaphor*; Watson, Standardizing the Gods.

7   Ward, *Through Other Eyes*; Siu, Cultural Identity and the Politics of Difference; Siu and Zhiwei, Lineage, Market, Pirate and Dan.

8   Faure and Siu, *Original Translocal Society.*

9   Siu, *Agents and Victims.*

10 Siu, China's Century; Siu, Grounding Displacement.

We acknowledge the overall impact of a political center with a civilizing mission,[11] but we also view the pre-modern state as a malleable cultural idea from the ground up – through the lenses of popular religious rituals, lineage building narratives, community festivals, and other »soft« arenas as the imperial metaphor percolated downwards and upwards, and circulated across conscious regional constructs. We highlight local initiatives and cultural inventions that dovetailed with imperial prerogatives at crucial junctures in the history of the empire when South China was rapidly incorporated. These were processes of synergy and fusion rather than stark oppositions. We stress fluidity and ambiguity rather than hard boundaries and static conceptual categories.[12]

To illustrate the point, I would briefly mention two works I have written over a period of fifteen years. One focuses on the rich ritual complex surrounding a community-wide chrysanthemum festival staged every sixty years since the late eighteenth century. Comparing documentations of the festivals staged in 1814, 1864, 1934, and various small occasions after 1949, we were able to decipher the initiatives of local stake-holders in a maturing delta economy in the Qing, who shrewdly used what they imagined to be symbols of cultural authority to sink territorial anchors. After the Communist revolution, the festivals showed a different kind of state-making, with an increasingly dominant party-state imposing its own top-down agenda and organizational structure. Local residents were but passive and cynical observers.[13]

In a volume *Empire at the Margins*,[14] historian Liu Zhiwei and I examine »ethnicity« in the Pearl River delta.[15] The river marshes, known as *sha* (sands), were rapidly converted into polders during the Ming and Qing. The operations were funded by lineage and merchant capital in county capitals. Boat-dwelling inhabitants of the sands were labeled as »dan«, and treated as a lowly social category and cultural aliens. In peaceful times, they could be the skilled boat-masters in river transport, but in times of dynastic decline, they were often portrayed in official and lineage documents as bandits and pirates. However, the ecology of the sands made it possible for those labeled as »dan« to take off with the harvests and accumulate their own wealth in commerce. They too acquired village land, had lineage genealogies compiled and built ancestral halls, and turned the discriminating gaze against another floating population on the edge of the sands. We argue that ethnicity was a fluid happening in the delta ecology. Hard ethnic labels were imposed by the powerful precisely when physical mobility was the norm and social boundaries were easily transgressed. In the pursuit of upward mobility by diverse groups, a unifying cultural nexus of power was reproduced.

In our engagement with critical social theories, the late twentieth century was inspirational for rethinking the positivist social science frameworks. To appreciate local agencies and processes, we have moved away from »structure and process« to »structuring«,[16] »practice«,[17] and the actor-network-theory of Bruno Latour. Rather than starting our analysis with established conceptual categories (social, political, ethnic, and more) and observing their interactions, we examine fluid processes out of which hardened boundaries, institutional structures

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11   Hsiao, *Rural China*; Lewis, *Construction of Space*.

12   Faure and Siu, *Down to Earth*; Faure, *Emperor and Ancestor*.

13   Siu, Recycling Tradition; Siu, Redefining the Market Town.

14   Crossley *et al., Empire at the Margins*.

15   Siu and Zhiwei, Lineage, Market, Pirate and Dan.

16   Abrams, *Historical Sociology*.

17   Ortner, Theories in Anthropology.

and identities emerge. At the center are human agents who are economically interested, politically shrewd, socially positioned, culturally meaningful, and historically specific. They are analytically different from the rational, self-interested and atomistic individuals that have dominated social science analyses.

Although cognizant of Durkheimian social structure and Marxist ideas on political economy and dependency, David Faure and I have long embraced a Weberian turn in anthropology. Culture is not essentialized as timeless, quantifiable and empirically »out there« to be recorded. It is lived and communicated, made significant by human agents who act from different positions of power and vulnerability.[18]

Similarly, we have viewed history in non-linear terms, marking continuity with disjuncture and contest. Historical events are infinite, but how they become history involves their being selectively remembered, recorded, and reinterpreted by human agents with different resourcefulness. »Tradition« is not a thing of the past but invented for the present by various stake-holders.[19] David Faure's study of lineage formations in the New Territories of Hong Kong is worth mentioning.[20] He pushes Maurice Freedman's structural-functionalist lineage paradigm beyond kinship and descent to focus on a language of lineage shrewdly used to claim settlement rights at a particular juncture in time and place.

If history is made by winners and losers, we see the need to identify who embodies the institutions and the languages of power. Power can be exercised by political machineries and their representatives, and embraced and resisted.[21] In Foucauldian terms, power can also be internalized and located in our bodies, language, forms of knowledge and subjectivity. The works by Michel Foucault, Raymond Williams, Bernard Cohn,[22] and Nicholas Rose are notable examples. I began my own fieldwork in China in the late 1970s intellectually armed with a hard, externalized concept of state power. Over the years I have come to appreciate how the language of class, politics and revolution has become the ordering frame for subjectivity and strategy. *Agents and Victims in South China: Accomplices in Rural Revolution*[23] and *Furrows: Peasants, Intellectuals and the State*[24] were my initial attempts to understand complicity and »state involution«.

Where is the arena of contest and engagement? Critical human geography, historical and post-modern views of world systems have long viewed »space« and »place« as constructed category.[25] These concepts seem innocuous and often treated as material receptacles of human life. But they can be imagined, negotiated and lived with rich historical meanings.[26] As some of our recent works on inter-Asian connections show, deconstructing definitive spatial boundaries may help uncover hidden landscapes and unexpected intellectual directions.[27]

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18 Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures*; Dirks *et al., Culture/Power/History*; Keyes, Weber and Anthropology.

19 See the works of Eric Hobsbawn and Terence Ranger, Partha Chatteee and Nicholas Dirks.

20 Faure, *Structure of Chinese Rural Society.*

21 See works by Benedict Andersen; Scott, *Moral Economy of the Peasant*; Scott, *Weapons of the Weak;* Scott, *Domination and the Art of Resistance*; Scott, *Seeing Like a State*; Scott, *Art of NOT Being Governed.*

22 Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge.*

23 Siu, *Agents and Victims.*

24 Siu, *Furrows.*

25 See works by Henri Lefebvre, David Harvey.

26 Gupta and Ferguson, *Beyond Culture*; Balakrishnan and Anderson, *Mapping the Nation.*

27 Lewis and Wigen, *Myth of Continents;* Scott, *The Art of NOT Being Governed;* Tagliacozzo *et al., Asia Inside Out.*

In sum, our group approaches a wide range of topics in Chinese culture and history. We are fortunate to have a shared repertoire of analytical themes and field experiences developed over the years. Initially labeled the »South China Gang«, we have traversed beyond the regional construct. We started our intellectual quest inspired by the critical thinking of Euro-American scholars. Hopefully, we can share our »history in the field« perspectives with a younger generation eager to engage an Asian renaissance.

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Universal Chronicles
in the Early Medieval West

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Abstract: This paper considers the modern concept of a ›universal chronicle‹, examining its validity for Latin texts written before the mid-ninth century. It notes that while modern historians of Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages concentrate on the most recent material in chronicles and other historical writings, the original authors were usually concerned to set events of their own day within a framework that began with the Creation, the Birth of Adam, or of Abraham, and that as a result most historical texts should be seen primarily as tracing the history of Salvation. As such they need to be understood as one manifestation of a more general concern with the nature of Time.

Keywords: chronicle, Bede, Isidore, Fredegar

The phrase universal chronicle, *chronicon universale,* does not constitute a category that was identified as such in late antique or early medieval sources – a point that also holds true for the early Islamic World. Its application to historical writings of the late- and post-Roman periods would appear to be an innovation of the nineteenth century. As a category it may have something to commend it for modern scholars seeking a shorthand to define a rather disparate selection of works – as long as one understands it only to be a shorthand. Certainly, the definition and categorisation of historical texts can be useful, and indeed there are numerous basic types. Among them one may point to chronicles as being concerned primarily with chronology and the marking of time.[1] Yet so too are other records, including lists of rulers and office holders, known now as *fasti* and *consularia* (again modern terms),[2] as well as episcopal lists, and even tables intended for the calculation of the date of Easter (which sometimes attracted historical annotations).[3]

All these other types of record were distinguished by the brevity of their entries, and as such they were similar to chronicles, which Cassiodorus defined as ›snapshots of history or very brief summaries of the past‹ (*imagines historiarum brevissimae commemorationes temporum*).[4] The term *chronicon*, however, is by no means the only one used in the Early Middle Ages to describe short historical texts. Thus Isidore described his own chronicle, which Mommsen edited under the title *Chronica Maiora*, as a ›summa temporum ab exordio mundi usque ad Augusti Heraclii vel Sisebuti regis principatum‹, which continued the ›brevem temporum‹ of Julius Africanus, the ›chronicorum canonum multiplicem … historiam‹ of Euse-

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1 Burgess and Kulikowski, *Mosaics of Time,* 22.

2 Burgess and Kulikowski, *Mosaics of Time,*, 10-12, 133.

3 Burgess and Kulikowski, *Mosaics of Time,*, 1-5.

4 Cassiodorus, *Institutiones divinarum et saecularium litterarum*, I, 17, 2, ed., Mynors, trans. Halporn and Vessey, 150; Burgess and Kulikowski, *Mosaics of Time,*, 25.

bius and Jerome, and the ›gesta sequentium aetatum‹ of Victor of Tunnuna.[5] From Isidore's description of his sources we find that a group of texts that we would see as belonging to the same category could be described as chronological summaries (*summae, breves temporum*), a many-sided history of the canons of chronicles (*multiplex historia chronicorum canonum*), and as deeds of sequential years (*gesta sequentium annorum*).

Just as a single form might be described in a variety of ways, so too different forms might be combined to create a single text. The *Chronicle* of Cassiodorus has been seen as a combination of two different genres, consular *fasti* and the chronicle.[6] But, equally, examples of several types of text might be preserved alongside each other in a single collection. Thus the so-called *Chronography of 354*, a compendium of texts put together by Filocalus, included a list of consuls, an Easter cycle (providing a calendar of the days on which Easter was to be celebrated), lists of the City Prefects, of the burials of bishops and martyrs, and of the bishops of Rome, a description of the imperial city, the *Liber Generationis* of Hippolytus (a very brief narrative of events from the creation of Adam, starting with the words *Liber Generationis hominum*), which was augmented and extended down to 334, and a *Chronica Urbis Romae*.[7] The inclusion of the *Liber Generationis*, together with the Roman Chronicle, alongside a collection of lists of office holders and of figures to be commemorated, as well as an Easter cycle, which was based on an earlier computistical work, also by Hippolytus, is a powerful reminder that historical writing could be categorised along with non-narrative works that were also concerned with the question of time and commemoration.

Filocalus was by no means the last to make such a compilation. In the mid seventh century the chronicler known as Fredegar put together a collection of chronographic material, including texts written in the third and fourth centuries. This begins with a version of the *Liber Generationis* of Hippolytus (augmented with information from, among other sources, a history of Troy), to which are added a chronological computation drawn from Eusebius/Jerome, running from Adam to the Frankish king Sigibert II (613), a list of popes, Isidore's account of the Creation of the World, a list of patriarchs, kings and emperors down to Heraclius, followed by extracts from Eusebius/Jerome, and Hydatius, before providing an epitome of Books I-VI of the *Histories* of Gregory of Tours and Fredegar's own chronicle.[8] Not that Fredegar, himself, appears to have used the term ›chronicle‹, although later redactors talk of his work as including a *cronece Gyromini scarpsum*[9] and a *scarpsum de cronica Gregorii*.[10] Moreover, in the prologue to Fredegar's own contribution, usually known as Book Four, the author announces that he has read the Chronicles of Jerome, Hydatius, ›a certain wise man‹, Isidore and Gregory, from the beginning of the World (*beati Hieronimi, Ydacii et cuiusdam sapientis, seo Hysidori immo et Gregorii chronicis a mundi originem diligentissime percurrens*) and that he has inserted slightly abbreviated versions of all five of them into his *libellus*.[11] One might add that his own additions are set out in the annalistic format associated with the chronicle genre, even if the individual entries are rather more substantial than one would expect of a type of history known for its brevity.

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5   Isidore, Chronica Maiora, 1-2, ed. Mommsen, 424-425.

6   Burgess and Kulikowski, Mosaics of Time, 41-42.

7   Salzman, On Roman Time, 35-56.

8   Wallace-Hadrill, The Fourth Book of the Chronicle of Fredegar, x-xi: Collins, Die Fredegar-Chroniken, 56-59.

9   Fredegar, ed. Krusch, 42.

10   Fredegar, ed. Krusch, 89.

11   Fredegar, IV, prol., ed. Krusch, 123.

Although Fredegar himself does acknowledge that the opening of his work is made up of lists, implying that the subsequent historical narrative, which is what attracts the modern scholar, is of less importance than what comes before, he presents the opening section of his compilation (or what would later be known as Book One) as very much more biblically inspired than the above summary would suggest:[12]

The book of descent (*liber generationis*) from Adam in order, which is contained in this volume of a book (*volumen libri*). The listing (*denumeratio*) of times and years. The descent of the world down to the present. The division of the earth by the three sons of Noah. A statement (*declaratio*) of the people who were created out of them, and which lands and cities fell to the lot of each. The number of notable islands. Which of each of the peoples migrated. The names of rivers. What the mountains are called. The judges, who judged the people for years. Which kings reigned over the tribe of Judah, and who reigned in which years. A statement of Easter (*declaratio Paschae*), and who ruled from the time of Moses until the present. The emperors of the Romans, from Augustus, and who reigned in which years. The time of Olympiads from Ipitus to the present Olympiad. The names of the patriarchs by descent. The names of the prophets. The women prophetesses. The names of the kings of the Hebrews, and of the kings who ruled in Samaria over the ten tribes, and who ruled in which years. The names of priests. The names of the emperors of Rome, and who ruled in which years.

Since a man ought to know the truth, I have reckoned it necessary, dearest brother, to set these words (*sermones*) out in short (*in breve*) from the holy scriptures, to corroborate doctrine, so that through small pieces of narration (*per paucas enarrationis*) we might learn more quickly not without reason the sought-out virtues of truth, cutting out the arguments generated earlier by the unlearned, which obscure the sense, so that it might teach the unlearned in this way. Desiring to see the summary (*summa*) industriously, we learn according to truth the division of the peoples and the listed descent of their ancestors, their dwelling places, and the times of wars fought and the times of the dispensation of the judges, and the years of kings and the times of prophets, and who was born to which kings, and how the captive peoples related to kings and judges, and which judges were present at which times, and what division and what loss took place, and in what way the descent of the seed of Israel from the patriarchs was fulfilled in Christ, and how many years are listed in what times, from the creation of the World to the present. We intend, however, beginning in Genesis, following the Revelation of the Word, to narrate as it happened, not as it is proved on our part, but from the Holy Scriptures themselves. Picking up on this line we set out our account (*sermo*) in the order of Genesis.

Fredegar is not usually considered alongside Filocalus, because scholars tend to ignore the opening sections of his compilation. One might also wonder whether the ninth-century *Historia Brittonum*, which in one manuscript is described as ›a heap of all that I have found, both from the Annals of the Romans and from the Chronicles of the Holy Fathers, and from the writings of the Irish and the English, and out of the traditions of our elders‹,[13] can usefully be considered as having something in common with both Filocalus and Fredegar. Although the *Historia* has convincingly been presented as being written in Gwynedd, in c. 829, and as deliberately responding to Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*,[14] its format, which echoes the

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12   Fredegar, praef., ed Krusch, 19-20.

13   *Historia Brittonum*, praef., ed. Morris, 9, 50.

14   Higham, *King Arthur*, 119-24.

description in the preface, and which includes a brief account of Biblical History, followed by a description of the Six Ages of the World, points rather to the concept of history that seems to have been envisaged by Fredegar.

If we talk about a category not just of chronicles, but specifically of universal chronicles, we are dealing even more obviously with modern rather than ancient categorisation: the phrase *chronicon universale* is not, to my knowledge, used in Late Antiquity or the Early Middle Ages. However, in talking about his translation and extension of Eusebius' *Chronicle* Jerome says that ›quae universa in suis locis cum summa brevitate ponemus‹ (›all of this I have placed in its correct context with utmost brevity‹).[15]

It is, of course, possible to justify the term ›universal‹. The Eusebius/Jerome *Chronicle* begins with the birth of Abraham. Other chroniclers begin with the creation of the World or of Adam (as does Hippolytus, and indeed Fredegar – as well as such Islamic historians as Ibn Habīb). The choice of the precise moment at which a narrative begins was significant, in that it impinges on the question of the age of the world, which could be regarded as important, if one thought that it would only last 6000 years: to place Christ's birth 5500 years after the Creation, as many did, following Julius Africanus, might imply that the world would end in 500 AD.[16] Eusebius deliberately began with Abraham's birth, on the grounds that one could not compute the number of years that had passed before that date. Not everyone agreed with him, with the result that different chroniclers opted for different dates as the start of their chronological computations.[17] In terms of defining certain historical texts as universal the precise moment at which a text begins is of less importance. Clearly a chronicle that begins with the Creation of the World, of Adam, or the birth of Abraham, can be regarded as universal, in that it initially deals with the totality of the created world, but so too can a chronicle that combines biblical and non-biblical, and especially Greek and Roman, narratives, in that this constitutes a coverage of much of the history available.

The origins of the Christian tradition of providing a summary of events in the history of the World, are usually traced to Julius Africanus, who in c.221 AD attempted to synchronise Hebrew and Greek History.[18] This work was continued a generation later in the *Liber Generationis* attributed to Hippolytus of Rome (the text later used at the beginning of the Fredegar compilation).[19] This in turn was developed by Eusebius in his *Chronici Canones*, which in Jerome's translation and continuation, down to the year 379, can reasonably be taken as the starting point of a Western chronicle tradition.[20] The Eusebius/Jerome *Chronicle* most certainly attempts to be universal, synchronising the entries for each historical tradition in parallel columns. Thus one has parallel entries for anything up to nine peoples, including the Assyrians, the Hebrews, the Greeks, the Latins and the Egyptians.[21] As one nation is subjected to another, so its column vanishes, until history is reduced to two columns, the Roman and the Jewish, and then, with the conquest of Jerusalem, to a single one. Thus, both the narrative and its visual representation on the page mark the steady rise of Rome to world dominance – and coinciding with the triumph of Rome was the Incarnation of Christ.

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15   Hieronymus, *Chronicon*, pref., ed. Helm, 19; Burgess and Kulikowski, *Mosaics of Time*, 26.

16   Whitby, The Biblical Past in John Malalas, 282.

17   Whitby, The Biblical Past in John Malalas, 283-284.

18   Whitby, The Biblical Past in John Malalas, 282; Burgess and Kulikowski, *Mosaics of Time*, 116.

19   Whitby, The Biblical Past in John Malalas, 282; Burgess and Kulikowski, *Mosaics of Time*, 117-118.

20   Burgess and Kulikowski, *Mosaics of Time*, 123-129.

21   Whitby, The Biblical Past in John Malalas, 282.

The majority of the chronicles written in western Europe in the Early Middle Ages are continuations of the chronicle or of epitomes of Eusebius/Jerome. Thus Prosper of Aquitaine continued Jerome's work from 379, initially down to 445, and subsequently to 455;[22] another Gallic chronicle runs to a date usually computed as 452;[23] Hydatius added annals to Jerome down to 469.[24] In 518 count Marcellinus provided another extension of Eusebius/Jerome.[25] Later generations added to these initial continuations. Thus Marius of Avenches probably continued Prosper's *Chronicle*, taking events down to 581, although in the sole surviving manuscript of Marius' work most of Prosper's text is replaced by that of the Chronicle of 452.[26] So too Victor of Tunnuna expanded Prosper's work down to 565, and his chronicle in turn was continued with annals to 589 by John of Biclar, while a much later Spanish chronicle, that of 741 (which is often referred to as the *Chronicon Universale*, albeit with no justification from the manuscript) follows John.[27] Isidore of Seville created an epitome out of the chain of chronicles running from Jerome, to Victor and John, adding his own entries down to 626.[28]

Although all of these chronicles have been edited, in several cases the editions are misleading in that individual continuations have been published as free-standing texts, without the preceding chronicles to which they are attached.[29] Each complete chain of chronicles, however, should be seen as a universal chronicle in its own right. Not only are the interests of the continuators to be found in the choice of material to be included in their continuations: at times they also transformed what was before them. This is clear when one looks at the alterations made to the text of Eusebius/Jerome, most obviously with regard to the dating systems used: Jerome's dating from Abraham and his use of Olympiads, regnal and imperial dates was modified, and the Spanish era, consular dating, and indictions were used in addition or instead.[30] Moreover, to judge by manuscript variations, earlier annals in the chain of texts were sometimes deliberately edited: for instance, the regnal dates of Frankish kings are inserted into Jerome's text in the Munich and Bamberg manuscripts that contain both Eusebius/Jerome and the Chronicle of 452.[31] As a result the kingdom of the Franks is treated in the same way as the kingdoms which attracted the attention of Eusebius and Jerome, who, of course, take us right back to biblical tradition. In addition, not only does each continuation constitute a different chronicle, but so too does each manuscript. The Chronicle of 452 is preserved in three different chains of chronicles, and each chain can be understood as a unique compilation.[32] The vitality of the western chronicle tradition has to be understood not only from the composition of new chronicle texts, and the addition of annalistic entries, but also from the manuscript transcriptions.

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22   Burgess and Kulikowski, Mosaics of Time, 184.

23   Wood, Chains of Chronicles; Burgess and Kulikowski, Mosaics of Time, 185.

24   Burgess and Kulikowski, Mosaics of Time, 185.

25   Burgess and Kulikowski, Mosaics of Time, 185.

26   Wood, Chains of Chronicles, 70; Burgess and Kulikowski, Mosaics of Time, 186.

27   Burgess and Kulikowski, Mosaics of Time, 187, 202.

28   Burgess and Kulikowski, Mosaics of Time, 187.

29   Wood, Chains of Chronicles, 68; Burgess and Kulikowski, Mosaics of Time, 40

30   Jerome dates from the Birth of Abraham, using Olympiads, regnal and imperial dates; Hydatius adds the Spanish era; Prosper uses consular dating; count Marcellinus use consular dating and indictions. On the changes to dating see Burgess and Kulikowski, Mosaics of Time, 129, 185.

31   Wood, Chains of Chronicles, 73.

32   Wood, Chains of Chronicles, 68.

Taken out of context the continuations of such authors as Hydatius, the 452 chronicler, and Marius, do not look universal, because their own additions tend to becoming increasingly local. In part the growing localism reflects the difficulties of communication occasioned by the disruptions of the fifth century. This is especially true of Hydatius, based in the far north-west of Spain.[33] Yet the reduction in the horizons of the compilers should not be seen as marking an abandonment of universal history. Hydatius' concerns remained broad: they were, however, universal not in a geographical sense, but rather in the sense that they were focussed on the End of the World, which he thought was imminent.[34] Not all the continuators of Eusebius/Jerome had such an eschatological message (despite the possible imminence of the End of the World), although they were all concerned with far more than the simple record of events.[35]

A chronicle taking as its point of departure the Creation, the Birth of Adam or the Birth of Abraham is, in a way, almost automatically a work of providential history, mapping the progress of the world, through to the moment of the Birth of Christ, which, of course, is given particular emphasis in Eusebius/Jerome manuscripts.[36] Not all providential histories, however, look like the *Chronici canones* of Eusebius/Jerome: there are texts categorised as *Historiae* and not *Chronica* – that is, texts which do not follow the annalistic format of Eusebius/Jerome, but rather offer an extended narrative in a more classical tradition.[37]

Orosius' *History against the Pagans* can certainly be placed within a tradition of Roman historical, rather than chronicle, writing.[38] Yet its religious purpose is clear from the preface addressed to Augustine, who, Orosius reveals, had instructed him to write against the pagans. The history is, therefore, to be religious history, and although he begins by talking of Ninus, the first king of the Assyrians, his point of departure is essentially the same as that of Eusebius/Jerome, since Ninus was supposedly the ruler at the time of Abraham.[39] Orosius states the length of time between Adam and Abraham, but notes that nothing is known about the period. Thereafter he writes that there were 2015 years from Ninus and Abraham to Christ, and then announces that divine providence rules the world and men. Before embarking on the historical narrative, however, he provides a geographical survey as an introduction to what follows.[40] Although its format differs radically from that to be found in the Eusebian tradition, this is providential history, and, at least in its opening stages, universal history, for the geography covers the whole of the known world, and the historical narrative takes in the Old Testament, Greek legend, including the Trojan War, as well as Greek and Macedonian history, before focussing on Rome and the growth of its empire. Orosius' *History* would have a profound impact on subsequent historical writing.

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33   Burgess, Hydatius and the Final Frontier, 321.

34   Burgess, Hydatius and the Final Frontier.

35   Muhlberger, *The Fifth-Century Chroniclers*, 193-226; Wood, The End of Roman Britain, 19; Wood, Chains of Chronicles, 71-72.

36   Hieronymus, *Chronicon*, ed., Helm 1956, 169. The typographical layout of the edition reflects the emphases in many of the manuscripts.

37   Van Nuffelen, *Orosius and the Rhetoric of History*.

38   Van Nuffelen, *Orosius and the Rhetoric of History*.

39   Orosius, Historia Adversus Paganos, I, 1, trans. Fear, 33-34

40   Orosius, Historia adversus Paganos, I, 2, trans. Fear, 36. On the geography Lozovsky, »*The Earth is our Book*«, 69-78; Merrills, *History and Geography*, 35-99.

Gregory of Tours, for instance, in his preface to the first book of his *Histories*, having provided his own statement of faith, announces that he is following in the footsteps of Eusebius/Jerome, Orosius and Victorius of Aquitaine.[41] He ignores, therefore, any distinction between what might be called the chronicle and historical traditions, and this approach can be clearly seen in Book Two of the *Histories*, which seems to contain annal entries within a more expansive narration.[42] Gregory begins his narrative with Adam, in order, so he states, ›that the sequence of time may be properly understood‹.[43] There follows a very short summary of major events in the Old Testament, a longer narration of the life of Christ, before the narrative follows the early persecutions and the establishment of the Church in Gaul. Thereafter Gregory's focus is almost entirely on Gaul and Francia, to the extent that his work came to be regarded wrongly as a ›History of the Franks‹.[44] Although such a reading was already current by the end of the seventh century, it is clear that one should accept Gregory's own assessment of his work: he wrote ›Histories‹, and not the ›History‹ of a particular group. Despite its geographical focus, the work begins as universal history, and it continues to be concerned with the workings of the divine, even though Gregory increasingly focuses on events in Francia, and was himself bewildered by what he observed.

Among the authors who drew on Gregory we have already noted Fredegar, whose mid-seventh-century compilation, at least in its initial sections, looks back to earlier chronographic work, culminating in Eusebius/Jerome, before excerpting the work of the Bishop of Tours, which later Fredegar manuscripts, as we have seen, describe as *Cronica*. Perhaps surprisingly, given the supposed cultural, economic and political weaknesses of the seventh century, Fredegar's horizons seem to be broader than those of Gregory, and not only in his inclusion of lists of popes down to Theodore (642) and emperors down to Heraclius. His narrative also has an eye on events in the East, as well as in the Slav world: it thus seems that it should be understood not as a work of Frankish, but of ›universal‹ history. But while Fredegar's breadth of interest is clear, his interpretative scheme is less so, perhaps because the work is incomplete. His political opinions are obvious enough, but, despite his preface, his overall interpretation of history is harder to fathom.[45] However, as the preface makes clear, whatever understanding of history he had, it took as its starting point the Old Testament.[46]

Arguably there is little that is universal in the work the next of the Frankish historians, where we can genuinely talk of a concentration on Frankish history, although at the same time we can still observe a spiritual framework. The author of the *Liber Historiae Francorum*, writing in the region of Soissons in c.727, announces at the start that ›we are setting out the beginnings of the kings of the Franks, and their peoples, and their origins and deeds‹ (*Principium regum Francorum eorumque origine vel gentium illarum ac gesta proferamus*).[47] This origin-story begins in the Asian city of Troy. When the tyrant Aeneas fled to Italy, Priam, Antenor and the rest of the Trojan army set off for the Maeotic marshes, and founded the city of Sicambria, where they emerged as Franks.[48] This clearly is national, and thus not universal,

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41   Gregory of Tours, *Historiae,* I, praef., ed Krusch, 3-5.

42   e. g. Gregory of Tours, *Historiae*, II 18, ed. Krusch, 65.

43   Gregory of Tours, *Historiae*, praef., ed. Krusch, 1, trans. Thorpe, 63.

44   Goffart, From *Historiae* to *Historia Francorum*; Goffart, *The Narrators of Barbarian History,* 119-127.

45   Wood, Fredegar's Fables.

46   Fredegar, praef., ed Krusch, 19-20.

47   *Liber Historiae Francorum*, 1, ed. Krusch, 241.

48   *Liber Historiae Francorum*, 1, ed. Krusch, 241.

history. And yet careful analysis of the text reveals that the author was deeply influenced by the Bible, and indeed that he was presenting the Franks as a counterpart to the Children of Israel. As a result even this text can be read (as can numerous works of Christian historiography) as ›salvific history‹.[49]

Although the notion of ›National Histories of the Germanic Peoples‹ has rightly been called into question by Walter Goffart,[50] it is clear that some authors were concerned with the history of individual peoples. Gregory of Tours does not announce that he is writing about the Franks, but the author of the *Liber Historiae Francorum* does. So too Jordanes writes both Roman and Gothic histories, and Paul the Deacon imitates him in writing Roman and Lombard histories. One might read the *Romana* and the *Getica* of Jordanes together as a pair, and thus see them as encompassing two peoples rather than one – and since he temporarily broke off writing the former in order to write the latter this is not an unreasonable way of considering the two works. The *Romana* begins with an abridged version of Eusebius/Jerome, running from Adam to Augustus: thereafter it integrates the historical writings of Florus, Orosius and count Marcellinus, among others, to bring its concise narrative down to the wars of Justinian.[51] What begins as universal providential history becomes something much more geographically specific. The *Getica*, by contrast, does not repeat the early history of the world, but begins, explicitly in the manner of Orosius, with geography: after a listing of the continents of Asia, Africa and Europe, Jordanes gives brief consideration to the Mediterranean and of the Ocean, before turning to Scandinavia, which serves as a point of departure for the migrating Goths.[52] More obviously than the *Romana*, the *Getica* has as its ultimate focus the reign of Justinian, and the hope that the union of Goth and Roman, marked by the marriage of Matasuntha and Germanus, will lead to a new dawn for the Ostrogothic people.[53] Jordanes' prime concern would seem to be the political situation of his own day, rather than any broader spiritual message.

While Paul the Deacon may have intended his *Historia Langobardorum* to be read as providential history, the fact that he seems not to have completed his work means that its purpose – like that of the Fredegar chronicle – is unclear. The model Paul takes, however, is unquestionably that of Jordanes, though he begins not with the continents of the world, but more specifically with *Germania*, before turning to Scandinavia, and he announces that his source is Pliny, rather than Orosius.[54] The *Romana* departs more radically from the model of Jordanes: whereas the *Roman History* of Jordanes begins with Eusebius/Jerome, Paul's *Romana* takes as his point of departure the *Breviarium* of Eutropius – a highly abbreviated narrative of Roman history written in the mid-fourth century. Essentially Paul provides six very short books to follow on from Eutropius' ten, bringing the narrative from 364 down to the days of Justinian. In fact he also adds some preliminary material to Eutropius' work, for while the latter starts with the foundation of Rome, the former looks back earlier to the days of Janus. Not that Paul was the only historian to insert classical mythology into synchronising history,[55] and indeed we have already noted the importance of the Troy story, which

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49 Dörler, *The Liber Historiae Francorum,* 25.

50 Goffart, *The Narrators of Barbarian History*, 3.

51 Jordanes, *Historia Romana*.

52 Jordanes, *Historia Getica*, I 4-V 38, ed. Mommsen, 54-64; Merrills, *History and Geography,* 115-132.

53 Goffart, *The Narrators of Barbarian History*, 68-84.

54 Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum*, I, 1-2, ed. Waitz, 52-53.

55 Whitby, The Biblical Past in John Malalas, 289-290.

is present, for instance, in Eusebius/Jerome, Fredegar and the *Liber Historiae Francorum*. Despite this apparent interest in the mythical pagan past, Paul also inserts Christian material into Eutropius' account. In the preface he reveals that Adelperga, the wife of Arichis II of Benevento, had complained to him that Eutropius' work failed to mention the history of Christianity.[56] As a result he added material from Jerome and Orosius to his base text.

We find a similar mixture of religious and secular history in the very much longer work by Bishop Frechulf of Lisieux in c. 829. This was published in Migne's *Patrologia Latina* under the title *Chronicorum Tomi Duo*, though in the most recent edition it is presented as *Historiarum Libri XII* (rather in the manner of Gregory of Tours' Histories).[57] Certainly the term ›chronicle‹, as defined by Cassiodorus, is inappropriate: Frechulf's historical work is not short, but it is universal. Whether or not it was originally described as a chronicle, it follows the outline and much of the chronology of Eusebius/Jerome. Its first half provides an account of the known world from the Creation to Augustus, in which Biblical, Trojan, Greek and Roman history is neatly combined. The second half runs from Augustus down to the early seventh century, and while for much of the narrative it is concerned with the Roman Empire, combining Roman and Church History, including Rufinus, Orosius, and the *Historia Tripartita* of Cassiodorus, in its closing stages it deals with the Franks, the Lombards, and the Papacy as well as the Byzantines.

The titles of the historical works written by Jordanes and Paul make clear their focus on specific peoples: they can scarcely be called universal histories. The same is certainly true of the two major historical works written by Isidore and Bede. The bishop of Seville's *De origine Gothorum* begins with praise of Spain (the *Laus Spaniae*), before turning to the Goths themselves, who are given a biblical starting point, with Gog and Magog: thereafter Isidore sets their early history in a Roman context, dealing with Julius Caesar and Pompey, Valerian and Gallienus, Constantine, and Valens, largely in the words of Jerome and Orosius, before concentrating on the arrival of the Goths in the Roman world, and their settlement in Spain.[58] While Isidore begins firmly in Spain, Bede begins his *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* with a description of Britain, very much in the Orosian mode, before turning to the invasions of Julius Caesar and Claudius, followed by an account of British history, concentrating largely on episodes involving the coming of Christianity, the persecution of Christians, and the presence of heresy, down to the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons.[59] Thereafter the history concentrates on the English, and more especially on the English Church.

But while Isidore and Bede wrote histories about the Goths and the Anglo-Saxons (and indeed Bede also wrote a history of the abbots of his own monastery of Wearmouth-Jarrow),[60] they also wrote chronicles, which return us closer to our point of departure. Isidore's *Chronicle* survives in two versions, the first running to 615/6, the second to 626, both of which begin, as does the *Chronicle* of Prosper, with an abridgement of Eusebius/Jerome.[61] It is not, however, simply an epitome of the earlier work, with additions. On certain issues it

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56   Paul the Deacon, *Historia Romana*, ep. to Adelperga, ed. Droysen, 4-5. On other writings from the court of Arichis see Wood, Giovardi, MS Verolensis 1, Arichis and Mercurius.

57   Frechulf, *Historiarum Libri XII*.

58   Isidore, *Historia Gothorum, Wandalorum, Sueborum,* ed. Mommsen, 267-276; Merrills, *History and Geography,* 185-205; Wood, *Politics of Identity*, 72-74.

59   Bede, *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, I, 1-12, ed. Colgrave and Mynors, 14-45; Merrills, *History and Geography*, 249-273.

60   Bede, *Historia Abbatum*, ed. Grocock and Wood.

61   Wood, *Politics of Identity*, 70-72; Burgess and Kulikowski, *Mosaics of Time*, 32, 199.

promotes a particular message – for instance its hostility towards the Jews is evident in its use of material drawn from Rufinus of Aquileia, and from the *Historia Tripartita,* the ecclesiastical history of Cassiodorus/Epiphanius.[62] More dramatically, it recasts the information contained in Jerome's *Chronicle* within Augustine's concept of the Six Ages of the World,[63] itself derived from Hippolytus' reading of the Book of Daniel, thus very obviously enhancing the providential nature of the narrative.[64] After the prefatory material the first entry simply states P*rima aetas saeculi.*

Isidore's understanding of the chronicle form, however, is yet more apparent from a much shorter chronicle text which is to be found in Book V of the Bishop of Seville's *Etymologies.* Here the history of the world is reduced to 137 entries, with 10 allotted to the First Age, from Adam to the Flood; 9 to the Second, from the Flood to Abraham: 10 from Abraham to David: 20 from David to the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem: 23 from the Babylonian Captivity to the Birth of Christ: and a much fuller, though still sketchy, 55 entries covering the period from the Incarnation to the time of writing (627/8 AD), with the last entry devoted to the conversion of the Jews by King Sisebut (dated to 615/6).[65]

The meaning of this so-called *Lesser Chronicle*, however, is not just indicated by the entries included in it. The short text is the culmination of a series of chapters in the *Etymologies*, beginning with one entitled *De chronicae vocabulo*: ›the term »chronicle«‹, which the author notes is derived from the Greek χρόνος.[66] Isidore then deals with the divisions of time (moments and hours, days, the night, the week, months, solstices and equinoxes, seasons, years, Olympiads, lustrums and jubilees, periods and ages) before giving his description of times (*De descriptione temporum*), which is how he entitles his short chronicle. The little collection of chronological information that follows is, thus, an illustration of the division of time, and above all its division into Six Ages, which are broken down into smaller units defined by dates from the Creation, the lifetimes of leading figures of the Old Testament and subsequently the regnal years of kings and emperors. In so far as there is a narrative over and above that implied by the dating clauses, it is concerned largely with religious matters, derived from the Bible or relating to the history of the Church, and especially heresy and its extirpation.

Bede's chronicles have much in common with those of Isidore. Like that contained within the *Etymologies*, they are to be found in longer, non-historical, works. The earliest of Bede's chronicles, the so-called *Chronica Minora*, constitutes chapters 16-22 of the *De Temporibus*, written in c.703: the first of his two treatises on time. This takes the chapters on time to be found in the *Etymologies* as its starting point, repeating much of what Isidore has to say of the various chronological divisions. Yet having dealt with years Bede does not continue with Olympiads, lustrums and jubilees (such classical divisions were obviously no longer of use), but instead he turns to the lunar cycle, and thence to the Easter cycle.[67]

Easter Tables had long been associated with other chronological material, as we have already seen in the *Chronography of 354*. Isidore had not dealt with them in his chronological discussions, reserving his chapter on the Easter Cycle for the following book of the

62 Wood, *Politics of Identity*, 206; Burgess and Kulikowski, *Mosaics of Time*, 199.

63 Burgess and Kulikowski, *Mosaics of Time*, 199.

64 Augustine, *De catechizandis rudibus*, 22; Darby, *Bede and the End of Time*, 22; Wood, *Politics of Identity*, 122; Burgess and Kulikowski, *Mosaics of Time*, 199.

65 Isidore, *Etymologiae*, ed. Lindsay, V 39, trans. Barney *et al.*, 130-133.

66 Isidore, *Etymologiae*, V 28-39, trans. Barney *et al.*, 125-33.

67 Bede, *De Temporibus*, ed. Jones: trans. Kendall and Wallis.

Etymologies, which includes a discussion of ecclesiastical offices. However, earlier chrono-graphers and chroniclers, including Hippolytus, Pannadorus, Annianus, and, above all, the author of the aptly named *Chronicon Paschale*, had wrestled with the date of Easter.[68] Bede's own interest in the correct dating of the Paschal Feast had a particular context in the conflicts engendered in the British Isles in the course of the seventh and eighth centuries. But for him the Easter Cycle not only raised the question of the calculation of the date on which the Feast should be celebrated, but also, and more importantly, the matter of its symbolism. The question of the Paschal Cycle thus becomes a major issue in Bede's discussion of time. Easter is intended to echo the transition of Death to Life: it must reflect the conquest of the Dark by the True Light, and must therefore follow the equinox: it must come in the third week of the moon, since it occurred in the third period of the world, the first and second being before and after the Law, as defined by the giving of the Ten Commandments, and the third being the Age of Grace. Bede's chronicle account of the Six Ages then follows, offering another way of divi-ding up time. Being largely derived from Isidore, this continues the Bishop of Seville's interest in the Church and heresy, adding some information, both on religious matters, and relating to the arrival in England and the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons. Bede also opts for a different calculation of the date of the Incarnation, following Jerome's Vulgate, whereas Isidore had followed the Septuagint – a choice that would earn him an accusation of heresy, to which he replied in the Letter to Pleguin.[69] The *Chronicle* ends with the statement that 'the rest of the Sixth Age is known to God alone.' Bede is thus careful to make it clear that he is making no millennarian prediction, although he is clearly aware that the End of Time could be imminent.

The criticism raised against the *De Temporibus* was no doubt one of the reasons for Bede revisiting the subject in his later and yet more substantial work, the *De temporum ratione* of 725. Here also the calculation of Easter is a central concern, and once again the discussion of the Paschal Cycle immediately precedes Bede's account of the Six Ages, which constitu-tes chapter 66.[70] This longer chronicle largely follows Jerome, albeit with numerous bibli-cal additions, together with information from Eutropius, Rufinus, Orosius, Gildas, Prosper, Marcellinus, Isidore, and above all in its most recent section the *Liber Pontificalis.* Its final entry, dealing with a Saracen siege of Constantinople, their subsequent war with the Bul-gars, and the translation of the bones of Augustine of Hippo from Sardinia to Pavia, is a neat illustration of the extent to which, unlike the *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, this is concerned with the known world, and its existence through all time.

Isidore and Bede, thus, point us back to the notion of the chronicle as one way among several of conceiving of time. They also suggest that, while for the modern historian trying to recreate the past events and dates are what matters, for the late-antique and early-medie-val author the chief concern was different. Even a historian who is regarded as an honorary modern, like Bede, has a very different concept of the *vera lex historiae* than we have now.[71] Although individual chronicles have political, moral and doctrinal agendas, the record of the passing of time was an end in itself, because, for the Christian, it afforded the possibility of rare glimpses of the workings of providence. Time in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle

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68   Whitby, The Biblical Past in John Malalas, 280, 283, 284, 293, 294, 301, 302.

69   Bede, *Epistola ad Plegvinam*; Burgess and Kulikowski, *Mosaics of Time*, 205.

70   Bede, *De Temporum Ratione*, 66, ed. Jones, 463-535, trans. Wallis, 157-237.

71   Ray, Bede's *Vera Lex Historiae*.

Ages, as in many societies,[72] had religious as well as historical connotations. Chronicles that began with the Creation, the Birth of Adam, the Flood, or the Birth of Abraham, were inevitably concerned to some extent with the history of the known world, even if, increasingly, an author's knowledge or interest became confined to the area he knew well: they also had a sense of the workings of divine providence, not least if they combined the Augustinian reading of the Six Ages with the chronological record of Eusebius/Jerome. But so too histories, even histories of individual peoples, might have a similar concern with providence, despite their provincial focus. There are no clear distinctions to be made when one considers what constitutes a chronicle and what constitutes a history, and whether or not either was universal.

72 Wood, *The Priest, the Temple and the Moon*.

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Universal chronicles in Arabic before c. 900

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Abstract: This paper uses two Arabic chronicles of the mid ninth to early tenth centuries – the *History* of Ibn Ḥabīb and the *History of the Prophets and Kings* of al-Ṭabarī – to illustrate the development of the message of the Qur'ān into chronological narratives that may be read as salvation history. The paper also briefly considers their place within the Islamic historiographical tradition and whether comparisons may be made with contemporary Christian historiography.

Keywords: Ibn Ḥabīb, al-Ṭabarī, Qur'ān, ḥadīth, salvation history

Several historians active in the first three centuries of Islam wrote, or were said to have written, chronicles that began with Creation and extended to their own times and encompassed the Islamic and sometimes also the non-Islamic world.[1] They appear to fit comfortably into the category of world or universal history.[2] Comparison with works from the Early Medieval West that have been placed in the same category[3] reveals the same concern for chronology and the computation of time, imposed on a framework of Old Testament narratives of prophets and their descendants and of the rise and fall of empires. The focus of the latter part of many of these histories on the life and teachings of the prophet Muḥammad, the early Islamic conquests and the reigns of the caliphs gives a providential tone to the narrative, which was sometimes made explicit. Paradoxically, however, to label all these texts as universal chronicles is not only to invent a category that their authors would not have recognized, for even the designation »history (*ta'rīkh*)« is anachronistic. This paper uses two Arabic chronicles of the mid ninth to early tenth centuries – the *History* of Ibn Ḥabīb (d. 853) and the *History of the Prophets and Kings* of al-Ṭabarī (d. 923) – to illustrate the development of chronological, »universal« narratives of the past within Islam.

Unlike the Jewish and Christian holy books, the Qur'ān is difficult to read as a narrative history of the chosen people.[4] Although the Qur'ān considers Creation, the lives of the prophets, culminating with Muḥammad and the early years of Islam, and anticipates the Day of Judgement, all aspects of the past and future are co-existent and the story is not told in a linear fashion. The sacred text is a series of moral messages to which episodes from history are added wherever appropriate to point up these teachings. Some time after the consolidation of the text of the Qur'ān – it is not clear when – a second source of knowledge about the past

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1 Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought*, 33.

2 Radtke, *Weltgeschichte und Weltbeschreibung*.

3 Wood, Universal Chronicles.

4 Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origin*, 80; Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought*, 8 ff.; Neuwirth, Qur'an and History; Robinson, *Islamic Historiography*, 43.

evolved. The teachings recorded in the Qur'ān were supplemented with *ḥadīth*: the sayings of Muḥammad, his Companions and other Muslims of the generations of the Islamic conquests. These were remembered and, from the beginning of the ninth century, recorded in writing, authenticated by *isnāds* – long chains of names going back to the source of the citation. Much has been written on *ḥadīth*, which cannot even be summarised here.[5] Even in the early centuries of Islam, the material was controversial, and repeated attempts were made to distinguish between false and true *ḥadīth* by validating their transmitters. Furthermore, *ḥadīth* overlapped with *akhbār* – ›accounts‹, sometimes translated as ›historical traditions‹ – which also narrated episodes from the past, but were usually supported by much shorter *isnāds*.

Although *ḥadīth* and *akhbār* were a vast resource of information, it may have been some time before this was added to the knowledge of the past assembled in the Qur'ān to convert it into a chronological narrative.[6] Nor was this process recognised as forming a separate category of knowledge within Islam. As late as the ninth century, the term *ta'rīkh*, which was sometimes used for what we would now call »history«, was used mainly to indicate the date of an event. In 987-8 Ibn al-Nadīm, the son of a bookseller in Baghdad, drew up a catalogue of all the books known to him; some of these are extant; many others have disappeared. The first section of the third chapter of his catalogue is allocated to ›accounts (*akhbār*) of the historians (*akhbāriyyīn*), genealogists and preservers of biographies and events (*aṣḥāb al-siyar wa-l-aḥādīth*), with the names of their books‹.[7] Although a few of the works are listed as »*ta'rīkh*« Ibn Nadīm did not gave a single name to this category; nor did he list all the chronological narratives or lists, however labelled, in this section; many appear in other sections of the catalogue with more famous works by their authors on theology, law or other matters. Conversely, works labelled »*ta'rīkh*« could in practice cover a wide range of subjects. One of the earliest historians writing in Arabic whose name was recorded is Ibn Isḥāq (d. 760s), the author of a *Life* of the prophet Muḥammad that survives only in late medieval manuscripts of a version by Ibn Hishām (d. 834). Many different titles were given to Ibn Isḥāq's work when it was cited in later centuries, but they suggest that he prefaced his *Life* of the Prophet with a narrative or a collection of *ḥadīth* on Creation called *The Beginning (Kitāb al-Bad', Kitāb al-Mubtadā')*; this does not survive, although an attempt has been made to reconstruct it from a considerable number of citations of it by later authors, in particular al-Ṭabarī.[8] Similarly, the titles given to other eighth-century authors such as Wahb b. Munabbih (d.728) point towards the writing of histories from Creation, but the citations from these authors in late medieval manuscripts cannot always be attributed with confidence.[9] Turning to the works that survived, although often only in much later manuscripts, gives a smaller number of texts, even though some of them are enormously long and wide-ranging. Radtke listed eighteen Islamic universal histories written in Arabic before 1500, nearly all of them in the later Middle Ages.[10]

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5   Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought*, chapter 2; Robinson, *Islamic Historiography*, passim.

6   Donner, Narratives of Islamic Origin, 115-118.

7   Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, vol. 1/2, 277; Dodge's translation adds to the confusion between *ḥadīth* and *akhbār* by translating *akhbār*, *aḥdāth* and *aḥādīth* as ›historical traditions‹.

8   Newby, *Making of the Last Prophet*.

9   Robinson, *Islamic Historiography*, chapter 2.

10 Radtke, *Weltgeschichte und Weltbeschreibung*, 9-108.

The *History* attributed to Ibn Ḥabīb[11] poses problems of dating. Ibn Ḥabīb was better known to his contemporaries as a legal scholar than as a historian and also composed works in many genres, several of which have survived. He was born in Elvira, near Granada and spent some years in Egypt, before returning to al-Andalus, where he served the Umayyads in Cordoba.[12] The *History* survives only in a single manuscript, dated by the copyist to 695/1295-6. It cannot be the work of Ibn Ḥabīb alone, since it includes annals that continue to the 880s, thirty years after his death. It was not uncommon for continuations of medieval Arabic texts to be known by the name of the first or most important author. Most scholars consider Ibn Ḥabīb's *History* to be a continuation, or even a set of notes, by one of his students, which is how it will be treated here, although Makkī argued that changes were made to the text in the eleventh century.[13] The *History* begins 50,000 years before the Creation of the world, when Allāh decrees the measures of good and evil[14] and continues with an account of the prophets from Adam to Muḥammad and a summary of the expansion of Islam up to the caliphate of al-Walīd I (705-715). After this, the focus narrows to al-Andalus, with a detailed narrative of the conquest of Hispania in 711 and a short annalistic account of the Umayyad governors and emirs of al-Andalus. Ibn Ḥabīb's sources are not immediately obvious. He cited only three written texts: Ibn Hisham's version of Ibn Isḥāq's biography of the Prophet and the works of two other historians that are no longer extant.[15] He included *ḥadīth*s, and these may perhaps have come from his own *ḥadīth* compilations which have yet to be edited.[16] Although Ibn Ḥabīb often used *ḥadīth* that were regarded as reliable, as we shall see, he did not follow the orthodox procedure when citing them, often leaving them unattributed, or with a truncated chain of authorities. For this he was censured by one of his biographers, Ibn al-Faraḍī (d. 1012), who also complained that Ibn Ḥabīb could not distinguish between true and false *ḥadīth*s.[17] Such criticisms were commonly levelled at scholars who recounted episodes from history, who were denigrated as *akhbārīs* – reporters of anecdotes rather than transmitters of truth.

In the surviving manuscript, the History ends with a prediction of the destruction of al-Andalus, followed by *ḥadīth*s on the destruction of sinful nations and biographies of some of the transmitters of these *ḥadīth*s. Thus Ibn Ḥabīb, or his continuator, realized the purpose that he had stated towards the beginning of the text:

I begin it with Adam [and] I mention all the prophets and kings who inhabited the world and their affairs and their history [*akhbār*] if God wishes and ... what God worked for them until the time of the Prophet, peace and blessings upon him ... and how the caliphs followed after him in their history and stories about them and their lives until the time of Walīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān, may God have mercy on him. Then I come to the conquest of al-Andalus and the arrival there of Ṭāriq, mawlā of Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr and I mention the number of her governors and those who will govern her until she is destroyed and what will

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11   Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitab al-Taʾrikh,* ed. Aguadé.

12   Al-Khushanī, *Ajbār al-Fuqahāʾ,* ed. Ávila and Molina, 245-253.

13   Makki, Egipto y los orígines, 207.

14   Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitab al-Taʾrikh*, ed. Aguadé, 13.

15   Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitab al-Taʾrikh*, ed. Aguadé, 100.

16   Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitab al-Taʾrikh*, ed. Aguadé, 66.

17   Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitab al-Taʾrikh*, ed. Aguadé, 42.

happen after the destruction until the hour [of the Last Judgement] with the traditions and the signs [of the end of the world] if God wishes it comes.[18]

At around the time that Ibn Ḥabīb's pupil assembled his teacher's *History*, al-Ṭabarī' opened his *History of the Prophets and Kings* on a providential note:

In this book of mine I shall mention whatever information has reached us about kings throughout the ages from when our Lord began the Creation of His Creation to its annihilation. There were messengers sent from God, kings placed in authority, or caliphs established in the caliphal succession. God had early on bestowed his benefits and favours upon some of them. They were grateful for His favours, and He thus gave them more favours and bounty in addition to those bestowed by Him upon them in their fleeting life, or He postponed the increase and stored it up for them with Himself. There were others who were not grateful for His favours, and so He deprived them of the favours He had bestowed upon them early on and hastened for them His revenge. There were also others who were not grateful for His favours: He let them enjoy them [only] until the time of their death and perdition.[19]

Like Ibn Ḥabīb, al-Ṭabarī wrote on many subjects. He too was a noted legal scholar and his exegesis (*Tafsīr*) of the Qur'ān is still consulted. Born in Āmul, the capital of Ṭabaristān, he spent many years as a wandering scholar before settling in Baghdad. The pre-Islamic section of al-Ṭabarī's *History* is structured both by the Old Testament prophets and by a chronological account of the Persian Empire. A biography of the prophet Muḥammad is followed by annals of the caliphs, ending in 302/914-15. The work aimed for completeness, to judge from its title as reported by one of al-Ṭabarī's biographers: *History and deeds of all the Prophets and Kings from the earliest times*[20]. Al-Ṭabarī claimed that it was trustworthy, citing ›traditions and reports which I have transmitted and which I attribute to their transmitters‹.[21] He clearly relied on written sources, rather than oral transmission; the same biographer remarked: ›Because of his concern for scholarly research, he had his books all laid out on one side of his residence, then went through them for the first [time] one by one, in the process carrying them to the other side, until he was through with them; then he studied them again and returned them to their original place‹.[22] Al-Tabarī's method of assembling chunks of narrative, often giving variant accounts of the same events,[23] with each preceded by a long chain of *isnāds* made for a long and often tedious work. No complete manuscript of the *History* survives. The modern versions are a composite of several manuscripts produced for the Leiden edition of 1879-1901; a new edition, published in Cairo in 1969, collated this edition with manuscripts from the library of the Topkapi palace in Istanbul. The editorial treatment of the manuscripts, paired with its sheer size, complicate the interpretation of the *History*.

Given the uncertainty in both the date and the original forms of the *Histories* of Ibn Ḥabīb and al-Ṭabarī, it is impossible to say which came first, and whether one was a direct influence on the other. The two historians moved in similar scholarly circles, although it is unlikely that they ever met. Both men spent several years in Egypt. Ibn Ḥabīb was a contemporary

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18   Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitab al-Taʾrikh*, ed. Aguadé, 25-26.

19   Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, vol. 1, ed. Barth, 5; trans. Rosenthal, *History of al-Tabari,* 168.

20   *Taʾrīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk wa-akhbāruhum wa-man kān fī zamān kull wāḥid minhum*; Yāʾqūt, *Irshād* VI, 68, trans. Rosenthal, *History of al-Tabari*, 131.

21   Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, vol. 1, ed. Barth, 6, trans. Rosenthal, *History of al-Tabari*, 170.

22   Yāqūt, *Irshād*, vol. 6, 68, trans. Rosenthal, *History of al-Tabari,* 131.

23   Franz, *Kompilation in arabischen Chroniken*, 7-16.

of the historian Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam (d.871) and both studied with his father, a famous legal scholar. Al-Ṭabarī was in Egypt c.867-870, where he may have met Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam and he could have read the latter's *Conquest of Egypt*, a history of Egypt from pre-Islamic times which is authenticated by long chains of *isnāds* – although he cited Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam only once.[24] The similarities in approach, if not the length of both *Histories* also suggest that they used a common written model, perhaps *The Beginning* attributed to Ibn Isḥāq, mentioned above. Both historians developed their history of salvation within the framework of the measurement of time. It seems that, as in the Christian tradition, ›the recording of the passage of time was an end in itself… [which] afforded the possibility of rare glimpses of the workings of Providence‹.[25] Al-Ṭabarī began his work with a long discussion on the meaning of time.[26] Ibn Ḥabīb divided time into ages that echo the Christian tradition; his calculation, which put the birth of Jesus at c. 6,000, makes this some 500 years later than the most commonly cited Christian dating; the birth of Muḥammad is dated 500 years later and both traditions envisage that the End of the World may be some 500 years after the arrival of their most significant holy figure:

Adam lived for 1,000 years and between him and Noaḥ were 1,000 years, which is 2,000 years. Noaḥ lived for 1,000 years and between him and Abraham were 1,000 years, which is 4,000 years. Another 1,000 years passed until Allāh sent down the Torah to Moses, which is 5,000 years. Between the Torah and the Psalter (*Zabūr*) were 500 years and between the Psalter and the Gospels (*Injīl*) 500 years and 6000 years were over. And from Jesus (*'Isā*) to Muḥammad – Peace and blessings upon him – a full 500 years passed. I will describe what elapsed during the remaining 500 [years], God willing. According to Ibn Ḥabīb 200 years remain of the 500 years up to the end of the 7000 years [but] according to other narratives there are more [years remaining to the End of the World].[27]

Both Ibn Ḥabīb and al-Ṭabarī emphasised the direction of time's arrow by expanding the Qur'ānic narrative with *ḥadīth*. The section on pre-Islamic history in both authors, built up mainly from the Qur'ān but also from the Old Testament, either as direct quotation or as inter-textual echoes[28] is expanded with narratives derived from the so-called »Stories of the Prophets« (*Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā'*), a popular genre of fantastic stories and miracles that some scholars included in *ḥadīth*, but which later Islamic scholars rejected.[29] These stories were enlivened with *ḥadith Qudsī*: the direct speech of God, Jesus and other prophets. Thus several anecdotes were added to the Qur'ānic account of the Flood and the building of Noah's Ark, Ibn Ḥābīb described the animals going into the Ark and reported that Satan also entered the Ark by grabbing hold of the donkey's tail;[30] al-Tabarī gave a slightly different version of events.[31] Although comical, the story may have helped point the moral of that God's punishment for man's wickedness was not exhausted by the Flood. Both authors, however, supplemented this account with an anecdote that was not only unedifying but apparently ludicrous,

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24   Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 1, ed. Barth, 712, Rosenthal, *History of al-Tabari*, 26-29.

25   Wood, Universal Chronicles.

26   Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 1, ed. Barth, 1-28, trans. Rosenthal, *History of al-Tabari*, 166-198.

27   Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitab al–Ta'rikh*, ed. Aguadé, 73.

28   Reeves, Some Explorations of the Intertwining.

29   Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought*, 68-72.

30   Ibn Ḥabīb, Kitāb al-ta'rīkh, ed. Aguadé, 38.

31   Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 1, ed. Barth, 190-191, trans. Rosenthal, *History of al-Tabari,* 360.

about the accumulation of dung in the Ark, and the miraculous appearance of an elephant, who managed to dispose of it.[32] In both the *Histories*, some of the anecdotes believed to derive from the popular folk tales are also supported by *ḥadīth* – and, in the case of al-Ṭabarī, by long *isnads*. The *ḥadīth* on the dung and the elephant has an *isnād* going back to Muḥammad's companion Ibn Abbās; he described a conversation between Jesus and his disciples about the Ark during which Jesus raised Ḥām from the dead so that he could describe it to them.[33] The credibility of the transmitters of this material might be questioned; the method, however, was undisputedly orthodox. There are far fewer of the stories of apparently popular origin in the last section of al-Ṭabarī's *History*, the age of the caliphs, but Ibn Ḥabīb included several in his account of the conquest of al-Andalus, including a description of the House of Bolts where the Visigothic king Rodrigo saw portraits of the men who would overthrow them, together with anecdotes relating to the presence of king Solomon in the peninsula.

Al-Ṭabarī was said to have written his *History* towards the end of his life, and at night, as though he had taken leave of the critical faculties he used in the compilation of his legal and religious works.[34] Ibn Ḥabīb's *History* has been dismissed as nugatory, following Dozy's verdict in the nineteenth century that it was simply a collection of fables.[35] This judgement ignores the parallels between the *History* and Ibn Ḥabīb's writings in other genres, which can be used to interpret his stories of the conquest of the peninsula as, amongst other things, a comment on its legal standing as a *jihād*.[36] Furthermore, some of the *ḥadīth*s that al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Ḥabīb used to validate their Histories were those that al-Ṭabarī had used in his exegesis of the Qur'ān, where he cited sayings of the Prophet to expound obscurities in the sacred text. One of these *ḥadīth*s concerning the creation of the Pen, which al-Tabarī discussed at length in the *Tafsīr*, is cited at the beginning of Ibn Ḥabīb's *History*:

[Ibn Ḥabīb] related to us from Asad from Naṣr ibn Ṭarīf from Saʿīd ibn Jubayr from Ibn Abbās [who heard it from the prophet Muḥammad]: the first thing that God created, blessed and raised from nothing was the Pen. And he said, »Write!«. He said, »What should I write?« He said, »Write the measures of good and evil.« And he wrote about the world and what existed in it up to the day of Resurrection.[37]

In the *Tafsīr*, in the commentary on *Sūra* 68, ›The Pen‹, commenting on the *aya* ›By the Pen and what they [the angels] write‹, al-Ṭabarī cited four similar *ḥadīth*s beginning: ›The first thing that Allāh created was the Pen‹.[38] He repeated this statement three times in the *History*,[39] although he also noted that other traditionists reported that the first thing to be created was light and darkness. In this way, history was constructed with the aid of the same *ḥadīth*s that were used in exegesis of the Qur'ān and salvation history came to be recounted in real time.

Yet it is clear that this was almost the end of the road for the writing of this sort of history in Islam. In contrast to Christian chroniclers' deployment of Old Testament narrative in accounts of their own times, the messages of Qur'ān and *ḥadīth* could only with difficulty be applied to contemporary history. Although Ibn Ḥabīb was able to give a providential reading

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32 Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh,* vol. 1, ed. Barth, 187-188, trans. Rosenthal, *History of al-Tabari,* 357.

33 Al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. 1, ed. Barth, 187.

34 Ibn al- Athīr, *Kāmil*, ed. Tornberg, vol. 1, 12.

35 Dozy, *Recherches sur l'histoire*, vol. 2, 28-37.

36 Christys, From *ǧihād* to *diwān*.

37 Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-ta'rīkh*, ed. Aguadé, 13.

38 Al-Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr,* ed. al-Khalīdī and al-ʿAlī, vol. 7, 270-272 .

of the history of al-Andalus, al-Ṭabarī's account of the caliphs becomes briefer and shorn of *isnāds* as it approaches his own day, suggesting that after the early years of Islam, the deeds of the caliphs did not seem to be leading to salvation.

Al-Ṭabarī's reputation as a historian remained high, but he was more celebrated than read. Medieval readers preferred to read him in shorter versions shorn of *ḥadīth* and pages of *isnāds*, and it was this form that later historians used as the basis for their continuations. An epitome of the work, interpolated as well as condensed, was made within two genera-tions of the historian's death and translated into Persian.[40] Ibn al-Athīr (1160-1233) used al-Ṭabarī's work as the basis for his own, extensive history, but he criticised his predecessor for his prolixity.[41] Yet most of the other Islamic universal histories that Radtke analysed were very different in structure and content. Pre-Islamic and Islamic history were complemented by geography, the history and anthropology of non-Islamic peoples and many other topics – a picture of the world derived from Antique authors translated into Arabic, which Radtke labelled ›Kulturgeschichte‹ and which echoes Fredegar's description of his work.[42] These works are very disparate, the structure and content of each are crucially dependent on the compiler's sectarian position within Islam.[43] Although many of the ›culture historians‹ focu-sed on cosmology, others did not. Most, but not all, included the biography of Muḥammad, but they did not always go on to give an annalistic account of the caliphs. The most famous of these encyclopaedic works are those of the Shīʿī geographer al-Masʿūdī (c. 893-956) and of Ibn Khaldūn (1332-1406).[44] Another Shīʿī, al-Yaʿqūbī (d. c. 905), compiled a miscellany whose first part covered both pre-Islamic history and that of non-Islamic peoples as far afield as India and China.[45] Al-Masʿūdī and al-Yaʿqūbī listed the historians whose works they had consulted; the latter also cited both the Old Testament and the Gospels, either directly or in paraphrase as the ›Peoples of the Book, the People of the Gospel and the Christians‹.[46] Among the later historians, al-Maqdisī (d. 966), a Muʿtazilite, focused on the data that could by confirmed from the Qurʾān, from unbroken chains of *isnāds* or by the consensus of the Muslim community and condemned the additions that had been made to the stories in the Qurʾān and true *ḥadīth* as being likely to lead Muslims into heresy. Yet when al-Maqdisī tried to reconcile accounts of Creation in the different Islamic and non-Islamic traditions, he eventually settled for the non-Arab (*ʿajam*) version of Creation in the Old Testament.[47] Creation was one aspect of the world that al-Maqdisī was describing rather than the starting point for an eschatological narrative.

Modern historians writing about the early Middle Ages repeatedly try to categorise the sources, perhaps in the hope of making our studies look more scientific. We have assumed that medieval historians too had a mental framework upon which they built their records of the past. As Ian Wood has shown, attempts to uncover this framework, to develop categories such as that of ›universal history‹ have fundamental flaws and generate outliers: i. e. works

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40   Al-Tabari, trans. Zotenberg, *La Chronique*.

41   Ibn al-Athī, *Kāmil,* ed. Tornberg, reprinted, vol. 1, 12.

42   Wood, Universal Chronicles.

43   Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought*, 40.

44   Khalidi, *Islamic Historiography*; Shboul, *Al-Masʿudi*.

45   Al- Yaʾqūbī, *Taʾrīkh*.

46   Griffith, The Gospel, the Qurʾān.

47   Khalidī, Muʿtazilite Historiography.

that will not fit into the proposed classification. Various attempts have been made to ›save the phenomena‹: to explain away mismatch between the existing works and our categorisations of them by positing, for instance, that generic conventions did exist even they are difficult to pin down.[48] For the historians of the medieval Islamic world, too, there were many ways of describing the past, of which a chronological narrative from Creation was only one option. For the two Histories discussed here, and, by inference, during the early centuries of Islam, the primary purpose of writing may have been the extension of the message of the Qurʾān into a chronological account of the past and future of the believers, but after this, providential narratives of the past were subsumed into encyclopaedic enterprises. The differences between the resulting works outweigh any attempt to unite them in a single category of »universal history«.

48　See e.g. Burgess and Kulikowski, *Mosaics* 9, 13, 16 and *passim*.

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»I Spy with my ›Little Eye‹«: GIS and Archaeological Perspectives on Eleventh-Century Song Envoy Routes in the Liao Empire

Gwen P. Bennett*

Archaeological data, combined with GIS analysis has given us new perspectives on eleventh century medieval period envoy missions from the Song Dynasty (960-1279 CE) to the Liao Empire (907-1125 CE). Lu Zhen and Wang Zhen were Song envoys sent in 1008 and 1012 by the Song to the Liao's Middle Capital or Zhongjing, in present day Chifeng Inner Mongolia, the Peoples Republic of China (PRC). Lu Zhen recorded information about the route he traveled that allows us to locate it on administrative maps of the Song-Liao period and present day maps of the PRC. Viewshed analysis of the route combined with information Wang Zhen recorded about it lets us calculate population densities for an area that he passed through that can be used to extrapolate population density estimates from archaeological data for other areas in Chifeng. Viewshed analysis provides insights about the areal extent of the landscape and what man-made structures the envoys might have been able to see along the route during their travels. Combined, these analyses give us better insights into some of the concerns that the Liao had about these foreign missions crossing their territory and the steps they took to address them.

Keywords: Liao Empire, Song Dynasty, archaeology, GIS, China, landscape analysis, viewsheds, optimal routes.

Introduction

Chinese historical sources tell us that in 1008, Lu Zhen was sent as an envoy from the Song Dynasty capital at Bianjing (modern day Kaifeng) to the Liao Empire (907-1125), centered in what is now Chifeng, Inner Mongolia, China *(Fig. 1)*.[1] Lu Zhen not only kept a record of his route by naming the places he passed through, but he also recorded observations he made about the landscape and population en route to his destination. His route is described clearly enough that it can be plotted on present day maps of the region, traced out across the landscape, and could, if one wished, even be driven on newly laid asphalt roads.

As Lu Zhen's route crosses from modern day Hebei Province into Inner Mongolia, the present day agricultural and pastoral landscape that it traverses is still settled according to the

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1 Chifeng is classified as a city in the PRC's administrative system, but at 34,855 mi² or 90,275 km², it is a vast area that is slightly larger than the US state of South Carolina at 32,020 mi² or 82,931 km² and slightly smaller than Portugal at 35,603 mi² or 92,212 km². The actual urban center of this »city« is in the Hongshan and eastern Songshan Districts, and is known as Chifeng as well. To a lesser extent, it is still also known by its Mongol name of Ulanhad. (Sources: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chifeng; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Carolina; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portugal; accessed April 10, 2015.)
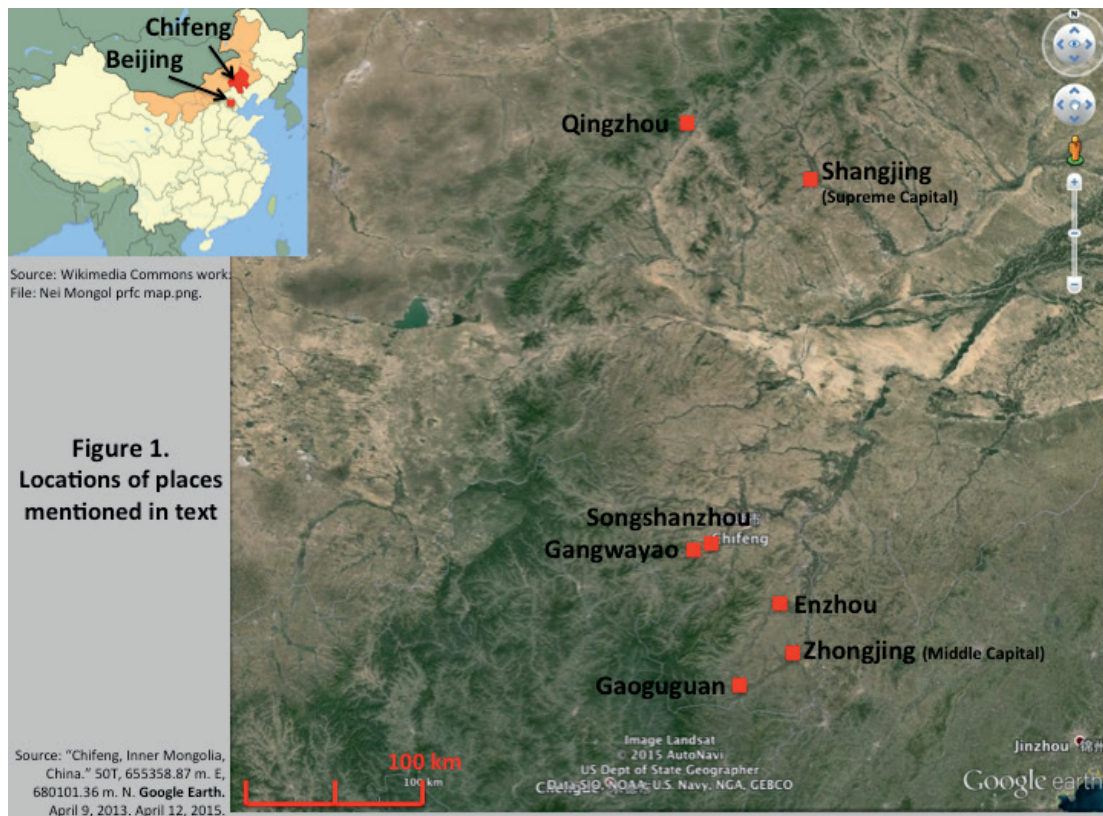
Fig. 1: Locations of places mentioned in text

general patterns that guided settlement 1,000 years ago when Lu Zhen traversed it to reach Zhongjing, the fourth of the Liao's five capitals.[2] Most of the present day agricultural villages in this dry landscape are strung out along the edges of the river valleys so that farmers can be close to their small plots of land on the narrow alluvial floodplains. Until the 1990s, seasonally dry riverbeds served as many of the region's transportation routes, giving villages an additional reason to settle next to the rivers. This traditional form of transport ended in the late 1990s and 2000s when the Peoples Republic of China's (PRC's) infrastructure building programs built paved and mechanized transportation routes replacing the shorter, clearer paths that were once traveled by horse caravan or camel train, which was surely how Lu Zhen traveled as envoy to Zhongjing, in present day Ningcheng, Inner Mongolia.

In addition to floodplain villages, there are some smaller hamlets nestled higher up on drier yet still arable land on rolling hills rising from the floodplains. In other areas low mountains rise more abruptly from the valleys and are covered with scrubby grass, thorn-covered bushes of sea buckthorn, and patches of andesite bedrock. Villages, hamlets and farm plots are not often found on these steeper slopes, and before 2004, they were used for pasturing, with sheep and goats dotting the crisscrossing paths etched by hooves into their surfaces.

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2 Settlement patterns for cultural periods ranging from ca. 6000 BCE to 1200 CE have been archaeologically defined by the Chifeng International Collaborative Archaeological Research Project (CICARP), which conducted full coverage regional archaeological survey in a 1,234 km² territory in Chifeng from 1999-2007. At present, the »Liao« period is defined by archaeologists working in the Chifeng region as the period from ca. 200-1300 CE due to the difficulty of further distinguishing the common unglazed pottery remains that make up the vast proportion of survey remains. CICARP, *Settlement Patterns,* 134.

Now, the increased dust storms that Beijing and other northern cities experienced in the early 2000s has resulted in a ban on grazing in these marginal environments, bringing momentous change to this millennia long custom. Villagers still keep sheep and goats, but herds are smaller now and pastured on the margins of the farm fields, no longer playing a major role in individual economic strategies.

Lu Zhen passed through territory that up until the 1990s must have looked much like what it did then. While towns have grown larger and paved roads are now more plentiful, tracing out his route over this landscape can still tell us much about the Liao Empire and its concerns as it interacted with an envoy from a potentially threatening neighbor who was also charged with gathering useful information on his travels. We can attempt to identify some of these concerns by looking at how the Liao guided this envoy and his retinue through their territory.

Traversing a landscape requires many choices to be made, some of which depend on mode of transportation, but others of which depend on different constraints. Railroad engineers, for instance, always seek out the most level terrain possible for laying rails, and will cut steep beds into or tunnel through mountains to avoid the climbs and dips in elevation that pose challenges to mechanical competence and fuel consumption. Premodern human transportation, done by foot or animal, certainly would have also taken changes in elevation into consideration due to the technical difficulties of scaling some of these obstacles, or perhaps for the same reasons railroads do – to save energy. Analytical tools within Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software can be used to determine optimal routes in a topographic landscape that can then be compared to known routes across them so that the convergences and divergences in route can be identified and reasons can be found that might explain them. When these analyses can be correlated with known archaeological data from the region, additional nuances can be added to the interpretation of both the route choice and the archaeological landscape. Combining these analyses when Lu Zhen's route is examined can end up telling us a considerable amount about both the Liao's strategic considerations as they led the Song envoy across their territory, and also more generally about how residents of the Liao Empire lived and carried out their activities in this landscape.

The Kitans and the Liao Empire

The Kitans (ca. fourth to thirteenth century+) lived north of the line of the Great Wall of China, and in the records kept in Chinese by the literate elite of their southern neighbors in the Yellow River region, were considered to be pastoral nomads. Recent archaeological investigations have shown how this is an overbroad characterization and that the inhabitants of some Kitan-controlled areas practiced sedentary agriculture[3] and could switch between this and pastoralism in certain circumstances.[4] Sometime before 907, the Kitan leadership began to transform their fluidly organized, aristocratically based society into an imperial power with bureaucratic administration. In 907, their leader Abaoji established the Liao Empire (907-1125), and through military and diplomatic action the Kitans achieved equal status with the Five Dynasties (907-960) and Song (960-1276) rulers of north China. The Liao has often been regarded as the first of several »alien« empires that incorporated increasingly large portions of territory claimed by Chinese states in China's Middle Period, which culminated in the Mongol submergence of China into their empire and Mongol control of two-thirds of the Asian continent.

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3   CICARP, *Settlement Patterns*; Wittfogel and Feng, *History of Chinese Society*, 121.
4   Toghto, *History of Liao*, 59: 923-924; Han, *Grassland and Rurality*.

The historical records surviving for the Kitan-Liao period – focusing on institutional structures, military and political events, and ruling elites – were compiled by officials of the southern, Chinese-style, dynasties who had complex political and sometimes cultural agendas regarding the northerners. Little to no mention is made in the records of individuals other than members of the Liao elite, or what the nature of life was like for commoners. While specifics are not spelled out, we do know that Kitan society developed into an empire in circumstances quite different from the better studied Xiongnu and Mongols. Unfortunately however, our current understandings of these processes do not take into account the effects of different ecozones and geographical locations, long-term intensive interaction with Yellow River societies and other Inner Asian polities, and what existing states were available as models. Moreover, the Chinese language texts (as for the formative periods of most Inner Asian-based empires) are frustratingly lacking in detail about how these states came into existence, how they were structured, or about aspects of life within them that did not have implications for the Chinese record keepers. These difficulties highlight the suitability of integrating archaeological, documentary, paleoecological and other evidence together in order to better understand the Liao period.

The Kitan homeland was within the current boundaries of Chifeng, Inner Mongolia, a vast region that in the first millennium was a borderland – a region between the undifferentiated Mongol, Tungusic, and Jurchen groups to the north, the Yellow River dynasties to the south, the Korean kingdoms to the east and the Turkic kingdoms to the west. Once the Liao dynasty was established, the Chifeng region became an important place for the Liao emperors to relocate populations captured from the Central Plains dynasties and the Bohai (Kr: Balhae) kingdom as farmers and artisans.[5] When these groups joined the agricultural population that was already present, they made this region a crucial source of the tax revenue required to fund the institutions and personnel needed to run a developing state-level organization. But more than just being a place where populations with different cultural backgrounds mixed, Chifeng was also an ecological zone that required its diverse populations to practice varying economic activities based on where they lived in the region – and ones that might have differed from those they practiced in the places from whence they came. Chifeng has many ecozones, some of which were suitable for intensive or extensive agriculture, and others that were better for pastoral nomadism, or hunting, gathering and fishing. Depending on circumstances, inhabitants might have plied any of these economic practices at different times in their lives. It was still possible in the mid-1990s to see families in the Chifeng region where, until land reforms were promulgated by Beijing in 2003, one member pursued each of these activities.[6]

The Kitan Liao Archaeological Survey and History Project
Because Kitan heritage, manifested by standing monuments and abundant material culture remains, stretches across a vast region of present day northern China and Mongolia, and their political and economic influence lasted for centuries, better understandings of developments emerging in the Chifeng region are vital to the study of not just China, but to all of northeast Asia, and for much of the pre-modern period. The Kitan Liao Archaeological

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5   Toghto, *History of Liao*, 39.

6   Bennett, pers. observation.

Survey and History Project (KLASH),[7] was established in 2012 to investigate the period from ca. 200 through 1400 when the Kitans emerged from the unnamed groups in the northern borderlands, first to become a confederacy and then an empire, and finally to be conquered and absorbed into the succeeding Jurchen Jin Empire (1115-1234).

KLASH is integrating methods from archaeology, history, and geophysics to investigate three Liao period walled city sites, along with their hinterlands in the Chifeng region. Song shanzhou, the first site we will examine, was a prefectural level town with walls measuring 510 × 510 m, whose one mention in the Liao History is a seven character description of it as »bordering on the Songmo region, a gathering place and crossroads for merchants«.[8] This short description is enough to hint at its relationship with the large kiln complex 10 km away known as Gangwayao, which will also be included in the KLASH investigations so we can determine their relationship to each other. Enzhou was also a prefectural level town with walls measuring 285 × 285 m, but it may have started as a garrison town on the line of the Han period Great Wall running near it.[9] The Liao History reports that it was one place where craftspeople and farmers from the neighboring kingdom of Bohai (Balhae) were relocated after the Liao conquered them in 926. Pottery roof tiles and fragments made in the Balhae style found at Enzhou hint at this heritage. The last of the three walled cities we will work at is Zhongjing, the Middle Capital, established in 1007, with exterior walls measuring 4 × 4,2 km.[10] Zhongjing was composed of three nested sets of walls marking out the outer city precinct, the inner city precinct and the palace precinct. All three sets of walls still stand, along with some gates, building foundations, and three pagodas, two of which were Liao and one of which may be very late Liao or Jin Dynasty (1115-1234).

KLASH's methods are designed to give us data at many different scales of resolution, from those that are minute enough to give us insight into individual lives to those vast enough to inform about state formation processes. We are combining a number of nondestructive investigative methods, including systematic full coverage archaeological survey, geophysical prospecting, and a reexamination of the historical documents to gather evidence. Full coverage survey will be done intensively on the sites and extensively around them in regions measuring approximately 200 km². Fragments of fired clay – roof tiles, bricks, glazed porcelains, and the huge quantities of unglazed hard fired pottery are our primary source of evidence and are found in abundance both underneath and lying on the surfaces of farm fields that cover most of the sites' surfaces.

Intensive archeological survey, involves crew members walking transects spaced at 20 meters apart and stopping every 20 meters to collect all the pottery fragments within a 2 meter diameter circle. Using this method on the city sites will give us finer control over our identifications of where things are located at the sites. We can also determine the differing

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7   I am Principal Investigator of this project, and my co-PIs are Professor Naomi Standen, School of History and Cultures, University of Birmingham, UK, and Dr. Joshua Wright, Dept. of Anthropology, Oberlin College, USA.

8   Toghto, *History of Liao*, 39:458.

9   Toghto, *History of Liao*, 39:482.

10 The Liao established five capitals, which were all kept in use after their beginnings, and several of which continued in use after the fall of Liao in 1125. The first capital, Shangjing or the Supreme Capital, was built in 918 in Balinzuoqi, or Balin Left Banner, Chifeng. The second, Dongjing, the eastern capital, was built in 928 from a former Balhae walled city at modern day Liaoyang, Liaoning. The third capital, Nanjing, the southern capital, was established in 938 at what is now modern Beijing. The fourth capital, Zhongjing, the central capital, was built in 1007, in present day Ningcheng County, Chifeng. The fifth capital, Xijing, the western capital, was built in 1044 at present day Datong, Shanxi.

intensities of use at these locations by using the samples we have collected as proxy indicators of density, which in turn reflect upon intensity. The types of fired clay artifacts we find (roof tiles, bricks, fine porcelains and glazed and unglazed pottery), along with remnants of the pounded earth construction that was used to build walls and building foundations at each site, will help us to identify what types of structures stood where within the cities, and the activities that took place at them and around them and in open areas. For instance, concentrations of roof tiles and bricks point toward the presence of buildings of a particular nature, since it is clear from the artifact patterns we have already noted in initial walkovers at the sites that not all structures could have been roofed with them. Our initial impressions from these walkovers also noted that finer ceramics are associated with areas of roof tiles, which suggests that more elite members of society may have used these structures. Other areas at some of the sites have slag and kiln furniture that suggests ceramic or metal production activities took place in them. However, a common problem we will have at each of the city sites is that the fired clay artifacts found on their surfaces are so abundant that they create a logistical problem for collection, even though we are not collecting everything on the surface but just sampling them. We are solving this issue by buying a donkey to carry all the collection bags.

In addition to intensive survey on the city sites, their hinterlands will be investigated using full coverage extensive survey. Areas measuring approximately 200 km² surrounding each of the city sites and bounded by features in the natural topography will be surveyed by crew members walking transects spaced approximately 40 m apart. If artifacts are encountered on the ground surface, they are collected and bagged; with new collection units started every 50 m.[11] Survey of the areas around the city sites will identify the smaller settlements located in their immediate vicinity, which will let us place the cities in a much more complete context that will contribute to understanding both the cities themselves, the smaller settlements, and how all of them were embedded within the larger context of the Liao Empire.

Geophysical investigations will be done on the city sites using a magnetometer, an instrument that can measure disturbances in the earth's magnetic fields that are caused by the presence of subsurface archaeological remains. Readings from the magnetometer can be used to create maps of these disturbances, whose layouts and shapes can indicate the presence of man-made structures or alterations to the landscape below the ground surface. Magnetometers react to burned soil, brick, rock, disturbed soil and decayed organic materials; which make them effective instruments to use on archaeological sites to identify buried features. We will also do systematic auger coring across the surfaces of each of the city sites. Sites are composed of stratigraphic layers of natural and anthropogenic deposits, and coring to appropriate depths gives us stratified soil samples from these different subsurface levels that we will use to create a three dimensional map of what is beneath the ground surface at each of the sites.

Our intensive archaeological survey at each city site will complement the findings from geophysical investigations and auger coring. Differently scaled architecture, its layouts and distribution within the city, and open spaces can all be identified using geophysical methods.

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11 Extensive survey methodology follows that established by CICARP (2011), the first of the large scale regional surveys done in southeastern Inner Mongolia and western Liaoning, but with an adaptation initiated by Dr. Gideon Shelach (pers. comm. January 28, 2013) in his later Liaoning survey of making collection units smaller in size at 50 m, rather than CICARP's 100 m collection units. This allows finer control over identifying spatial distribution of artifacts.

The archaeological materials gathered during surface survey and subsurface auger coring will be integrated with the geophysical information to identify potential uses and users of these areas of the sites. Combining the findings from these three methods should help us identify the subsurface remains of potential walls, roads, residential quarters for different social groups, markets, open plaza areas, craft workshops and cemeteries. Since Songshanzhou and Enzhou have earlier artifacts on their surfaces in addition to Liao and later artifacts, and Zhongjing has earlier and later artifacts in certain areas within its 4 × 4,2 km walls, our finding will also let us look at how these cities developed through time, and how at particular time periods they may have had similar or different layouts and components. We will then be able to compare our fine-grained field results with the rather limited textual record.

GIS and archaeological perspectives on Song envoy routes to Zhongjing
Cities and towns can also be considered as nodes where intense activity took place within landscapes that are themselves the loci for other, no less important but often more diffusely evidenced activities such as agricultural fields, livestock corrals, or small hunting camps. Communication and transportation networks linked these nodes together within a region, as well as to smaller settlements and subsistence and raw material resources in their vicinities and even farther. Examining the nature of the linkage between different centers by identifying probable transportation routes helps us to understand their relationships with each other, and their relative importance within the greater region. Each of the three walled cities that KLASH is investigating sat on the major transportation route between the Liao Supreme Capital, the first of the Liao's five capital cities, located in northern Chifeng and the fourth capital, Zhongjing 270 km to the south in southern Chifeng. Lu Zhen's envoy route, which ended at Zhongjing, tells us about the strategic decisions that Liao made about what to let him see as he crossed their territory. If we extrapolate from the information we have gathered about the territory Lu Zhen passed through and apply these observations to the landscape that our other two city sites are located on, we can then start to identify some of the choices made by settlers when they selected sites for the villages, towns and cities, and can also start to make initial estimates for the population that lived there.

In preparation for KLASH's summer 2014 field season, we prepared the initial map layers of our project GIS database by georeferencing maps of Liao administrative geography.[12] We then plotted on these maps the locations that Lu Zhen noted he had passed through on his way to the Liao Middle Capital at Zhongjing as a case study for our integration of archaeological and historical methods. We then overlaid these maps onto regional topographic maps that were another data layer in our GIS to calculate the most efficient routes (based on the least expenditure of energy) across the landscape between the points Lu Zhen noted in his envoy report. We then compared this optimal route to the route Lu Zhen recorded *(Fig. 2)*. In most instances, the optimal and probable routes both follow river valleys when they are present or otherwise seek out areas of lower elevation when they are not. But there are several instances where the two routes diverge and it is in these divergences that we can potentially see some of the considerations that Lu Zhen's Kitan guides were making as they led him through this territory.

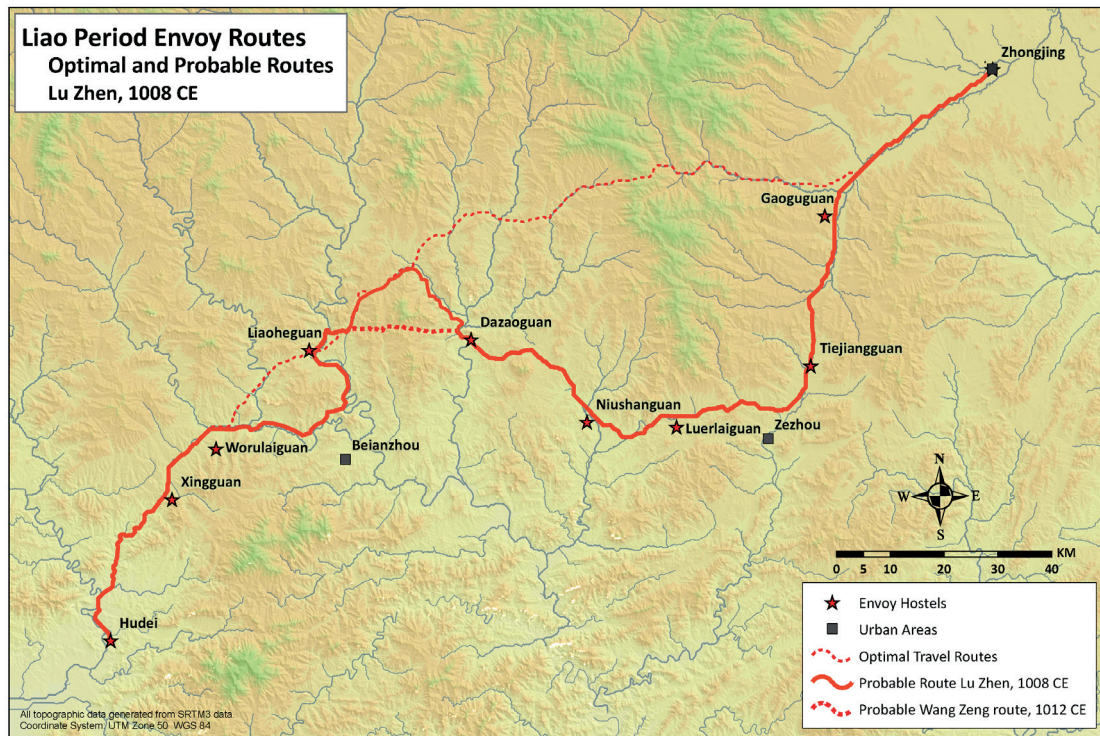12   Tan, *Historical Atlas of China*, 3-6, 10-11.

Fig. 2: Liao period envoy routes: optimal and probable routes

By 1008, the Liao and the Song were already three years into the Treaty of Shanyuan, signed in 1005. This treaty ended several decades of warfare between the two polities, which had not achieved much to alter the balance of power between them. Because of this, they signed a treaty that succeeded in giving them a century of peace. Envoy visits between the two polities were a time-tested means of maintaining communications, and had a long history within the varied political frameworks that governed polities during this age and earlier. The Treaty of Shanyuan appears to have formalized an arrangement of visits between the two states, with three annual northbound visits, plus occasional *ad hoc* embassies, with responses and missions of thanks heading south.

Lu Zhen's envoy mission to Liao was carried out in this context, and although peaceful relations were maintained between Song and Liao, his route through Liao territory exhibits some unexpected elements. One of the first of these is that Lu Zhen was guided on a route that did not pass through any urban centers, but rather followed a series of *guan* stations, which were official rest stops used by envoy missions, messengers, and internal imperial officials. The lack of urban centers along the route seems to imply that the *guans* along it, and perhaps the route itself might have been established for this thrice-yearly exchange of envoys. This apparently dedicated function would have meant that they would not have had the full array of common economic or political activities taking place at them that would have been occurring at other centers in the region, which would have denied the envoys any opportunity to observe and evaluate Liao economic strength.

Second, Lu Zhen's route does not always follow the optimal one across the landscape. The *guan* stations he stopped at were arranged along a convoluted path that more than doubled the length of the optimal route to Zhongjing. Moreover, the position of the *guans* in the region's narrow valleys would have emphasized the occasional danger any party traveling along these paths would have had from flash floods during the summer monsoon months.
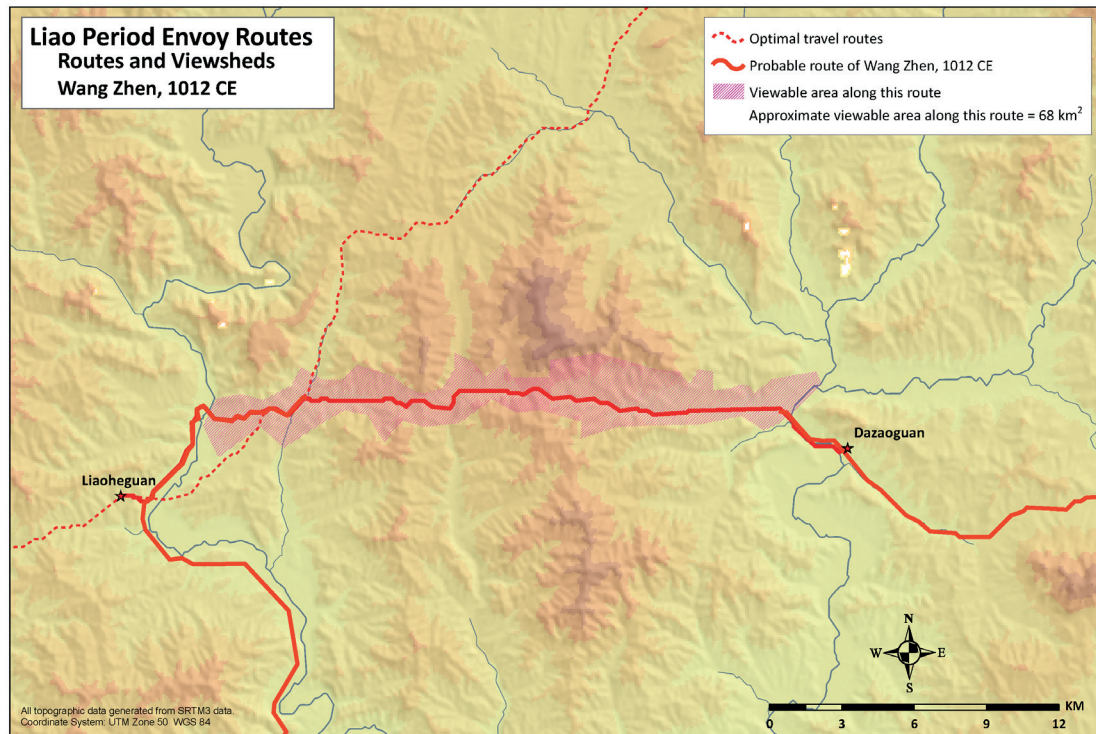
Fig. 3: Liao period envoy routes: viewsheds, Wang Zhen's route, and population estimates

The histories indicate that embassies were known opportunities to collect information that might be of military, political or economic use against neighboring states, especially ones that had been enemies in the past and might well be enemies again in the future. With these considerations, Liao might well have thought it prudent to limit envoy access to local populations and the places they frequented, which may explain the isolated nature of the *guan* locations.

Wang Zeng was another Song envoy sent to Zhongjing in 1012 *(Fig. 2 and 3)*. On his passing between the Liaoheguan and Dazaoguan *guan* stations, situated in a region with low mountains and occupied by Bohai (Balhae) groups, he noted that he only saw one hundred households in that stretch of the route. GIS software contains analytical tools that can calculate viewsheds – the areal extent of territory that can be seen from a particular vantage point. Viewsheds are concerned with the visibility of features, both natural and manmade, and are ways to provide a measurement of how much of the landscape that Wang Zhen might have seen on the stretch of route for which he made his observation. Viewshed analysis indicates that along the route he most probably took, he was able to see a total of approximately 68 km² of the surrounding landscape. According to Wang Zhen, this 68 km² contained 100 households, which gives us a population density of 1,5 households per km² along this route. This low population density figure may be evidence of the effectiveness that Liao imperial institutions had in controlling what foreign envoys were able to observe on their journeys, as well as the degree of effort that the Liao exerted to avoid potential future war with Song. Combining the historical data with GIS analysis provides us with an informative observation on population density along one stage of the envoy route, from which we can then infer Liao concerns; but it also provides us with a figure against which to compare population densities calculated using archaeological data for other areas in Chifeng that were not on the envoy route. Because we have no reportage for these areas, the density of pottery finds within
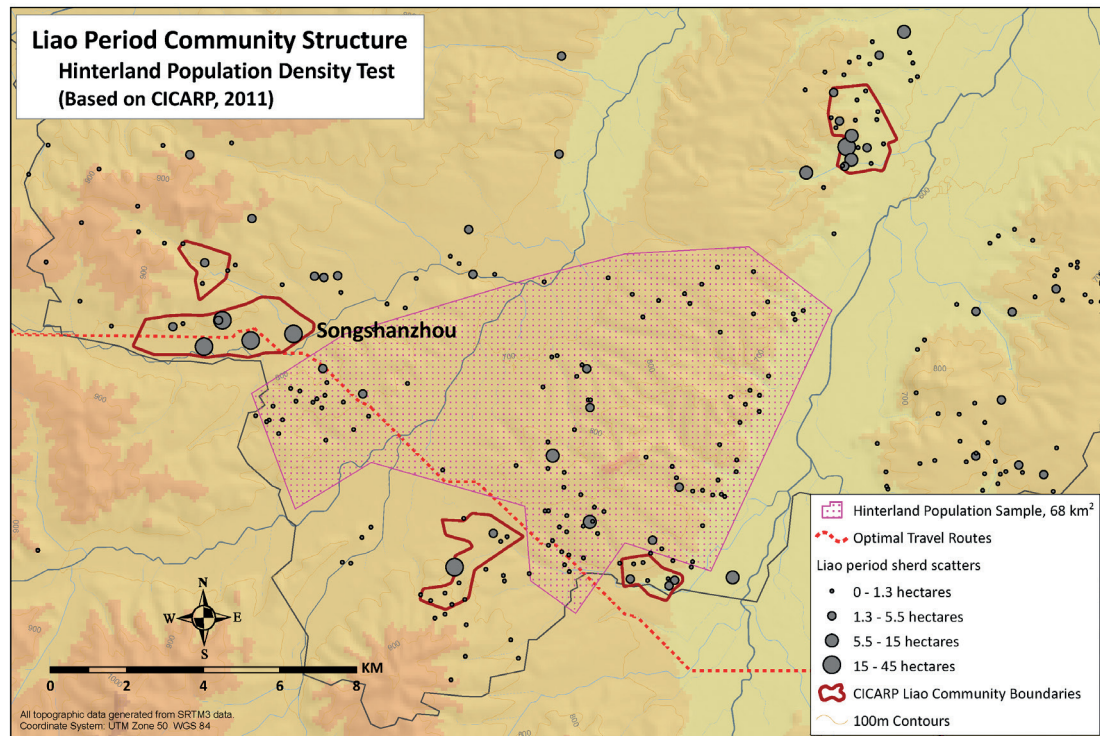
Fig. 4: Liao period community structure: hinterland population density test

circumscribed locations on the landscape is used as proxies to calculate population density *(Fig. 4)*. In this example, a randomly selected vantage point was plotted in the vicinity of the two large Liao communities that straddle the optimal route leading to Songshanzhou, and a viewshed totaling 68 km² was calculated from this vantage point. The areal extent of all the known sites within this viewshed was calculated, along with the total number of pottery fragments found on these sites. These figures were then used to calculate a median pottery density figure that led to a population estimate of nine households per km², a figure that is significantly larger than that for the region Wang Zhen was led through.

Viewshed analysis can also identify other elements of Liao's staging and control of the experience that Song envoys and their retinue had as they moved through Liao-controlled territory. The Liao state did not control the practice of religion amongst its people, but much of its population was Buddhist. Imperial sponsored construction of many religious buildings and monuments took place during the Liao period, and while some of these temples were Confucian and Daoist, the majority was Buddhist.[13] Cities, in addition to their political and economic roles, were also centers of religious practice, and many of them had temples with multistory pagodas. Two of the cities KLASH is investigating – Songshanzhou and Zhongjing – had temples and pagodas, although only one of these pagodas still stands. Liao pagodas, of which many survive across Liao territory, were mostly made of regular and decorative brick that was plastered over to create a smooth surface and then painted. Inscriptions tell us that many people contributed financial resources to their construction, but the ones at Chaoyang (in Liaoning), and in Chifeng at Qingzhou, the Supreme Capital, and Zhongjing seem to have been imperially sponsored constructions.

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13 Lin, *Urban Landscape and Politics*, 136.

Pagodas served the same function as the South and Central Asian stupas that preceded them in the chronology of Buddhist architecture – they contained holy relics associated with the Buddha or with Buddhism's greatest teachers, and as such were material expressions of piety and reverence for people of the faith. But they were also displays of the wealth, power, and control that their patron(s) could put towards their realization – which required obtaining holy relics for burial in the pagoda crypts, underwriting construction expenditures, and engaging suitably high-ranking Buddhist clergy to staff the temples and their pagodas once they were finished. It is no surprise that during Liao, many of the Buddhist patrons whose support was essential to these magnificent structures were members of the imperial court. Liao pagodas tend to be monumental in comparison to the surviving pagodas of other dynasties, and those remaining today are 50-80 m tall. Da Ming Pagoda at Zhongjing is the largest Liao pagoda of all surviving ones, and stands approximately 80 m high with pedestal *(Fig. 5)*.
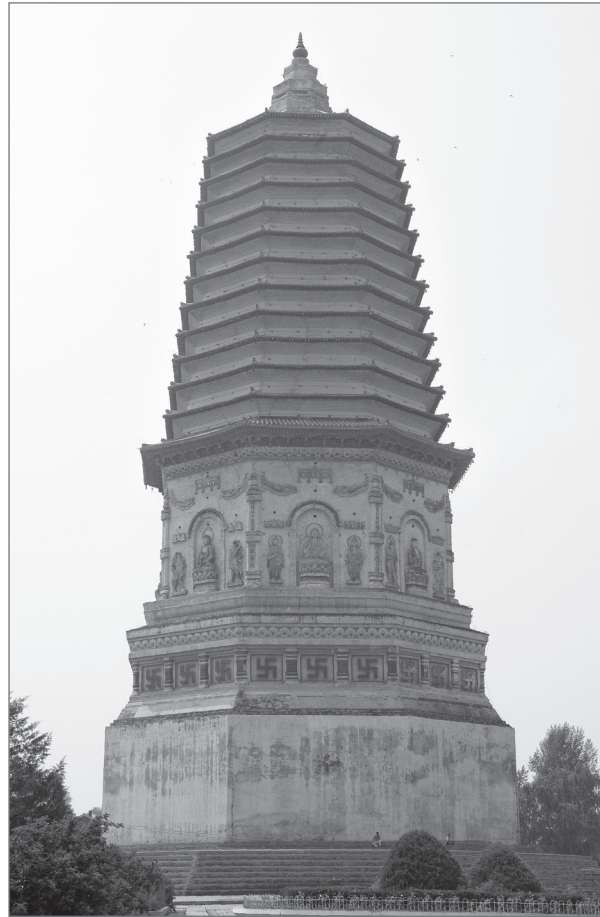

Fig. 5: The Da Ming Pagoda at the Liao Middle Capital of Zhongjing. (Photo: Daniel C. Waugh, 2009)

The last 75 km of the envoy route to Zhongjing followed the north flowing Laoha River, one of the region's largest rivers and whose broad floodplain evidences its seasonal inundation. The last *guan* stop before Zhongjing was Gaoguguan on the Laoha, from which the envoys would have had approximately 45 km left of the distance to their final destination. After leaving Gaoguguan and progressing about five km, the Laoha shifts its course to flow in a northeasterly direction almost straight to Zhongjing. Viewshed analysis for the Da Ming Pagoda shows us that when the envoys reached this point of inflection in the river, their changed direction meant that the last 40 km of their journey would have passed with the pagoda growing ever closer in their sight lines *(Fig. 6)*.

Moreover, the southwestern corner of Zhongjing stands 20 m taller than the area just outside the walls. This corner of the city would not only have had a commanding view over the valley but along with Da Ming Pagoda, would also have been visible from quite a distance. To add to the pomp and majesty of the envoy's approach to Zhongjing down the Laoha valley, there is a second large, but now ruined Liao pagoda that sits outside the southwest corner of its walls. When this pagoda was complete, it too would have been visible for much of the envoy's approach.[14]

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14 This pagoda would not have been as tall as Da Ming Pagoda since the diameter of its base is smaller at 20 m vs. 35 m (measurements done from rectified Google Earth images).
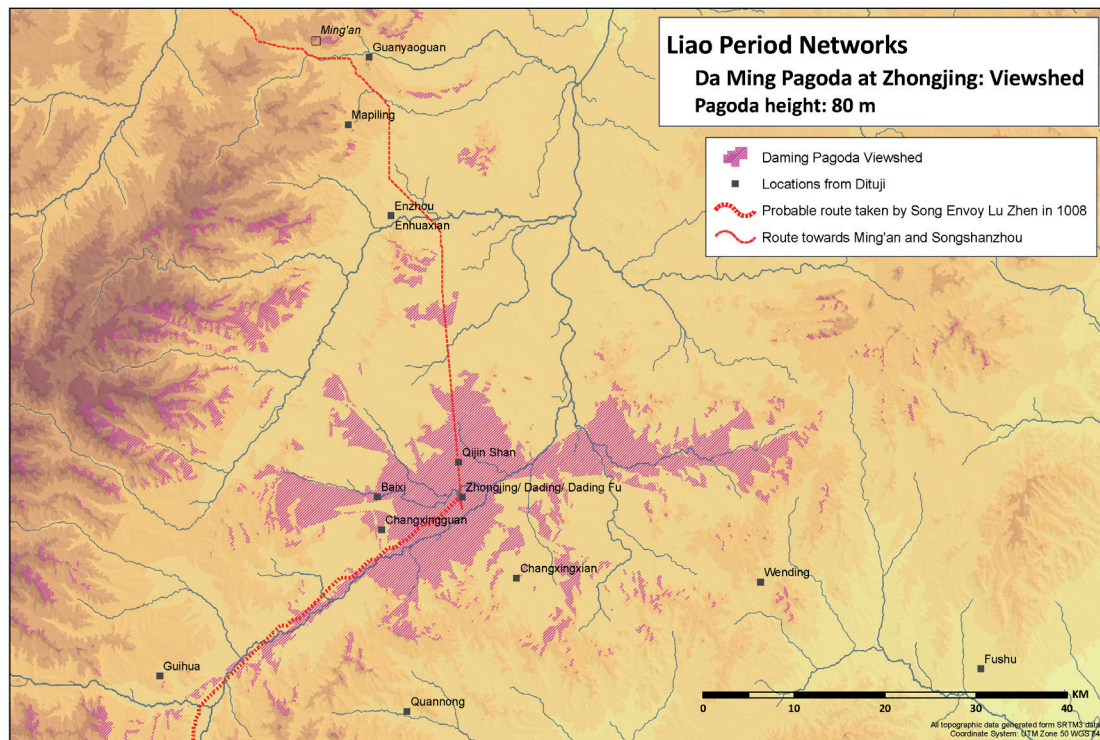
Fig. 6: Liao period networks: the viewshed of the Da Ming Pagoda at Zhongjing

The human use of landscape as abstract symbol that can mediate relationships is well documented by decades of archaeological investigations on the megalithic landscape of Neolithic Britain and elsewhere.[15] Architectural theory discusses how architecture too has the ability to affect perceptions of activities conducted at a structure.[16] The ability of landscape and architecture to act both singly and in tandem on the human creation of social reality seems to have been well understood by the Liao planners and builders of Zhongjing. They coopted the Laoha River valley as a 40 km processional approach avenue along which the envoy advanced; and, if the timing was right as the envoy neared the southwestern corner of the city, the slanting rays of the setting sun would have glowed on its massive walls and the now ruined southern pagoda. In the near distance, the mirrors, bells and white plastered surface of the colossal Da Ming Pagoda, a structure taller than any other Tang or Song Dynasty pagoda that the envoys could have seen before, would have also caught and reflected the sun's glow. The effect of nearing these structures when one travels down the river valley, even without the sun, is still singularly impressive, and would have been more so when they were in their kept-up state at the time when Liao received the Song envoys at Zhongjing.

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15   Bradley, *Prehistoric Britain*; Bradley, *Altering the Earth*; Clarke, Cowie and Foxon. *Symbols of Power*; Hodder *Domestication of Europe*; Thomas, Rethinking the Neolithic; Thomas, Monuments, Movements and the Context of Megalithic Art; Tilley, Phenomenology of Landscape.

16   Tuan, *Space and Place.*

Conclusion

Historians, archaeologists, art historians and philologists of the Chinese Middle Period are often seeking better understandings of the Kitans and the Liao Empire that they created, and many valuable new contributions to knowledge have been made in recent years. Liao influence on the cultural, religious, political and economic life of Inner and East Asia during the middle period reached far beyond the Liao homeland in Chifeng and shaped events for many centuries after their fall in 1125. KLASH's integrated approach to the study of the middle period in the Chifeng region of Inner Mongolia is providing innovative new understandings that could only have been reached by combining archaeological and historical methods. Applying GIS and archaeological perspectives to the study of the eleventh century Song envoy routes to Zhongjing have revealed the intentionality of the Liao's staging of the envoys' experience as they traversed Liao territory.

Since part of the envoys' role was to gather useful information of all sorts as they proceeded along their route – from the locations of settled areas and their populations to the types of crops grown and animals raised in different regions – the Liao appeared to have made sure to keep the envoys in as great a state of visual deprivation as they could by leading them along under-populated and convoluted routes through difficult landscapes. That is, until the last stage of the route when the envoys were approaching Zhongjing. At this point everything about the route changed – former visual impressions of the dry, unpeopled scrub-covered floodplains and hillsides would have given way to scenes set in the broad, fertile valley of the Laoha River that ran straight for 40 km to the walls of Zhongjing.

At 80 m tall, the Da Ming Pagoda, covered with its reflective bronze mirrors and tinkling bells, was visible from a distance of more than 40 km away from the capital and it would have loomed over the envoys' approach. Its mass, elevation, reflectivity and other architectural properties as the tallest pagoda in either Song or in Liao would have made it a presence that registered on the envoys and their retinues as it grew ever larger in their eyes as they approached. This pagoda, along with the massive walls that encircled the city, would have helped to frame the envoys' perception of their reception by the Liao at the capital. Chinese city planners have long been known for using the built environment to enforce perceptions on the part of the people who used cities, and it is not unreasonable to assume that neighbors would have borrowed ideas from them, although perhaps not their associated symbolic meanings.[17] At Zhongjing we can see the Liao coopting the landscape surrounding the city to use the Laoha River Valley as a processional approach to the massive walls of their city, and using the Da Ming Pagoda to dominate the landscape around it, leading all to the capital that lay at its feet.

Although the Treaty of Shanyuan was ostensibly between equals, the terms of the settlement and the flow of gifts from Song to Liao indicates otherwise. This unequal relationship was also reflected in the dominance that Liao wished to project over the Song envoys perceptions of their journey to Zhongjing. The pagoda's dominance over the landscape and the envoys' inability to escape this image during the last 40 km of their journey would have served Liao by reinforcing these impressions.

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17 Wheatley, *Pivot of the Four Quarters.*

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Foundations ›for the Salvation of the Soul‹ – an Exception in World History?

Michael Borgolte*

Foundations for the salvation of the soul, as they are known from Christianity, are to be found for the first time in world history in Zoroastrianism. Though influenced by the spirit of ›Zoroaster‹, they can be proven to have existed for the first time in the age of the Sassanids. Doubtless they are a result of the revolutionary ›Axial Age‹, yet other religions of the Axial Age found other solutions for dealing with the discovery of the individual and the ethical responsibility for others (or: for empathy). This can be demonstrated via the teachings of Confucius in China.

Keywords: foundations; soul cult; funerary cult; Zoroastrianism; salvation of the soul; Axial Age; Zoroastrianism; Christianity; Confucianism; ethics; empathy; individualization

Foundations ›for the salvation of the soul‹ are from the perspective of medievalist scholarship well-studied, while their importance in the religious life of the pre-modern world is assigned an even greater significance.[1] The Freiburg historian Karl Schmid in any event claimed in 1985 that all the foundations of the Middle Ages possessed »one and the same motivation, concern for the salvation of the soul.«[2] According to his view foundations of this type were directed at God himself; in the words of the early Christian theologian Tertullian (d. around 220) they represented a good deed, which put God in the donor's debt and effected the forgiveness of sins as a heavenly reward for the founder.[3] Medieval foundations thus bore reference to transcendence and supported or brought about the salvation of the founder's soul on Judgment Day. Understood in this way, Christian foundations must be differentiated from related phenomena in other cultures, namely the foundations for the dead and the soul cult.[4] Foundations for the dead were widespread for example in Ancient Egypt or pre-Christian Rome; as such the founder obligated those who survived him to cultivate his memory and his deeds for all time, or at least over the long term, for instance by visiting his tomb or

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1 This essay is based on a presentation held at the 58th colloquium of Germania Sacra on 27 February, 2015 in Göttingen. Cf. Also Borgolte, *Fünftausend Jahre Stiftungen*.

2 Schmid, Stiftungen für das Seelenheil, 66 s.; cf. 61: The Middle Ages can be described as »the great age of ›foundations for the salvation of the soul‹«.

3 Schmid, Stiftungen für das Seelenheil, 59 und 61, with reference to Tertullien, *Pénitence*, 150 cap. II.11.

4 On foundations for the soul cult, which »dominated endowment praxis throughout the entirety of Antiquity«, see Liermann, *Handbuch des Stiftungsrechts* I, esp. 13 s.; cf. Bruck, Stiftungen für die Toten. Newer studies in ancient history contradict the connection between pagan foundations and the cult of the soul: Veyne, *Brot und Spiele*, 225; further references in the scholarly literature on this subject in Holman, *The Hungry Are Dying*, 14 n. 64, cf. recently Von Reden, Glanz der Stadt. On the problematic nature of the idea of the ›funerary cult‹ see Oexle, *Mahl und Spende*, 401, n. 1.

uttering his name; one can in this context speak of memorial foundations.[5] With regard to ›the cult of the soul‹ the accent lay upon the intended prolongation of life, which was above all enabled by the ritual meal with the deceased.[6] The continuation of life in the hereafter was based here on the soul, without God or the gods needing to intervene in its favor or for its salvation.

To this day Schmid's thesis has never been discussed, indeed it also remains ignored. There are various reasons for this:[7] On the one hand among medievalists it is generally accepted that foundations in the Middle Ages were endowed for the salvation of the soul; in this sense we are dealing with what is practically a truism, that is an opinion without analytical depth. On the other hand, and more importantly, in both his time as well as today medieval foundations were discussed with regard to the »memoria« of commemorative prayer,[8] and this is, when one includes for example ›pagan‹ Antiquity, the general point of view as well.

In a quite unforeseen way Schmid's thesis has become questionable for the first time through the intercultural comparative research on foundations of the last ten years. The Europeanization and globalization of our understanding of history, which has also encompassed medieval history,[9] have brought cultures and religions into our purview, which have hitherto been ignored by medievalists and left to the agenda of other disciplines. At the beginning of the new millennium I myself ascertained that ›foundations for the soul‹ also existed in the Persian Empire of the Sassanids (221-642/651 AD) and the religion of Zoroastrianism;[10] as little as Karl Schmid and his contemporaries had perceived this analogy and were able to further consider it, so the Iranologists acted as well, knowing nothing of European medievalist research. After I had taken pains to call for comparative studies on Christian, Muslim and Jewish foundations of the Middle Ages,[11] a generous grant of the European Research Council first enabled intensive examinations of medieval foundations via a universal comparison.[12] Since 2012 I have been able to lead a working group of five excellent post-doctoral scholars from Indology, Islamic Studies, Jewish History, Byzantine Studies and Medieval Studies, which by 2017 is to produce a three-volume »Encyclopedia of Foundations in Medieval Societies«.[13] All the articles of this work, the first volume of which appeared in the summer of 2014,[14] consist of contributions from the five disciplines, the results of which are summa-

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5   On ancient Roman foundations recently see, for example: Von Reden, Glanz der Stadt, 29-33; on Egypt: Fitzenreiter, Statuenstiftung und religiöses Stiftungswesen; Helck, *Materialien zur Wirtschaftsgeschichte* II, passim.

6   Cf. Oexle, Mahl und Spende; Oexle, Gegenwart der Toten; Oexle, Gegenwart der Lebenden und der Toten.

7   Certainly the series of the publication, which from the perspective of the discipline is unknown, played a role (as n. 2). The essay also did not appear in the collected articles of its author, cf. Schmid, *Gebetsgedenken und adeliges Selbstverständnis.*

8   See the title of the volume cited in n. 2, which at the same time stood in the shadow of its monumental predecessor volume: Schmid and Wollasch, *Memoria.* For the scholarly tradition in the most recent period cf. Borgolte, *Stiftung und Memoria.*

9   Cf. (for other matters as well) Borgolte *et al., Mittelalter in der größeren Welt.*

10 Above all Macuch, Sasanidische Stiftung »für die Seele«; in addition Macuch, Sasanidische fromme Stiftung; Boyce, Pious Foundations of the Zoroastrians; Menasce, *Feux et Fondations Pieuses.*

11 Borgolte, Von der Geschichte des Stiftungsrechts; Borgolte, *Stiftungen in Christentum, Judentum und Islam*; Geelhaar and Thomas, *Stiftung und Staat im Mittelalter.* See also Meier et al., *Islamische Stiftungen.*

12 Cf. Borgolte, Foundations in Medieval Societies.

13 The relevant persons concerned are PD Dr. Annette Schmiedchen (Indology), Dr. Ignacio Sánchez (Islamic Studies), Dr. Patrick Koch and Dr. Emese Kozma (Jewish Studies), Dr. Zachary Chitwood (Byzantine Studies) as well as Dr. Tillmann Lohse and Dr. Susanne Ruf (Medieval Studies).

14 Borgolte, *Enzyklopädie des Stiftungswesens* 1; volume 2 is planned for 2015 (»Das soziale System Stiftung«), volume 3 for 2017 (»Stiftung und Gesellschaft«).

rized in each case via a comparative analysis. Based on the advice of the experts from each discipline, among whom a Sinologist for a time was included,[15] I am working concurrently on a monograph on the foundations of the Middle Ages from a universal perspective, which should foray somewhat further than the encyclopedia. This essay will present the results of this research.

The observation of the Persian analogy to Christian foundations for the soul is thus especially interesting, because Zoroastrianism is a much older religion. Its supposed founder Zoroaster was counted by Karl Jaspers among those great geniuses, who independently of one another in the middle of the first millennium before Christ are said to have made that »deepest impression«, which German philosophy termed the »Axis of World History«.[16] At the center of the kindred breakthrough stood, according to Jaspers, the experience of transcendence, which would fundamentally alter humanity's worldview.[17] The conception of the cosmos, which encompassed both the world of the gods and of men, was superseded by the division between this world and the hereafter, the holy was separated out and the world, to use Max Weber's words, was ›demystified‹.[18] A single person was no longer enfolded within a cosmic cultic society, but must instead himself bridge the resulting gap between here and there. With the discovery of transcendence in his own case he experienced himself as subject, person and individual that is as someone quite different from his contemporaries.[19] Since the search for meaning did not have to be based on an afterlife at all, which either with or without divine beings would be radically different from this world, it could also lie in self-transcendence, namely the overcoming of selfishness.[20] The ethical demands of the Axial Age were emphatically underlined only just recently as follows: »The moral moved into the center of spiritual life. The only way to meet that which they termed ›God‹, ›nirvana‹, ›Brahman‹ or the ›way‹ was to live a life characterized by compassion.«[21] On the other hand the individual was able to recognize this world as malleable, to develop utopias and consciously carry out social changes. Thus the so-called Axial Age was also the birth of the intellectual.[22]

Jaspers' prescriptions have been adopted above all by social scientists and scholars of religion;[23] instead of breakthroughs of the Axial Age, more recently they have concentrated on the typology of axial cultures and attempted to capture the rediscovery of axial characteristics in history. Occasionally one speaks of secondary breakthroughs, among which are counted, for example, Christianity in relation to the religion of Israel, or one stretches the Axial Age from ca. 500 BC until the rise of Islam, i.e. until the seventh century.[24] If foundations for the salvation of the soul, such as those with which we are familiar from the Christian

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15   Dr. Volker Olles.

16   Jaspers, *Vom Ursprung und Ziel der Geschichte*, 19-42. The observation of world historical parallels extends back to Ernst von Lasaulx in in the middle of the 19th century, cf. Pitz, *Griechisch-römische Ökumene,* 524, 540; Bayer, *Neue Hochkulturen in Asien*, 9, 151 f., 253 f., 286-293, 317-325, 382.

17   The following is derived from Borgolte, Universität und Intellektueller, 277.

18   Cf. Schluchter, *Entzauberung der Welt.*

19   Cf. Stroumsa, Entstehung des reflexiven Selbst; but: Halbfass, Mensch und Selbst.

20   Cf. among others: Joas, *Was ist die Achsenzeit?*

21   Armstrong, *Achsenzeit*, 10 s.

22   Elkana, Entstehung des Denkens, esp. 61; Eisenstadt, Achsenzeit in der Weltgeschichte, 41, 44; Eisenstadt, Transcendental Vision.

23   Cf. Arnason *et al., Axial Civilizations and World History*; Eisenstadt, *Comparative Civilizations* and Multiple Modernities, 195-488; Eisenstadt, *Kulturen der Achsenzeit*; Eisenstadt, *Kulturen der Achsenzeit II.*

24   Cf. Borgolte, Geburt Europas aus dem Geist der Achsenzeit; Borgolte, *Universität und Intellektueller.*

Middle Ages, can be proven to have existed already in Zoroastrianism or under Zoroaster himself, then foundations of this sort would belong to the practices with which one mastered the Axial Age, and perhaps from its beginning. Further down the road is the task of testing the religions of Near Eastern origin as well as those of China and India with regard to the particularities of the appearance of foundations in the most ancient period. I have conducted these investigations, yet the results are too comprehensive and complex to be presented in a single study. Thus in what follows I will content myself with a comparison of Christian with Zoroastrian foundations in Persia and Confucian foundations in China.

The model on which I am basing both other phenomena is that of the Christian foundation for the salvation of the soul; I will restrict myself to a few essential features in order to characterize it.[25] In Latin documents ›foundations for the salvation of the soul‹ are often addressed with formulae such as *pro remedio animae* or *pro redemptione animae*, yet also attested is the unspecific *pro anima* as well as turns of phrase which do not explicitly mention the soul at all.[26] Whether it concerns ›foundations for the salvation of the soul‹ or not simply cannot be deduced from the language of the sources. One must carefully differentiate foundations from donations;[27] in contrast to the latter the former did not merely consist of one-time, but rather repeated, gift-giving, since only the income from a piece of property, not however the property itself, was consumed. The beneficiaries of foundations were usually churches or monasteries; Constantine the Great created the legal framework by granting the right to own property and testamentary capacity to the Christian community.[28] The theological basis was laid out by Greek and Latin Church Fathers, who deduced from certain passages of the Bible that a donor could aid his salvation with a gift of his estate.[29] From the middle of the fourth century Basil the Great and the other monastic fathers called for a share of the inheritance as a »quota for the soul«, »quota for Christ« or »quota for the poor«.[30] In Greek Christianity one spoke of the *psychikon*, in Old Russian *zadušie*, that which was »apportioned for the soul«, found also as a loanword in Serbian and Bulgarian.[31] The authors of documents in the area of the Orthodox Church underlined, as in the West, that a foundation was erected »for the attainment of eternal goods« and that »the perishable of this world« served the acquisition of the »everlasting«.[32] With priests and monks founders laid claim to the experts for liturgy

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25   The literature is immense. Cf. Borgolte, *Stiftung und Memoria*; Hugener, *Buchführung für die Ewigkeit*; Moddelmog, *Königliche Stiftungen des Mittelalters;* Lohse, *Dauer der Stiftung;* Stanford, *Commemorating the Dead;* Barron, *Memory and Commemoration in England*; Schilp, *Pro remedio et salute anime peragemus*. In the future Lohse, Art. 7.2: Religiöses Verdienst, and 8.2: Gedenken und Kultus.

26   E. g.: *Chartularium Sangallense* I, 5 Nr. 7, from the early eight century: *Ego quidam Petto cogitavi dei induidum vel divina retributionem vel pecadis meis veniam promirere, et ut mihi in fuduro mercis boni obiris adcrescat* (»I, Petto, have thought about [judgment] before God and how I might acquire forgiveness for my sins, so that the reward of this good work might grow in the future.«).

27   Cf. Borgolte, Gedenkstiftungen in St. Galler Urkunden, as well as further essays in Schmid and Wollasch, *Memoria.*

28   Liermann, *Handbuch des Stiftungsrechts* I, 28.

29   Bruck, *Kirchenväter und soziales Erbrecht*; Schultze, *Augustin und der Seelteil*; cf. now *Ogris*, Art. Freiteil, who, however, still follows the old understanding of Schultze and not that of Bruck. With reference to Cyprian (ca. 200-258 AD) and Clement of Alexandria (ca. 150-ca. 215 AD), as well as the Old Testament books of Tobias and Jesus Sirach, the key role of the Cappadocian Fathers in the development »quota for the soul« has been qualified by Holman, *The Hungry Are Dying,* 15.

30   Bruck, *Kirchenväter und soziales Erbrecht,* 29.

31   Steindorff, Glaubenswelt und Prestige, 160.

32   With reference to the Rus: Steindorff, *Memoria in Altußland,* 25. On Byzantium in the future: Chitwood, Art. 7.5: Religiöses Verdienst und weltliche Ambitionen, und 8.5: Gedenken und Kultus.

and intercession, who in exchange for a donation or endowment had to offer the Eucharist or pray; in the Western Church and Byzantium, not however in Rus,[33] these gifts, understood as good works, supported philanthropic activities as well, after the church had from the earliest period taken over the most important tasks of social welfare. Foundations were thus such a highly sought-after means for one's own salvation, because they were to last permanently; as long as the fate of the soul in the afterlife was undecided, as most believed. Until the Last Judgment the prayers of the survivors and the further good works of the deceased that they performed would be of assistance to the soul.[34]

With regard to the other foundation cultures it is worth underlining that some additional tenets of faith in Christianity were operative, which for the most part were silently assumed. Thus Christians knew of only one soul, and not multiple souls, for a person, just as they knew only of one heaven and earth. They expected only one corporeal death and one resurrection, at which the body would be reunited with the soul. A personal God would decide for eternal life or eternal damnation in his court, so that at least in the West a particular judgment for each individual was differentiated from the Last Judgment at the end of time; what the just could expect as their reward was not seen simply as the greatest happiness, yet was to be received as such by them, thus it at the same time meant bliss.[35]

If one attempts to set the parameters of the Christian model for Sassanid foundations, unexpectedly large difficulties are met: even the basic religious tenets are disputed.[36] Rather harmless is the conclusion that Zoroaster is no longer to be dated to the middle of the sixth century before Christ, as Jaspers still believed, but five to ten centuries earlier.[37] More serious however is that some Iranologists completely doubt[38] the historicity of this priest and prophet or ascribe to him at most the core of a religious doctrine.[39] The only certainty is that the *Avesta*, the oldest collection of Zoroastrian texts, was first made in the third Persian Empire of the Sassanids, after its transmission had occurred for hundreds of years only orally. Presumably the codification was prompted by the influence of Christianity and the religion of Mani (216-274/277), both of which contained scriptures, and was completed in the sixth century after Christ.[40]

Naturally it is debated in the contemporary scholarship how one should imagine a compilation of teachings, stories, prayers and liturgical hymns in the course of perhaps one thousand years. With regard to foundations, with which we want to concern ourselves, it seems reasonable to sketch the teachings of Zoroastrianism and to verify in the foundation documents if and to what degree the former influenced the latter. The British Iranologist Mary Boyce,

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33 Steindorff, Glaubenswelt und Prestige, 172-175.

34 Fundamental is: Lusiardi, Stiftungen und Seelenheil; Lusiardi, Fegefeuer und Weltengericht.

35 Differently than in Buddhism: Lamotte, *Buddha, Seine Lehre und Seine Gemeinde*, 53.

36 Cf. the recent overview of Kreyenbroek, Zoroastrismus, 155-170. On Zoroaster s. also: Strohm, *Geburt des Monotheismus*; Assmann and Strohm, *Echnaton und Zarathustra*.

37 Kreyenbroek, Zoroastrismus, 160: around 1000 or earlier; Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, xiii: around 1200 BC, 2: around 1400-1200, 18: between 1700 und 1500 BC; Clark, *Zoroastrianism*, 18-22: around 1400 BC. By contrast Boyce, Zoroastrismus, 261: around 588 BC; Lanczkowski, Iranische Religionen, 250: around 600 BC.

38 Kreyenbroek, Zoroastrismus, 155, 160.

39 Macuch, Iranische Literaturen, 284 s.

40 Macuch, Iranische Literaturen, 283-286; Kreyenbroek, Zoroastrismus, 162 s.; cf. Reck, Manichäismus als iranische Religion.

who passed away in 2006, has developed a model of these teachings, which is useful for our purposes, though it has meanwhile been derided by many specialists as conformist and essentializing.[41]

As an Iranian ›Zoroaster‹ was, if one accepts his historical existence as a given, the kinsman of a people related to the Indians, who in the third millennium before Christ migrated from the Eurasian Steppe southward. Researchers believe they can deduce the original religious beliefs and practices of these shepherds and farmers via a comparison of the *Avesta* with the ancient Indian tradition. According to them the ancient Iranians sacrificed to fire and water with prayers for the souls of men and animals: »So then we worship (...) our own souls and those of the domestic animals which nourish us (...) and the souls of useful wild animals.«[42] The gifts which were offered to the many gods were to keep the world functioning as well as shape human life. According to Boyce they believed in the post-mortal existence of the individual, an existence which could at times be decisively influenced.[43] Within the first three days after death the soul of the deceased had to be aided by his relatives through fasts and priestly prayers against evil forces. Relatives were to sacrifice for food and clothing to the soul of the deceased so that it might reach the subterranean realm of the dead. These activities were repeated for the first thirty days, then month after month and then on each anniversary until the 30th year. Only after a generation did the soul enjoy, so it was thought, the company of the dead without restriction, so that the family could content itself with further commemorating the deceased on ›All Souls' Day‹. It was postulated that only dukes, warriors and priests could hope for entry into paradise; other souls, above all those of the low-born, women and children could expect only a joyless existence.[44]

According to these religious beliefs concerning the world of the afterlife, foundations could only be concerned with the promotion of the soul cult, by which souls were to be nourished for their continuing existence, but not with the salvation of the soul, to which it promised an enhanced existence as the gift of God or the gods. Zoroaster was supposedly responsible for the transition. ›Zoroaster‹ is thought to have been a priest, who through the revelations of the highest god Ahura Mazdā felt himself called to be a prophet for all of humanity. The hymns ascribed to him proclaim that Ahura Mazdā is the one uncreated god, who always existed and is the creator of all else that is good, including the other philanthropic divinities. At the same time ›Zoroaster‹ was said to have recognized in a vision the antagonist of the highest god, the ›enemy spirit‹, who was likewise uncreated, but ignorant and evil through and through. Both great gods of good and evil came into conflict in thought, word and action.[45] An originally free decision of both of the first beings for good or evil corresponded, according to the doctrine of ›Zoroaster‹, to the choice which every person in his own life must himself make. A person must thus in the world created by Ahura Mazdā play

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41　Cf. Kreyenbroek, Zoroastrismus, 156.

42　Yasna 39.1-2, according to the English translation of Boyce, *Textual Sources for the Study of Zoroastrianism*, 55 (cf. the commentary ibid., 53): »(1) So then we worship Geush Urvan and Geush Tashan, then our own souls and those of the domestic animals which nourish us, for which we are here and which are here for us. (2) And we worship the souls of useful wild animals.« Cf. Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, 5. The citation stems from the Yasna Haptaŋhāiti, which was enclosed by the five Gathas, s. Macuch, Iranische Literaturen, 284.

43　Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, 9, 12 s.

44　Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, 14.

45　Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, 20, with the citation of Yasna 30.3-5, here 30.4, cited here after Boyce, *Textual Sources for the Study of Zoroastrianism,* 35: »And when these two Spirits first came together they created life and not-life, and how at the end Worst Existence shall be for the wicked, but (the House of) Best Purpose for the just man.«

his own role in the battle between good and evil. ›Zoroaster‹ is credited with the recognition that »the worth of an individual (...) does not depend on his being a member of society.«[46] Each person must advance the physical and spiritual existence of his fellow men along with that of his own, since they as well as he were god's creation. The ›prophet‹ demanded of his followers that they live according to the maxims of good thoughts, words and deeds, which corresponded to the three-fold exhortation to Iranian priests, that they perform the liturgy with a good disposition, fitting words and correct rituals.[47] At one's death everyone would be judged according to what he had done in life for the good. In contrast to the previous doctrine women as well as men, slaves as well as masters could aspire to paradise. At the »Bridge of the Separator« each person would be judged not according to the expense of his sacrifice in the previous life, but according to his ethical merits.[48] According to an individual verdict the righteous man gained paradise, while the wicked man was damned to hell. A few souls, in which good and bad deeds stood in equal weight, entered a 'Place of Mixed Beings', where they would lead a grey existence without joy or sorrow.

Yet according to Mary Boyce the good as well did not acquire any perfect paradisiacal joy, but rather had still to await the day of resurrection at the end of time. Thus ›Zoroaster‹ was supposedly the first »to teach the doctrines of an individual judgment, Heaven and Hell, the future resurrection of the body, the general Last Judgment, and life everlasting for the reunited soul and body«, all doctrines which would reappear in the Mediterranean monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.[49] The differentiation between both days of judgment is believed by other Iranologists however not to have been an idea of ›Zoroaster‹ himself, but rather a further development of the doctrine which he had laid down.[50]

The conceptual breakthrough of ›Zoroaster‹ according to Boyce consisted of his having opened the prospect of paradise to all people, of every social status and sex, and having called for the ethical services of the deceased in this world as merit, which would be reviewed in the postmortal court. Works of charity during one's earthly life and the individual judgment could thus be interpreted as indications that it no longer concerned the mere continued existence of the soul in the afterlife, but rather the earned and awarded salvation of an individual's soul. ›Foundations for the salvation of the soul‹ would then have had the intention, but also the power, to further the ascendance of the soul such as through prayers and sacrifice through the performance of charity even after death. Open to interpretation meanwhile is whether this type of foundation can be traced back to ›Zoroaster‹ as well, thus to the Axial Age itself, or whether it can only be historically demonstrated much later.

The formation of the Persian empires was decisive for the expansion of Zoroastrianism; the personal attitude of the first rulers of the Achaemenids is however disputed among scholars.[51] Cyrus the Great (559-530 BC) is assigned a key role, who established the first Persian Empire by conquests which stretched in the west to the coast of Asia Minor and to Egypt.[52]

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46 Boyce, *Zoroastrismus*, 262.

47 Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, 24.

48 Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, 27.

49 Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, 29.

50 Clark, *Zoroastrianism*, 63-65.

51 Cf. Kreyenbroek, Zoroastrismus, 161; Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, 48-77; Boyce, Zoroastrismus, 265 s.; Wießner, Reich der Perser, 101 s.

52 Wiesehöfer, Iranische Großreiche, 53.

Apparently Cyrus and his successors did not exclusively venerate Ahura Mazdā, but rather cultivated a mixture of Zoroastrianism and ancient Iranian traditions of the Magi.[53] Cyrus fell in battle against the peoples of the steppe; his body was led back to Persia and was interred in the newly-founded residence of Pasargadae. The monumental tomb still stands today out in the open.[54] As Alexander the Great in 334/330 crossed over to Asia Minor and conquered Persia, he sought this final resting place. As the Greek Arrian reports, the Macedonian found that the tomb had been plundered: »Within the enclosure, and lying on the approach to the tomb itself, was a small building put up for the Magians, who were guardians of Cyrus' tomb, from as long ago as Cambyses, son of Cyrus, receiving this guardianship from father to son. To them was given from the King a sheep a day, an allowance of meal and wine, and a horse each month, to sacrifice to Cyrus. There was an inscription on the tomb in Persian letters; it ran thus, in Persian: ›Mortal! I am Cyrus son of Cambyses, who founded the Persian Empire, and was Lord of Asia. Grudge me not, then, my monument.‹«[55] Alexander ordered that the tomb be restored, and the Magi, who had been for the most part arrested, were then freed once again.

The Magi, the guardians of the tomb of Cyrus, were already active as priests in the Empire of the Medes which Cyrus had overthrown. According to Arrian's testimony they received payments in kind daily and monthly from the king for the defrayal of the costs of the cult and transmitted their function hereditarily within their families. In fact it would have been around two centuries from the death of Cyrus to Alexander's campaign. All this points to the erection of a foundation by Cambyses, for which the reigning king was active as a ›foundation organ‹, by financing the funerary cult from the state budget. In addition Mary Boyce has pointed out that above the entrance to the funerary chamber the sun as a symbol of immortality in luminous paradise was displayed, and speaks of a foundation for the soul for eternity[56]; according to her, Zoroastrian beliefs were already at this early point tied to the cultural traditions of the Medes.[57] This conclusion must however be contradicted. On the one hand an explicit indication of the salvation of a soul as a motive is lacking; on the other hand, still more importantly, is that nowhere was a service of the deceased touched upon, that was justified based on a hope for salvation, for a qualitatively improved existence in the afterlife, or the motive of judgment, against which he had to protect himself and in which the foundation would help him.

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53 Cf. Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, 48-50.

54 Wiesehöfer, Iranische Großreiche, 53, 65 (plates); Boyce, *Zoroastrians*, 53.

55 Arrian, *History of Alexander* 2, 196 (Greek), 197 (English) VI. 29.

56 Boyce, *Zoroastrians,* 52 s.: »The tomb of Cyrus shows, however, with what care Zoroastrian kings prepared their sepulchres (...). Over this doorway (sc.: of the tomb-chamber) was set a carving of the sun, symbol of immortality in luminous Paradise; and Cyrus' successor, Cambyses, endowed, as well as a daily sacrifice of sheep, a monthly sacrifice of a horse, the special creature of the sun, to be made at the tomb for his father's soul (...).« Ibid., 65 s.: »Colleges of scholar-priests must also have existed, either independently or perhaps in conjunction with the great religious foundations. Another form of pious endowment (older, evidently, than the founding of temples) is also attested in the Achaemenian period. This was the establishing of religious services and offerings on behalf of the souls of the eminent departed, to be maintained as far as possible in perpetuity«; cf. Wießner, Reich der Perser, 101.

57 Herodotus ascribed to the Magi that the bodies of the Persians were first given over to birds and dogs to consume, then covered with wax and finally brought beneath the earth: Herodotus 1, 178 (Greek), 179 (English) I.140, cf. Boyce, *Zoroastrians*), 59. Regarding the sacrifices of the Persians he notes (Herodot 170 s. I.132), that they had neither altars nor did they light fires; »they use no libations, nor music, nor fillets, nor barley meal.«

Only many centuries later, in the third Iranian Empire of the Sassanids, do we again come across evidence of foundations. From the time of Ardašīr (224-239/240?) rulers ascribed divine qualities to themselves and in thanks for the favor of the gods cultivated the Zoroastrian cult, »they rendered charity to the priests, endowed fire and thus increased the sites for the worship of the gods«.[58] Proof of this is offered by an impressive inscription of Ardašīr's son Šābuhr I (240-271/272) on a tower in Persepolis. It is composed in three languages (Middle Persian, Parthian and Greek) and emphasizes the divine origin of his house as well as reverence for (Ahura) Mazdā.[59] The King of Iran and non-Iran had gained renown through his military victories and conquests, at the Roman Empire's expense as well, but had also at the same time enjoyed the protection of the gods. Šābuhr therefore erected many Wahrām-fires (sanctuaries) and assigned benefactions to the priests. Also via the inscription of Persepolis he established a fire with the name »Glorious is Šābuhr« and »for Our Souls and (Our) Fame«, as well as further sanctuaries of this sort with the same motivations for his daughter, the »Queen of Queens«, in addition to individually-named sons, among whom one was Great King of Armenia. The expense of the foundation reportedly consisted of 1,000 lambs, »which are excellently conceded to Us from the surplus«. Whether the endowment consisted of landed properties or the King of Iran and non-Iran wanted to finance the cult from reallocated incomes of the crown estates or from taxes is not stated. For Šābuhr's soul, as already was the case with Cyrus I, each day a lamb as well as a precisely-delineated measure of bread and wine were to be sacrificed, and for the souls of the members of the ruling house along with the dignitaries of the empire the same was to occur.[60] The difference to the foundation of Cambyses for his Achaemenid predecessor almost eight hundred years before lay in the double motivation for temporal fame and the soul bound up with charity for others, among whom were not simply the ancestors and other relatives of the ruler. This ethical impulse corresponded to Zoroastrian doctrine and the distinctive features of the Axial Ages; even though the judgment motive is lacking, it is this clearly religious context which allows one to define Šābuhr's foundation for the »soul« as a »foundation for the salvation of the soul«.

Even clearer in this context is the disposition of the grand vizier Mihr-Narseh from the first half of the fifth century. He was feared as the archenemy of the Christians, yet in his own land he was famed as a philanthropist, as the Arab chronicler at-Tabarī attests.[61] Fire temples which he endowed in his own memory and that of his sons have survived in his homeland, the district of Fīrūzābād. The endowment of a bridge in this city proves the spiritual sense of benefaction. The inscription reads: »This bridge was built by the order of Mihr-Narseh, the Vuzurgframadār, for the benefit of his soul, at his own expense. Whoever has come on

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58   Wiesehöfer, Reich der Sasaniden, 284; in particular on the holy fires and the relevant foundations in Zoroastrianism eps.: Boyce, On the Sacred Fires; De Menasce, *Feux et Fondations Pieuses.*

59   Huyse, *Dreisprachige Inschrift Šāpūrs I.*; with a German translation of the Middle Persian version: Back, *Sassanidische Staatsinschriften*; a short excerpt in English translation in: Boyce, *Textual Sources for the Study of Zoroastrianism,* 111. Cf. Henning, Great Inscription of Šāpūr, esp. 845-847; Macuch, Sasanidische fromme Stiftung, 33 s.; Macuch, Sasanidische Stiftung »für die Seele«, 174 s.

60   Cited after the translation of the Middle Persian version with the additions of the other versions by Huyse, *Dreisprachige Inschrift Šāpūrs I.*, 46-48, in addition 49-64; cf. Back, *Sassanidische Staatsinschriften*, 326-371. Back translates »für Unser (bzw.: das) Seelenheil«, cf. the commentary of Huyse, *Dreisprachige Inschrift Šāpūrs I.*, vol. 2, 104-106.

61   Macuch, Sasanidische Stiftung »für die Seele«, 167, 174; Macuch, Sasanidische fromme Stiftung, 32, 35.

this road, let him give a blessing to Mihr-Narseh and his sons for that he thus bridged this crossing. And while God gives help, wrong and deceit there shall be none therein.«[62] In other religious contexts as well, such as among Muslims and Brahmins, endowing bridges was viewed as a work of charity.[63]

The primary source for Sassanian foundations »for the soul« is a collection of legal decisions, which date at the earliest from the last years before the Arab conquest of Persia.[64] The text has caused Iranologists considerable problems and has not always led to clearly recognized solutions. A German translation, which has existed for two decades, reflects these difficulties as well. The text[65] treats foundations for religious ceremonies, which evidently served the fire cult alone or at the same time were to be exercised for the benefit of the founder.[66] Whatever remained from ceremonial foundations for the soul could be allocated to other purposes, presumably that of charity, by the endowment's administrators.[67] The incomes of the foundation could also, instead of the liturgical cult, directly support a third person; the example of the beneficiary Mihrēn refers to this: »If the founder ordained that: ›The thing, which is endowed by me for the soul, Mihrēn should possess‹, then it is valid as a pious gift for the soul. Neither Mihrēn or another person is allowed to sell the thing or to use it up.‹ The foundation shall pass over to the kin of Mihrēn.«[68] The founder and the foundation's beneficiaries were in turn able to profit from the religious ceremonies,[69] and whoever provided for cultic activities for the benefit of another supported his own soul as well.[70]

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62   Henning, Inscription of Firuzabad, 101.

63   Cf. Heidemann, Frömmigkeit und Wohltätigkeit, 76, 69-72; Lev, *Charity, Endowments, and Charitable Institutions*, 70 s.; in the future Schmiedchen, Art. 9.6: Wohltätigkeit und Bildung, at n. 5. Cf. on an example from Greek Antiquity in the context of Evergetism: Veyne, *Brot und Spiele*, 190.

64   Edition in two parts with a commentary and German translation by Macuch, *Sasanidisches Rechtsbuch,* and Macuch, *Rechtskasuistik und Gerichtspraxis*. On foundations for the soul s. also the transliterations and French translations of De Menasce, *Feux et Fondations Pieuses,* 5-31, cf. 59-62.

65   The following is based on a chapter of the lawbook in the edition with a German translation in Macuch, *Rechtskasuistik und Gerichtspraxis*, 255-257 (edition of the Middle Persian original text 252-254, commentaries 258-266, cf. also ibid., 192-219).

66   Macuch, *Rechtskasuistik und Gerichtspraxis*, 255: »Das Kapitel von der Stiftung für religiöse Zeremonien (*yazišn nihādag*); über den Besitz, der für das Feuer, und die Sache, die als Stiftung für die Seele (*ruwān nihād*) gegründet wird.«

67   Macuch, *Rechtskasuistik und Gerichtspraxis*, 255: »Wenn jemand eine Sache für religiöse Zeremonien für die Seele (*ruwān yazišn rāy*) stiftet (und) die Stiftung nominatim für religiöse Zeremonien errichtet, (dann ist) der Teil des Ertrages, der von der Stiftung übrigbleibt, den Gewalthabern (*sālārān*) eigen.«

68   Macuch, *Rechtskasuistik und Gerichtspraxis*, 256: »Wenn er (= der Stifter) bestimmt hat: ›(...) Die Sache, die von mir für die Seele (*ruwān rāy*) gestiftet ist, soll Mihrēn besitzen‹, dann wird sie der Seele (dadurch) nicht wieder weggenommen, denn sie (gilt) auch als fromme Gabe (*ahlawdād*) für die Seele (...). Weder Mihrēn noch eine andere Person ist befugt, die Sache zu verkaufen und zu verausgaben‹ (...).«

69   Macuch, *Rechtskasuistik und Gerichtspraxis*, 257: »Wenn er (= der Testator) bestimmt hat: ›Von dem Ertrag (*bar*) und dem Zins (*waḫt*) dieser Sache soll im Monat Frawardīn für die Seele Farroḫs (*pad ruwān i Farroḫ*) und im Monat Tīr für die Seele von Mihrēn die und die religiöse Zeremonie (*yazišn*) (abgehalten werden). Und jedes Jahr sollen an dem Tag, an dem ich verscheide, so viele *yazišn*, wie sich ziemt, abgehalten werden‹: wenn der Zuwachs (*waḫt*) nicht ausreicht, um das *yazišn* (für die im Testament genannten Personen) gleichermaßen davon abhalten zu können, (dann) sollen (diejenigen Zeremonien) abgehalten werden, die, wenn man sie ausführt, als die verdienstvollsten (*kirbag wēš*) gelten.«

70   Macuch, *Rechtskasuistik und Gerichtspraxis*: »Und die religiösen Zeremonien, die ein Mann für die Seele eines (anderen) Mannes (*yazišn i pad ruwān i mard*) stiftet und abhält, werden (zugleich) auch für die eigene Seele gestiftet und abgehalten.«

It appears that various layers of Iranian religious history made their mark in this Sassanian lawbook: one, from the perspective of historical development an older type of foundation, was to provide for the prosperity of the soul through the careful observation of the soul cult (*nāmgānīh*).[71] *Ruwānagān* foundations, which ›belonged to the soul‹, were however, according to the understanding of scholarship, primarily to be created for the salvation of the soul of the founder, his family and friends.[72] »The testator determined (...), that they [rituals] would be implemented ›for the soul‹, *ruwān rāy* (or *pad ruwān*), thus this formula was considered an act of endowment, and this diverted part of the estate was used for the establishment and endowment of a pious foundation, which seemed ›most beneficial‹ (*ruwān rāy sūdōmandtar*) for the salvation of the soul of the testator.«[73] If it was expressly planned that the founder would expend set sums for alms for the benefit of the poor,[74] this corresponded to the ethical demands of Zoroastrian doctrine. It fell explicitly to the discretion of the descendants to use the yields for purposes of common good, such as bridges, roads and irrigation canals.[75]

In summary one can contend that ›foundations for the salvation of the soul‹ in Iran can be proven to have existed since at least the third century after Christ; even though they are clearly influenced by the religious and ethical reform which is ascribed to ›Zoroaster‹, they cannot be set chronologically within proximity of the Axial Age, irrespective of whether one dates this period to the second or first millennium before Christ. On the other hand they are certainly older than the first Christian foundations for the salvation of the soul, which hardly stretch back to the time before Constantine. Since Jewish foundations of this type are hardly older, which I cannot discuss here,[76] everything points to the conclusion that Zoroastrian foundations for the salvation of the soul became a model for Christians and Jews as well as later (indirectly or directly) for Muslims too.[77]

In China and Confucianism the problem in recognizing medieval foundations were constituted differently than in Ancient Iran. It is certain that foundations in Chinese Buddhism, in Confucianism and Daoism played an extremely important role, yet there is a lack of studies on the history of foundations.[78] Some monographs are available for Buddhist and Daoist

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71   Macuch, *Sasanidische fromme Stiftung*, 26 s.; cf. Boyce, Pious Foundations of the Zoroastrians, 270 s. In an epistolary correspondence from 4.4.2014, for which I am thankful once again, Prof. Dr. Maria Macuch took a position on the differentiation, suggested above, between foundations for the soul cult and for the salvation of the soul and qualified this, stating that the endowment character of financing religious ceremonies needs to be confirmed by further studies: she however stands by ›foundations for the salvation of the soul‹ (*pad ruwān, ruwān rāy*).

72   Macuch, Sasanidische fromme Stiftung, 26.

73   Macuch, Sasanidische fromme Stiftung, 29 s.; Boyce, Pious Foundations of the Zoroastrians, 282 s.

74   Macuch, Sasanidische fromme Stiftung, 33.

75   Macuch, Sasanidische Stiftung »für die Seele«, 168; cf. De Menasce, *Feux et Fondations Pieuses,* 15 cap. 18.2.

76   On this see in the future chapter 1 of my »World History of Foundations«, currently in preparation.

77   Cf. Macuch, Sasanidische Stiftung »für die Seele«; Macuch, Sasanidische fromme Stiftung.

78   Olles, Religiöse Stiftungen in China, at and after n. 1: »The process of founding was present in all phases of Chinese history between 500 and 1500, and played an important role in the areas of religion, politics, the economy, art, philanthropy and education, just to name a few keywords (...). It has to be emphasized that in Sinology and other China-related fields a genuine ›research on foundations‹ does not exist. As in other disciplines, focusing on foundations represents virgin territory in Sinology as well, even though massive amounts of relevant sources are available and the process of founding has already been observed and documented in the scholarly literature on Sinology (...).«

79   On Buddhist monasteries: Walsh, *Sacred Economies*; Gernet, *Buddhism in Chinese Society*; on Taoist monasteries and temples: Kohn, *Monastic Life in Medieval Daoism*; Bokenkamp, *Ancestors and Anxiety*; a new case study: Olles, Unsterblicher Lehrmeister. In the future Olles, Religiöse Stiftungen in China.

monasticism,[79] while for Confucianism one must fall back on selective studies. The historical backdrop, against which all Chinese religions and philosophical doctrines must be viewed, is the ancestor cult.

The classical development of the ancestor cult is dated to the time of the Western Zhou Dynasty (ca. 1050-771 BC) and has retained its essential character until the present.[80] The practices of the Zhou Period were predicated on the assumption that »the spirits of deceased ancestors possessed extraordinary powers. It was thought that ancestors could assist their children and children's children (...) for prosperity and prestige; however, they had to again and again earn the favor of their ancestors through the correct and punctual performance of the sacrificial rites. Ancestors and descendants thus lived in a symbiosis with one another, in which the living maintained their ancestors by meal offerings, and the latter by intervening on the forces of nature during life.« The offerings were performed via ritual meals, in which a family gathering assembled in the ancestral temple and the ancestral spirits employed a human being as a medium. The oldest family member had to report in ritualized speech to the ancestors on the well-being and the virtuousness of their descendants: »One found out the response of the divine through an oracle; his blessing and succour were the expected reward for adhering to the traditional customs and rites.«[81] As the abode of the ancestors, in which they were able to temporarily return to the world of the living, the environs of the highest heavenly god is attested by bronze inscriptions;[82] other evidence points to a realm of the dead by the name of »Yellow Springs« (*Huangquan*) or »Dark City« (*Fengdu*), yet possibly the grave itself was understood as the last possible habitation of the dead.[83] In any case the spheres of the living and the dead formed a unity, both zones were permeable and the task of memoria in the one corresponded to duty of the cult of memory in the other.[84] It concerned a cosmic unity of a pre-Axial Age character, without the experience of transcendence.[85] Offerings for ancestors had the function of making them well-disposed towards the living, not however – as is the case with foundations in favor of the soul of the deceased – of improving their situation in a separate afterlife.

A clear new orientation within Chinese thinking is dated by scholars to the Eastern Zhou Dynasty (770-221 BC), thus within the supposed span of the Axial Age.[86] Instead of the communication between the living and dead, it came now to a starker division between the two spheres, which indicates the experience of transcendence. Emblematic of this change are the »Analects« of Confucius (550/552-479 BC). While in contrast to Zoroaster his existence and the dates for his life have essentially not been disputed, the question of authorship is however wide open. Some sayings have been traced in the scholarship back to Confucius himself, others to his disciples. »The text [of the ›Analects‹] perhaps received its present appearance in the second, possibly also at the beginning of the first century BC, by an anonymous compi-

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80 Von Falkenhausen, *Ahnenkult und Grabkult im Staat Qin*, 35; on the ancestor cult in the present: Reiter, Religionen in China, 52-54, 56-61.

81 Von Falkenhausen, *Ahnenkult und Grabkult im Staat Qin*, 35.

82 Von Falkenhausen, *Ahnenkult und Grabkult im Staat Qin*, 35, 40.

83 Clart, *Religionen Chinas*, 49.

84 Bokenkamp, *Ancestors and Anxiety*, esp. 51-53 und passim.

85 On the discussion of the Axial Age in China cf. Cho-Yun, Rethinking the Axial Age, esp. 453-456; Harbsmeier, *Axial Millennium in China.* In addition the essays in: Eisenstadt, *Kulturen der Achsenzeit II*, part 1.

86 Cf. Von Falkenhausen, *Ahnenkult und Grabkult im Staat Qin*, 44.

87 Van Ess, *Konfuzianismus*, 10, cf. 19.

ler.«[87] ›Confucius‹ – which I use in what follows to designate the whole work – did not at all reject the ancestor cult,[88] yet refrained from uttering concrete statements about the world of the spirits and gods, in order to even more energetically indicate one's duties to one's fellow man, ›society‹ and ›state‹. His aphorism on wisdom condenses his message in this sense: »Fan Chi asked about wisdom. The Master said: ›Secure the rights of the people; respect ghosts and gods, but keep them at a distance – this is wisdom indeed.‹«[89] The almost agnostic attitude of the »Analects« is expressed in the topic »Life and Death«: »Zilu asked how to serve the spirits and gods. The Master said: ›You are not yet able to serve men, how could you serve the spirits?‹ Zilu said: ›May I ask you about death?‹ The Master said: ›You do not yet know life, how could you know death?‹«[90] Instead ›Confucius‹ formulated for the first time in world history the ›Golden Rule‹ of humanity: »Zigong asked: ›Is there any single word that could guide one's entire life?‹ The Master said: ›Should it not be reciprocity? What you do not wish for yourself, do not do to others.‹«[91] Where one wanted to earn merit, he suggested temporal remembrance, or better yet, fame: »The Master said: ›A gentleman worries lest he might disappear from this world without having made a name for himself.‹«[92]

By contrast Confucius reportedly avoided questions regarding posthumous existence; as he became terminally ill and his disciple Zilu asked him whether he could pray for him to the »gods above» and the »earthly spirits« below, the Master reacted quite brusquely, saying that he had »prayed for long enough«.[93] Disciples and family meanwhile took pains for his memorial in Qufu, where Confucius had been born and buried; yet the decisive step for the cult of Confucius was the attention of the emperor.[94] The founder of the Han Dynasty, Han Gaozu (r. 206-195 BC), was the first to personally sacrifice at the Temple of Confucius; successive emperors furnished the ›Kongs‹, the descendants of Confucius, with hereditary honors and estates as well as repeated donations for the renovation of the temple. In the Middle Han Period the Kongs already possessed over 3,800 households, which had been given to them for sacrifice to Confucius in their temple.[95] Later the Emperor Ming Taizu in the year 1368 alone donated 98,400 acres of land. Naturally the giving of estates, which was complemented by tax exemption, served to maintain the Kong family itself.[96] Without a doubt these material furnishing of the Confucius Temple in Qufu were foundations – foundations which however were meant ›only‹ to serve a temporal commemoration and to secure for the living relatives the succour of their ancestor. It is noteworthy that the cult of Confucius, which also included the veneration of his disciples and later additional scholars, was not limited to a single place.

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88 Confucius, *Analects*, 8 III.12: »Sacrifice implies presence. One should sacrifice to the gods as if they were present. The Master said: ›If I do not sacrifice with my whole heart, I might as well not sacrifice.‹" Cf. ibid. 8 III.11; on II.24, IV.19.

89 Confucius, *Analects*, 44 f. VI.20.

90 Confucius, *Analects*, 81 XI.11.

91 Confucius, *Analects*, 122 XV.23; in Van Ess, Konfuzianismus, 23, he renders the text in the following way: »[The student] Tzu-kung spoke: ›What I do not want is that others inflict on me, that which I do not want to inflict on others.‹ The Master spoke: ›Tz'u, that way you won't make progress.‹« Cf. in addition the comments and citations ibid., 23 f.

92 Confucius, *Analects*, 47 XV.19.

93 Confucius, *Analects*, 55 VI.34; cf. Van Ess, *Konfuzianismus*, 20.

94 On the following esp.: Lamberton, Kongs of Qufu, 297-332; Van Ess, *Konfuzianismus*, 55-60; Shryock, *Origin and Development.*

95 Lamberton, Kongs of Qufu, 319.

96 Lamberton, Kongs of Qufu, 311.

Already under the Emperor T'ai-tsung (627-649) the order was issued for a Confucius Temple to be erected in every province and district school;[97] this measure was connected with the implementation of the examination system for bureaucrats. It has even been said by scholars that Confucius had been raised »to a kind of divinity of the state administration.«[98]

The expectation of aid by ancestors developed in China first within Daoism under Buddhist influence into a concern of the living for the dead, which at least approximated the idea of the salvation of the soul among Christians.[99] With ›Confucius‹ however the adherence to ancestor worship was tied to a decisive reorientation toward temporal ethics, which can be regarded as a distinctive feature of the Axial Age. A call for »foundations for the salvation of the soul« would thus not have been able to invoke ›Confucius‹.

The résumé of the studies cited here can be summarized in short: ›foundations for the salvation of the soul‹ were not at all a general direct answer to the experience of transcendence that is the separation of the divine and heavenly from the earthly sphere. If they corresponded to the doctrine that can be traced back to Zoroaster, then they were perhaps in Iran the first result of a long religious development, which can be dated first to the period after Christ. With ›Confucius‹ the basic tradition did draw closer to the Axial Age, yet the Master did not introduce any religious change in the relation of the living with the dead. It is worth questioning whether ›foundations for the salvation of the soul‹ formed only in the Near East, particularly under the conditions of Monotheism. For a well-founded response the Jewish and Muslim traditions must still be compared critically with the Christian sources.

(Translation: Zachary Chitwood)

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97 Lamberton, Kongs of Qufu, 297; Van Ess, *Konfuzianismus*, 57.

98 Van Ess, *Konfuzianismus*, 59; Shryock, *Origin and Development*, 137: »The sage now became the patron deity of the civil administration of the government, and as such, an important feature in the state religion.«

99 On which the book of the author mentioned in n. 76 makes reference.

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Defining the Global Middle Ages
(AHRC Research Network AH/K001914/1, 2013-15)

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This report sketches the goals and findings of a research network involving some thirty UK-based academics, charting the development of our collective thinking from efforts to establish parameters to our ›breakthrough‹ into new findings and approaches, over the course of three workshops.[1]

What was ›global‹ in the Middle Ages?

Our project begins from the premise that the medieval period has the potential to shape central debates within the broader field of global history while at the same time being enriched itself by global perspectives. Rather than relying on interpretative frameworks borrowed from scholars of other historical periods, we feel that the pressing task is to analyse the global as it was experienced in the Middle Ages. We are looking for a global Middle Ages that makes sense in its own terms, and seek to define the scope, limits and nature of the global in the period (c. 300 to 1600)[2] characterised by multiple centres, porous boundaries, and plural societies.

Until very recently ›global history‹ has tended to focus on the origins of the modern world and has only rarely strayed before the sixteenth century. Yet it is now abundantly clear that features associated with ›modern‹ global history, such as long-distance trade, voluntary and forced migration, multi-ethnic empires, and the transmission of cultural forms, were also present in a number of locations many centuries before 1600. The surviving evidence, textual and material, illuminates innumerable connections and comparisons, but requires careful handling if the scope, nature and significance of these relationships are to be properly understood. Central to any picture of a global Middle Ages is communication: how did ideas, products and people move within and across cultural traditions, and what was the range and volume of such transmissions? Everywhere we find that medieval communications simultaneously expressed local as well as long-distance characteristics. This tension is integral to any assessment of the nature and extent of global communication in a medieval context, and has important implications for our understanding of other periods when the long-distance and the localised were (and continue to be) engaged in complex and dynamic relationships.

This research takes place in a context of change. In 1989, Janet Abu-Lughod made an examination of a short-lived but powerful late-medieval world system facilitated by the mid-thirteenth century expansion of the Mongols, which for a decade remained an isolated

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1   Network members and workshop contents are listed at the end of this article.

2   We include dates with some reluctance, and we do not regard the ones given here as definitive, but as broadly indicative.

contribution.[3] As readers of this journal will know, interest in the ancient and medieval dimensions to the global is now mounting,[4] but medieval global history is still a fledgling field. Eurasia dominates discussion, leaving little space for Africa or the Americas. Medievalists have yet to establish the most basic definitions of what may be involved in globalising the Middle Ages. We have yet to decide what ›the Middle Ages‹ can or should mean in a global context, or the extent to which our presumed chronological range from 300 to 1600 is ›medieval‹ in any part of the world beyond Europe. The scope of the field, methods, treatment of evidence, and the potential and limitations of adopting a global perspective remain sketchy. Instead those who study this period often draw on methods and perspectives offered by other historical timeframes or look for medieval examples or phases in subjects for which the parameters have been established by others: for example empire-building, state-formation, migration and long-distance trade in precious commodities. Yet the unquestioning application of theories and models from other contexts runs the risk of occluding and distorting medieval globalisms, particularly the creative tension between the global and the local. We need to define a new field of historical inquiry within which to give serious attention to the global dimensions of history in a period all too often dismissed as a mere precursor to the modern world.

Accordingly our project has three main intellectual goals. First, we want to establish medieval history on a truly global footing, and we are particularly concerned to ensure that the new field does not simply become another form of Eurasian history shaped by primarily Eurocentric debates borrowed from other periods. Instead, we are actively seeking to integrate Africa and the Americas on their own terms, and put effort into drawing on perspectives from the study of these world regions in our considerations of the global. Second, we are trying to analyse the global as it was experienced in the Middle Ages themselves. This means that we pay close attention to material as well as written evidence, but international luxury trades are not our chief concern. Rather we seek out non-elite contexts and focus on the regional and local. Third, our explorations rest upon chronological and geographical specificity. We do not begin from top-down theories about global processes and phenomena and then seek regional case studies. Rather, we begin from regional expertise and then seek to establish what might be global about local situations. By addressing these objectives we aim to generate questions, analyses and theories that come from our understandings of the pre-modern world and which will offer new approaches to both later and earlier periods.

In 2012 we obtained funding from the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) to create a network of thirty-three UK-based scholars, each with different regional specialisms who could investigate these objectives under the banner question: ›What was ›global‹ in the Middle Ages?‹[5] The group included those with expertise in Africa, the Americas,

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3   Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony.*

4   See, for example, for comparative studies of the medieval and ancient worlds: Lieberman, *Strange Parallels*; Haour, *Rulers, Warriors, Traders, Clerics*; Scheidel, *Rome and China*; and for in-depth studies of medieval maritime worlds, Green, *Rise of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade,* as well as ›The Copper Plates from Kollam. Using a 9th Century Legal Document to Explore the Medieval Indian Ocean World‹, an AHRC network project (2011-13) organised from De Montfort University by Elizabeth Lambourn (http://849ce.org.uk/; retrieved on 06 June 2015). Resources for studying a more global Middle Ages are becoming increasingly accessible: see, for instance, the International Dunhuang project, which makes available the texts and materials from Dunhuang and the eastern Silk Road (http://idp.bl.uk; retrieved on 06 June 2015).

5   We also received funding from The John Fell Fund, The History Faculty of the University of Oxford, and The Centre for the Study of the Middle Ages at the University of Birmingham. Our workshops of 2012 to 2014 were prefaced by a pilot event held in Oxford in 2011 (sponsored by the John Fell Fund).

eastern Eurasia and western Eurasia, thus breaking down traditional barriers between European medievalists and specialists in world regions beyond Europe. The network met four times between 2012 and 2014 to discuss approaches to the global Middle Ages. We met on a fifth occasion to develop publication plans. The network also organized an outreach event which presented our findings to an audience of early career academics, museum curators and high school teachers. In this report we offer thoughts from our first two meetings, which tackled the almost impossible to handle, and yet unavoidable, themes of historiography and periodisation. Their value was to clarify the parameters of our project. We also include some findings from our third workshop, on networks, where our discussion and conclusions point to a tool of substantial significance for studying what was global about the Middle Ages.

Locating parameters

The **historiography** workshop was divided into four thematic sessions that each questioned how far historiographical models borrowed from the study of other periods or regions can facilitate or inhibit research into the global Middle Ages. The themes selected were empire, divergences and transformations, religion, and resources. All four themes were found to include useful elements but we also discovered that we needed to eliminate, adjust and winnow quite substantially to make them productive for the medieval period.

›Empire‹ seemed an obvious category to investigate, and we found it easy to see how this theme was global, with network participants offering many comparisons and parallels from across the medieval globe. That said, we found the utility of the concept of ›empire‹ limited for our period. This was in part because it proved difficult to disentangle ›empire‹ from other political units. A kingdom-empire distinction, for instance, did not seem especially helpful. Nonetheless wrestling with the scope and criteria of ›empire‹ led to an issue which really engaged the group during this workshop and continued to shape discussion across subsequent meetings: the question of praxis. How do you do things (as a ruler) and what is it like to have things done to you (as a subject)? But questions of what rulers *do* generated in turn questions about what they are *for*, and about how much of an impact they really have on their subjects. During periods of slow transportation and little mass communication, as in the Middle Ages, the top-down roles of coercion and persuasion mattered, but so too did bottom-up impulses to associate as followers in various guises with those who were deemed to be attractive, useful and efficacious, a set of ideas which the group felt we could distil into the formula of: ›the empire as umpire‹. While there was an evident lack of congruence between what ›empire‹ means for the Middle Ages and for other periods, some parallels did emerge that suggested the study of a global Middle Ages has the potential to contribute to the study of more ›modern‹ phenomena. These might include the important role in imperial states played by collaborating elites, especially as hinges between remote imperial authorities and local populations, and the desire for rulership or leadership. Perhaps the most useful conclusion to come out of our study of empire was that we clearly need to conceive of the political in the medieval world in terms of entangled units, units that were themselves rarely neat and discrete but were typified by the most fluid of boundaries.

Our second historiographical theme was ›Divergences and Transformations‹, and here again we saw limitations but also potential. The group was wary of grand comparative history that was overly reliant on the model of divergence, largely because of its tendencies to efface specificities, to adopt a teleology focused on modernity and to offer an essentially ›western‹ cultural perspective. Nonetheless large-scale change was not rejected out of hand. In particular the group felt we would not want to abandon the notion of a transformation characterised

by common dynamics or patterns of causation that might then precipitate regionally-specific outcomes: in this way, a concept such as a Eurasian ›transformation‹ around 1000-1200 could be rendered historically plausible. The group saw potential for thinking about causes of parallel transformation – climate, disease, neo-Malthusian constraints, technology – while also being drawn to the study of the moments at which processes of change (often long drawn-out and caused by different pressures) were recognised by different societies. In short, large-scale hypotheses were thought to be productive if founded on strong enough empirical bases. We were reminded that as historians we are constitutionally set up to look sceptically at theories and insist on local differences, but if we want to engage in large-scale analysis or develop some kind of conception of the global, we will have to find ways of creating acceptable generalisations.

In our analysis of our third theme, of ›Religion‹, we were keen to see whether there were patterns or problems in regional historiographies that could point us towards new models with global reach. We approached religion through several different lenses including those of ›encounter‹ between different confessional groups, and practices and beliefs that were potentially comparable, such as sacrifice. Despite these efforts, ›religion‹ simply seemed to be too large a category for coherent investigation. Certainly we could see that issues connected to exchange of beliefs and practices, shared space, competition, and co-existence were all potentially fruitful avenues to pursue globally. Equally it was clear that to make headway with religion as a medieval global theme, scholars in this field will need to overcome the dominant focus on Christianity, and to avoid or refine the terminology that goes with that focus. The topic will need engagement, for instance, with a more capacious category such as ›clerisy‹ rather than the predominantly Christian term ›clergy‹; or the weaving of conflicts between Church and State into a broader story of tensions between ruling powers and religious specialists, rather than taking that western Christian binary as the standard for other comparisons. The group also felt that material culture, particularly objects, could prove to be an asset to the study of global medieval religions, not least because objects can help to shrink the distance between official pronouncements by rulers and religious experts and lived, on-the-ground practice. Nonetheless, given the vastness of religion as a topic, we thought it better pursued as an integral element of other themes rather than as a theme in its own right.

Our final historiography workshop theme was ›Resources‹, in which the network's approach of comparing specialist regional historiographies to generate more global ideas proved extremely successful. It seemed a theme with the capacity for enabling the global to be seen in both comparative and connective terms. We could, for instance, compare states, institutions and socio-economic organisations by examining their relationship with and control over resources. We could alternatively use resources to focus on connectivities between disparate parts of the medieval world through trade and forms of non-economic exchange (e.g. gift-giving). This is a theme which would allow material culture to take centre stage by consideration of the use, reuse, adaptation and transformation of objects or resources as they moved through space and time. ›Resources‹ have an obvious connection to ecology: the role that access to natural resources (woodland, fossil fuels, animals, fertile lands etc.) had in determining parallel and divergent social, economic and political developments in otherwise unconnected parts of the globe. Equally this is a theme susceptible to cultural readings, including the comparative study of the non-material resources on which societies drew, such as stories, texts, memories, images and symbols, and on the connections, exchanges and adaptations made in different locations and contexts. Above all, ›resources‹ is a category which is concerned with both local and global scales of experience.

Our second workshop, on **periodisation**, was inspired by the problem of using the term ›Middle Ages‹ in a global context. This seemed important given the essentially western context to that label. More generally, we were keen to think about what we gain or lose from periodisations that are used by those writing about a history they claim as their own (whether those writers are western or otherwise) and by those looking in from outside. At the heart of the discussion was the question of whether we can improve on the term ›Middle Ages‹.

In a session we called ›Beginnings and Endings‹ we considered whether it was possible to distinguish a global Middle Ages from what came afterwards and (to a lesser extent) what came before; a consideration that forced us to question whether any such ›before‹ and ›after‹ distinctions made any sense at all and, if they did, whether they did so merely in a Eurasian context or could be applied over a wider geographical canvas. Should historians seek to identify a single global Middle Ages distinct from other periods, or should we instead be pluralising our period into more finely-cut and overlapping segments, and be more sensitive to the idea of gradual globalising (and de-globalising?) steps? Should we accept the arguments of early modernists that the first truly global world only emerged in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, characterised by the spread and strength of connections? And should we thus see a (global) Middle Ages as essentially less connected, in the sense that direct links between regions as far apart as as China and western Europe were almost non-existent? If this was so, should the global Middle Ages by definition be more about looking for useful comparisons rather than seeking to uncover connections? Or might we want to use connectivity in a more nuanced way that could then redraw period boundaries? Might we think about how different parts of the world ›brushed against‹ each other on an intermittent basis rather than in terms of suddenly intensifying connection? With this outlook could we then think, for example, less about a big bang of contact across the Atlantic during the fifteenth century and more about an earlier northern Atlantic system gradually giving way to a south Atlantic one, an approach which would erode the standard medieval-early modern distinction? More radically, should we give airtime to ideas of ›big time‹ periodisation? To do so might break down distinctions between antiquity, medieval and early modern and we could then think about the Middle Ages as the end phase of a much longer period that was characterised by large scale agrarian empires in Eurasia, which had emerged in the Neolithic and only ended when Eurasians reached out beyond Eurasia.

 Although our group in fact thought the ›big time‹ idea too huge for useful explanatory frameworks, we agreed that ›going global‹ has the potential to relativise what may seem to specialists like obvious periodisations, and may make us more sensitive to the fact that very early processes usually considered typical of and confined to one age may still be playing out at a much later date. We also saw a place for attending to how contemporaries periodised themselves in the centuries between 300 and 1600, especially to the ways in which they marked key transitions and transformations. We thought that placing contemporary conceptions at the heart of our discussion could allow us to escape from key dates such as 1492, the significance of which may be overstated, especially to contemporaries. Sensitivity to contemporaries‹ views may also enable new key dates or processes to emerge, especially if we can detect resonances across cultures, which might be in the form of shared expressions and responses rather than physical connections.

Contemporary conception was a theme developed by a guest lecture from one of the network's international visitors, Professor Nile Green (UCLA), who encouraged us to see a global Middle Ages in terms of a history of contemporary cultures or orderings of time.

This would generate an inherently plural, subjective and yet also collective scholarly exercise which could shift the focus of global history away from economies (as with the standard world time of early modernity) to mentalities. In this context, time according to different calendars, diverse concepts of time in different scriptural traditions, and genealogical times might all have their place. Time orderings – and times – are, after all, social creations. They overlap, come and go, succeed and fail, and compete. And they become part of the history we are examining.

Contemporary conceptions of periodisation were also opened up later in the workshop particularly with regard to the relationship between the construction and reproduction of periodisation and legitimation strategies. One crucial difference between modern and medieval periodisations which struck network members was that the latter were typically connected to large cosmological systems, whereas those of today are not. The focus on the contemporary perception of time(s) and use(s) of time-systems also drew out a distinction between the multiplicity of time-systems available to medieval contemporaries and the far more limited set of ways in which modern society measures both present and historical time.

In another session, which seemed to follow on naturally from beginnings and endings, we moved to ›Shifts and Transitions‹, to discover that conventional European periodisation markers, such as the ›Renaissance‹ and ›medieval‹, clearly do not travel well or easily into other cultures, such as those in China, the Islamic world or India. Indeed we noted that conventional periodisations are often recognised as problematical, contested and distorting even within their ›home‹ historiography; in this context using such periodisations in the discussion and description of other parts of the world seems particularly hazardous. Surely, network members asked, it should be possible to synthesize new theories from bottom-up, evidence-based studies, which are then compared around specific issues, instead of through the use of overly general periodisation categories? This session also pointed to the dangers of nominalism: of something becoming real simply because it is labelled and named. Thus ›Silk Road narratives‹ often leave out central Asia and India, given their primary concern with the eastern and western ends of the routes. Clearly we need to make the periods we choose to use more complex and wide-ranging than sticking to the overly simplistic stories, whether of ›Renaissance‹ or ›Silk Roads‹. Central Asia, for instance, should not be defined simply by the fact that people crossed it on particular occasions, but rather by the significant historical developments that occurred there.

Rather than abandoning the notion of periodisation altogether, however, the network thought it important to pin down crucial and genuinely transformative shifts between periods, in contrast to what might be termed ›motion‹, i.e. the regular changes that all societies experience. In addition, even if we wish to avoid nominalist over-simplifications such as ›Silk Road‹ and ›Renaissance‹, we decided that we wanted to leave open the possibility of broad comparison of processes such as secularisation or state-formation and collapse.

In as much as shifts and transitions were thought to matter greatly, at least at times, the network was also keen to think about how standard periodisations gloss over or ignore phases which do not always ›fit‹. In a session on ›Blanks and Gaps‹, the case of Eastern Eurasia was used to explore this point: namely that certain transitional phases in this region's history were often relegated relative to others that more conveniently slotted into official historiography (the Yuan in the case of the Song-Yuan-Ming period, for instance). In a similar way certain political units, such as the nomadic empires or the kingdoms of central Asia, have been ignored or marginalised because of their unclear, awkward (or in the nomad case, overschematised and thereby static) relationships with political institutions the continuity

of which dominates the way historians periodise. More attention to these ›marginal‹ entities would open the subject up to new layered and overlapping schemes of periodisation in parallel with the more familiar dynastic model.

Throughout the workshop we returned to the question of whether or not we should worry about using the terms ›medieval‹ or ›Middle Ages‹ at all, given their historiographical baggage. Some felt these were unavoidable, and harmless within our particular group, given that none of us was using them to imply or assume that other parts of the globe shared the particular characteristics of medieval Europe at the same time. Others were conscious that these terms have been very deliberately rejected by prominent practitioners of pre-modern global history and were more uncomfortable about their use. This was a debate which resurfaced from time to time in subsequent workshops, but given that we tended to find ourselves making most headway when looking at the rich contexts that shelter underneath big labels such as these, we have learned to live with ›medieval‹ and ›Middle Ages‹, provided they are used in value-free ways, and always in hope that a more suitable label will emerge in due course.

Networks

Having established some theoretical parameters for our field of inquiry in our first two workshops, our next meeting took up the themes of networks, an approach which proved to be creative and flexible for analysing the polycentric and permeable medieval world. This theme enabled us to get closer to our goal of working out how the global Middle Ages were actually experienced. Networks are a familiar idea and we wanted to continue to break down traditional categories by focusing not on what things or ideas a network carried but on what communicative work it did in cutting across time, space or activities. How and what did different communities communicate with each other over space and time? But also what were the physical and cultural limits on communication?

Our first two sessions, both on ›Networks and Their Functions‹, brought us to questions about what different kinds of network might be identified, *how* networks work and *what* work they do that is not provided by other social relationships. The value of ranging beyond Eurasia was demonstrated by analyses of East and West African networks that focused on the people as much as on the objects involved. These analyses generated the idea of the ›spindly‹ network, applicable in both coastal and hinterland contexts and characterised by relatively small numbers of agents, who linked these African ›small worlds‹ through just a few nodes to reach as far as East Asia. These agents were ›strangers‹ who ›belonged‹ to the routes rather than the local communities through which they passed, but the objects (and ideas) they carried were integrated into local worlds in ways that might have been unrecognisable to the originators, as when Chinese pottery was incorporated into house walls on the Swahili coast. A very similar pattern was subsequently observed in circuits identified as running around Europe from c. 950 until c. 1100. The key point to emerge from these comparisons was the importance of understanding the relationship between global networks and local conditions. Discussion covered whether the specialised local knowledge of agents was more critical in network functions than their characteristics as ›strangers‹; the romanticisation of the pre-modern as less bounded and less scrutinised; and our preference for ›pulses‹ of network activity rather than linear development. We considered the need for a typology of networks that should differentiate types of routes and nodes, and the functions of global and local networks.

This discussion did not elaborate on whether the traders travelling these spindly networks formed a community with each other, but those who interacted with relics in Orthodox con-

texts do seem to have created community by means of shared participation, in sometimes discrete locations, in a set of devotional practices involving ›contact relics‹ (oil, clothes, water) that linked believers physically with the holy person at the centre of a cult and could offer the potential to challenge established authorities. Meanwhile, travel accounts that described the long-distance routes between the sinitic and the Islamic worlds had afterlives in which the texts were valued for elements other than their practical information, which is indicative of waves of connectedness followed by periods of greater disconnect. Two peaks of connectedness may have been the seventh to ninth centuries and Janet Abu-Lughod's mid-thirteenth to mid-fourteenth centuries. The latter prompted a reminder that the concept of ›world system‹ would be worth keeping on hand as a reminder that larger connectivities may be built from indirect links. This in turn raised questions about the spatiality and fluidity of networks, about if, when and how networks can become communities, and about the benefits that induce people to pay the cost of becoming a member of a network.

A related point arose from our discussions of ›Networks and Borders‹, and concerned the evident need for traders and travellers in networks or circuits to develop common points of reference to enable the solemnising of the agreements which long distance exchanges required. This could generate a sense of commonality transcending political and sectarian boundaries, but the free movement and exchange of ideas along these circuits could also have prompted a reaction from religious authorities fearful of challenge. Such reactions may help to explain some of the boundary-maintenance activities of the eleventh century, such as advocating warfare against the enemies of Christ and the liberation of Jerusalem. This then points towards an area of possible comparison with the circumstances in other parts of the world in which the boundaries of belief and ideology also hardened in the eleventh century.

Continuing with ›Networks and Borders‹, a presentation on the Americas reinforced the value of bringing non-Eurasian regions into our considerations. The search was for a new narrative to transcend the hegemonic account of Western European-Mesoamerican links focused on 1492. Hence the emphasis lay upon seafaring networks predating Columbus that ranged not only across the North Atlantic but also involved the movement of people, goods and ideas from Mesoamerica into Europe c. 1400-1700. This would also have the effect of decentering the ›Atlantic‹, so that what is normally seen as a spiderweb network might be reconfigured as a matrix in which sensitivities at one node set off vibrations across other diverse nodes.

In the session on ›Network Dynamics‹ we heard about the ›apostolic networks‹ of thirteenth-century Christian friars, personalised political networks in north China and Inner Asia in the seventh to ninth centuries, and trade and distribution networks in early medieval Europe, each with its own particular dynamics. The friars formed a diachronic and partly imaginary network by linking themselves to the original apostles, while in Asia they created real networks of helpers and believers. The latter, sustained by the sense of being God's agents on earth, were able to survive periods of dormancy between one friar's departure and another's arrival, suggesting that even intermittent contact could be enough to maintain networks as virtual entities through periods of physical attenuation, particularly if supported by a powerful cosmology. Meanwhile, the highly dynamic political networks of northern China and Inner Asia emerge as a single system[6] in which networks of elites formed and re-formed around those perceived to offer effective leadership for managing persistent military and ecological challenges. The constant dynamism of northern networks contrasts with the more stable hierarchies of the new society centred on the Yangzi valley from around the tenth century.

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6   Skaff, Sui-Tang China.

Networks arising for different purposes also interacted with each other. In the European Early Middle Ages extensive networks typically engaged in long-distance trade, and often necessarily intersected with intensive networks that distributed resources in local communities. While it is difficult to reconstruct trading networks from archaeological evidence, in this case material and textual evidence combine to show how long-distance networks thickened and faded according to opportunities and competition, and how local demand could set the agenda for long-distance traders. The nodal points of medieval networks were broadly equal, and we noted here a contrast with the hierarchies of nodes in later periods. At such times networks such as the Hanse or the East India Company had the upper hand over local networks partly because they offered new opportunities to local interests that were willing to comply. Some people were apparently more willing to engage with ›otherness‹, risk and distance than others, leading them towards long-distance rather than local networks.

This session set the dynamics specific to each network alongside both their ›internal‹ roles within recognised political spaces and their ›external‹ capacity for crossing temporal and spatial boundaries to link far-flung places. Discussion also noted that we need to place the useful flexibility and informality of networks, and their commonplace emergence from inter-personal relations, against the utility of institutions, with their reliability, standardisation and implication in formal structures of authority. We also noted the importance of considering what written, graphical or mnemonic resources contributed to sustaining networks – particularly if highly extended or intermittent – over time. Finally, we pondered whether networks existed in all forms of society and whether they were merely another Eurocentric way of understanding other parts of the world.

A presentation by our international visitor, Professor André Wink (University of Wisconsin-Madison), reinforced our thinking about the generative quality of the medieval period by replacing the idealisation of India's ancient period with an argument that in many regards India was the product of the Middle Ages. Particularly germane to our endeavours were his observations of a dearth of archaeological research; that India, while exposed to the steppe world, was conquered not by nomads but by sedentary peoples with origins in the nomadic world; and that ›conversion‹ is a less helpful idea than slow cultural transformation in which saints, tombs and relics were integral to the gradual adoption of Islam.

We came to the end of the workshop feeling that, despite some scepticism, most found the concept of networks useful, perhaps especially as a description of personalised contacts rather than of systems. We would, however, henceforth wish to use the term ›network‹ with more precision than previously, because network, community, connection, contact, communication and world system are not the synonyms they are often taken to be, with some concepts less useful than others. Also important are the concepts of nodes, centres, starting points and the ›gatekeepers‹ who exact a price for entering or moving around a network. Since the individual is always the centre of a network in their own mind, so our focus should be more on the individual experience of networks, especially at the level of choice.

New directions

With this third workshop we felt that the project had come of age. Without ignoring the difficulties created by mismatches in historiography and periodisation, we had nevertheless found a vocabulary and method for investigating commonalities, contrasts and connections around the medieval globe. While some medievalists argue that ›medieval‹ is a specifically European concept, so specialists in world regions beyond Europe may make claims to uniqueness that require their region to be studied *sui generis*. Bringing together European medie-

valists and regional specialists has done what we hoped it would to undercut traditional scholarly boundaries, question longstanding assumptions and open up the ›home‹ fields of network members to new questions and issues. We end up with many more questions rather than answers, but at least the lines of enquiry are opened up.

Network members
Lesley Abrams (Oxford) – W Eurasia: Scandinavian world, conversion
Scott Ashley (Newcastle) – W Eurasia: Vikings, W Europe
Sergei Bogatyrev (University College London) – W Eurasia: Russia
John Darwin (Oxford) – British Commonwealth
Hilde de Weerdt (Kings College London/Leiden) – E/S Eurasia: China institutional
Kent Deng (London School of Economics) - E/S Eurasia: China economic
Caroline Dodds Pennock (Sheffield) – Americas: Aztecs, Spanish America, Atlantic
Glen Dudbridge (Oxford) – E/S Eurasia: China
Ian Forrest (Oxford) – W Eurasia: England institutions, religion and society
Anne Gerritsen (Warwick) – E/S Eurasia: China
Anne Haour (East Anglia) – Africa: Sahel, W African archaeology
Catherine Holmes (Oxford) – W Eurasia: Byzantium
Tim Insoll (Manchester) – Africa: sub-Saharan, W African, Islamic archaology
Andrew Laird (Warwick) – Americas: Spanish America
Elizabeth Lambourn (De Montfort) – E/S Eurasia: Sri Lanka
Jay Lewis (Oxford) – E/S Eurasia: Korea
Conrad Leyser (Oxford) – W Eurasia: W Europe
Neil McLynn (Oxford) – W Eurasia: later Roman
Bob Moore (Newcastle) – clerical elites and social transformation
Andrew Newman (Edinburgh) – E/S Eurasia: Islamic world
Arietta Papaconstantinou (Reading) – Africa: Egypt, Rome, Islam
Amanda Power (Sheffield) – W Eurasia: Mediterranean world
Andrew Redden (Liverpool) – Americas: early modern Latin/Central Americas
Jonathan Shepard (Cambridge) – W Eurasia: Russia, Byzantium
Naomi Standen (Birmingham) – E/S Eurasia: China, Inner Asia
Alan Strathern (Oxford) – E/S Eurasia: Sri Lanka, global religious encounters
John Watts (Oxford) – W Eurasia: Europe politics
Monica White (Nottingham) – W Eurasia: Russia and Byzantium
Susan Whitfield (International Dunhuang Project) – E/S Eurasia: China, Central Asia
Mark Whittow (Oxford) – W Eurasia: Mediterranean archaeology
Chris Wickham (Oxford) – W Eurasia: W Europe
Stephanie Wynne-Jones (York) – Africa: E African coastal urbanism
Simon Yarrow (Birmingham) – W Eurasia: W Europe, global

International visitors (first three workshops)
Nile Green (UCLA) – E/S Eurasia: Islamic S Asia
André Wink (Madison) – E/S Eurasia: S Asia

Workshop contents
Historiography (10-12 September, Oxford)
Empire: presentations by Alan Strathern, Andrew Newman, Anne Haour

Divergences and Transformations: presentations by Hilde de Weerdt, Bob Moore, Caroline Dodds Pennock
Religion: presentations by Conrad Leyser, Andrew Redden, Catherine Holmes
Resources: presentations by Monica White, Anne Gerritsen, Stephanie Wynne-Jones

Periodisation (19-20 January 2013, Birmingham)
Beginnings and Endings: presentations by Alan Strathern, Scott Ashley, Glen Dudbridge
International visitor: Nile Green
Shifts and Transitions: presentations by John Watts, Susan Whitfield
Blanks and Gaps: presentations by Naomi Standen, Mark Whittow
Contemporary Notions of Periodisation: presentations by Hilde de Weerdt, Simon Yarrow, Amanda Power

Networks (16-18 September 2013, Newcastle)
Networks and Their Functions: presentations by Anne Haour, Stephanie Wynne-Jones, Monica White, Glen Dudbridge
International visitor: André Wink
Networks and Borders: presentations by Jonathan Shepard, Kent Deng, Caroline Dodds Pennock
Network Dynamics: presentations by Amanda Power, Naomi Standen, Scott Ashley

References

Abu-Lughod, Janet, *Before European Hegemony: the World System A.D. 1250-1350* (New York and Oxford, 1989).

Green, Toby, *The Rise of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in Western Africa, 1300-1589* (Cambridge, 2012).

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Lieberman, Victor, *Strange Parallels: Southeast Asia in Global Context, c. 800-1830*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 2003).

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Why Did Islamic Medieval Institutions *Become* so Different from Western Medieval Institutions?

Eduardo Manzano*

This paper attempts to answer the question of why Islamic medieval institutions became so different from their Western counterparts. It is divided into three sections. The first discusses the significance of comparing institutions from this perspective and the patterns that can be found in doing so. The second section describes the methodology that has been followed in this research and sets aside other possible approaches, particularly those espoused by the New Institutional Economics. The third section seeks to answer the main question: it is argued that differences in institutional shaping emerge from the divergent paths taken by power and authority in Islamic social formation, which was confronted with an irresolvable dilemma between temporal rule and religious legitimacy. This separation emerged, in the final analysis, from a distinctive polity that was based on the control of tax and increasingly detached itself from forms of religious authority that sprang from the Muslim community.

Why institutions need to be compared

One of the main contrasts between Islamic and Western social formations is the very different shape that institutions took in them. There are countless examples that support this claim. Take the case of the religious institutional configuration: throughout what we now term Medieval Europe, the Christian Church adopted an institutional layout based on bishoprics, religious orders, councils, or the papacy, which are totally absent in the structural configuration of Islam as an organized religion. The same holds true for forms of territorial rule that became institutionalized throughout the Middle Ages, such as duchies, counties and shires, baronies and the innumerable forms of institutional framing that assumed the configuration of power in the West and had no clear equivalent in Islamic lands, where the terms of socio-political rule are always more difficult to grasp. Urban institutions also illustrate the point: albeit Islam is usually considered a »civilization of cities«, there are no equivalents to the urban medieval communes, *signorias*, burghs or *concejos* whose powerful institutional profiles embody the strength of the collective action that implemented them.

Therefore, it seems that there is a pattern here; a pattern that shows Western Medieval institutions as more recognizable, more prominent, more assertive than their Islamic counterparts. Obviously, this does not mean that Islamic institutions did not exist: there was no central religious organization, but religious dogma and rituals were consistently shared by a huge number of believers; socio-political institutions were somehow foggy, but coercion was

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exerted in Islamic social formations; town or city halls were never built, but Medieval Islamic cities expanded and worked successfully, integrating large populations. So, institutions certainly did exist in Islamic societies. The challenging issue is that they seem to have been consistently different from the ones we find in the Medieval West.[1]

The distinctive shape of institutions in these societies entails a whole variety of issues that are rarely raised, but become especially relevant when they are analyzed from a comparative perspective. A good example is the preservation of institutional memories in the form of written documents. One of the reasons why most medievalists are not archaeologists is because the Medieval West produced an increasing amount of religious and lay institutions, which kept their own documentary records. The conservation of texts helped to create an institutional self-consciousness that claimed the preservation of the past as a useful resource for the present.[2] Monastic cartularies, chancery records and royal archives were fed by documents which were produced, archived and preserved within the distinctive boundaries of these institutions because their binding or referential nature was deemed relevant for their social reproduction and continuity.

For some reason, Islamic medieval societies yielded institutions which were not as eager or less effective at preserving their documents as religious bodies, administrations or households did in the Latin West. Yet recent scholarship has proved beyond any doubt that from a very early stage Islamic societies produced large amounts of documents with strong legal, political and social value[3]. It has also been convincingly argued that institutions such as the Fatimid court or the Mamlūk chancery not only issued documents, but also kept copies of them in their own archives. Moreover, multi-generational documentary collections were not unknown among Muslim merchant families of thirteenth century Egypt.[4] Therefore, archival practice was not unknown in the *dār al-islām*, but the paucity of surviving documentary material from these societies is particularly striking when compared not only with the contemporary Latin West, but also with the later Ottoman Empire.[5]

It has been suggested that political and social unrest in the medieval Near East and North Africa may be an explanation for this dearth of written records, as new dynasties or rulers sought to destroy the legitimacy of their predecessors by inflicting »archival violence« against their textual memory.[6] People were required to ask for new documents from the new sovereigns »since the privileges the documents confirmed rested on the relationship between individual rulers and their subjects and were not automatically transferred by legacy«.[7]

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1   This article embraces a broad comparative analysis between Medieval Western and Islamic social formations. The latter should be identified with the formation prevailing in the territories of the *dār al-islām* i.e. the »the abode of Islam«, the area inhabited by Muslims where Islamic law ruled without disputation. The West refers to areas which had formerly been part of the Western Roman Empire and to those affected by their medieval expansion. Although by no means satisfactory – both realms were far from being homogeneous – this distinction is practical for the aim of this paper. It should be noted that Byzantium is not included in either of these areas: for reasons that will become apparent in this paper from an institutional point of view I tend to consider it as a middle ground between Islamic and Westerm formations.

2   Melville, Institutionnalité médiévale, 255.

3   Sijpesteijn, Archival Mind in Early Islamic Egypt, 166.

4   Rustow, Petition to a Woman, 3; Bauden, Recovery of Mamluk Chancery, 75-76; Guo, *Commerce, Culture, and Community*, 10-25.

5   Stern, *Fatimid Decrees*, 4; Manzano, Introduction, xxvi.

6   El-Leithy, Living Documents, Dying Archives, 427-429, rightly criticizes the views held by Chamberlain, *Knowledge and Social Practice*, 11-18.

7   Rustow, Petition to a Woman, 18.

This interpretation makes sense and to some extent explains the scarcity of preserved medieval documents. However, what is at stake here is an institutional practice which seems to differ from the Latin West, where changes of dynasties or successions might have fostered the necessity of confirming previous documents, but did not usually entail such a degree of »archival violence«. This may well be a symptom of the high value of written documents »as signifiers of political sovereignty«, but the fact that »even at the peaceful accession of an heir, the old documents lost their value and one had to petition the new ruler for the old privileges«, indicates that political power adopted a distinctive institutional practice in Islamic lands.[8] In this sense, it is also significant that »Christian and Jewish institutions have turned out to be among of the best sources of original documents from the Islamic Middle Ages«.[9] The intriguing question remains as to why this was the case.

Tracking their distinctive textual records is only one of the many fruitful approaches that may yield a comparative study of those social artifacts we call institutions. Comparative history, though, is always a hazardous field. Both similarities and differences can easily be overstated, and there is always the possibility of mistaking as parallel certain historical processes that respond to quite different conditions, thus considering as underlying causes what in fact are only social symptoms. This is why this paper is divided into three sections: the first sets the premises of the research by making clear what is (and what is not) our methodological approach for the comparative study of medieval institutions; the second shows this comparative approach at work in connection with processes of institutionalization in both Islam and Christendom; and the third proposes a working hypothesis in answer to the question that frames the title of this paper.

How institutions need to be compared

The different shaping of Western and Islamic institutions has not attracted too much attention from historians, but it has been the subject of a great deal of discussion by scholars of the so-called New Institutional Economics. This school follows the ideas of Douglass North, who argued that Western institutions were key actors in economic development, as they managed to clarify property rights and contractual obligations, thus helping to reduce transaction costs.[10] This line of research has been continued by authors such as Avner Greif and Timur Kuran. The former defines institutions as »systems of social factors that conjointly generate a regularity of behavior« based on the cognitive, coordinative, informational and normative aspects that make up the behavioural contents of institutions. Greif considers that »institutions are the engine of history« and this is exemplified by late Medieval European commercial expansion, which was fostered by self-governing corporations established by individuals who were unrelated by blood, but were able to create impersonal rules that regulated their activities, thereby reducing uncertainty.[11]

Other scholars have followed these ideas by referring to »European institutional exceptionalism«. Lisa Blaydes and Eric Chaney relate it to the emergence of feudalism, which forced sovereigns »to enter into forms of consensual rule with their local elite«. This resulted in the emergence of political institutions that favored constraints on the power of rulers. The main consequence was the decentralization of power, which paradoxically entailed a growth of

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8   El-Leithy, Living Documents, Dying Archives, 431.

9   Rustow, Petition to a Woman, 24.

10   North, Institutions and Economic Growth, 1325.

11   Greif, *Institutions and the Path*, 30, 399.

political stability in Western Europe as revolt was »less enticing for the sovereign rivals« because they had »more to lose from an unsuccessful rebellion (and less to gain from a successful one)«. These authors claim that this can be effectively measured and compared with the more uncertain situation in medieval Islamic polities, where the provision of military service by foreign soldiers with no roots in local communities accounted for a centralized state apparatus in which competition for power was stiff and rebellions rife.[12] Jan Luitten Van Zanden, Eltjo Buringh and Maarten Borsker have singled out medieval Western parliaments as the main institution to constrain the actions of kings. The emergence of these political assemblies in twelfth century southern Europe was rapidly replicated in other Western lands, but it is significant that they never extended to the East. In the early modern period parliaments gained importance in the British Isles, the Netherlands and Sweden, where »power was not concentrated in one person, but spread over different power-holders and social groups, such as the church, the nobility, and the cities«.[13] This occurred at the crucial juncture of the economic expansion of these regions, which these authors think was positively affected by that institutional development.

Timur Kuran has taken these arguments one step further by arguing that the West produced »self-undermining and ultimately self-transforming« institutions, whereas »the corresponding institutional complex in the Middle East proved generally self-enforcing, if not self-reinforcing«. According to Kuran, the peculiar institutional shaping of Islamic societies was not particularly problematic within the economic structures of the pre-modern period and even fostered trade exchanges throughout the High Middle Ages. However, it showed its drawbacks when it was confronted with the Western forms of economic organization that emerged during the modern era and were much more dynamic than their Islamic counterparts. A whole variety of Islamic institutions contributed to the Middle East's slip into stagnation: some of them were traceable to the early period, some of them took longer to develop. One of them, for instance, was the Islamic inheritance system, whose Qur'anic rules for the bequeathing of testamentary portions to children, spouses, parents and siblings allowed the fragmentation of wealth and discouraged the formation of durable commercial partnerships. This was also the case with the *waqf* system, a form of trust which was established by endowing income-producing property to provide a service in perpetuity, but whose rigidity »depressed the already low need to develop more advanced commercial organizations«. Kuran also implies that the concept of corporation was alien to Islamic law, which only gave legal standing to individuals, thus preventing the emergence of economic organizations with a legal entity.[14]

Criticisms of these views stress the idea that they subordinate historical interpretation to the teleological perspective that considers »economic development« as the main objective of any society in the past. Authors such as Jack Goldstone are right when they point out how inadequate it is »to build world history around a single long-term trend described as *the rise of the West*«.[15] Long-term processes are examined from the confident perspective of their final outcome and the uncertainties that surrounded historical agents in their own times are subsumed under a sort of »manifest destiny« conception that pervades the bulk of the narrative.

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12   Blaydes and Chaney, Feudal Revolution and Europe's Rise, 24.

13   Van Zanden *et al.*, Rise and Decline, 846.

14   Kuran, *Long Divergence*, 36, 283.

15   Goldstone, Trend or Cycles?, 106.

Insufficient empirical evidence can also be singled out as another weakness of these explanations, as they subordinate the complex social and economic variables of historical dynamics to the abstract models that are the subject of the comparative enquiry.[16] In terms of the analysis of the evidence, these approaches introduce a methodological bias, as institutions are used as proxies of a social or economic rationality that is always defined in Eurocentric terms. Institutions are invoked because »market laws« do not always work properly and economic interpretations need another set of variables to buttress the idea that the Western path to capitalism was paved on the track of indisputable rationality.[17] Symptoms are taken as explanations and social conflicts are regarded as epiphenomena of a collective action that was always guided by the »neutral« mechanisms of rational choice.

The critique of the approach taken by the New Institutional Economics shows that while it is methodologically unsound to start any comparative discussion on institutions from the premise of failure or success, efficiency vs. inefficiency, the idea that there is a pattern in the different institutional configuration in East and West still holds. Any definition of institutions conceives of them as structures or processes performed by social regularities. However, these regularities do not simply flow from an addition of individual rational behaviors. They are the outcome of power struggles among multiple actors who shape institutions as arenas of social conflict and dispute. This was perfectly explained by Michel Foucault more than thirty years ago when he suggested »that one must analyze institutions from the standpoint of power relations, rather than vice versa, and that the fundamental point of anchorage of the relationships, even if they are embodied and crystallized in an institution, is to be found outside the institution«.[18] When broader socio-normative power relations are taken into account, their institutional *crystallization* reveals certain regularities that allow for a comparative anlaysis, as it will become clear in the final sections of this paper.

Such analysis requires, though, a clear identification of what exactly we mean when we refer to »institutions«. In this connection, eclecticism is always a methodological advantage. This is why Jacques Revel's distinction between three different meanings of institutions is particularly useful:

I) The more technical and restricted sense, which is prevalent in legal history, considers institutions as »legal-political entities«.

II) A broader view includes any organization, which works regularly in society according to implicit and explicit rules, and responds to a specific collective demand (the family, the school, the trade unions).

III) A very wide use refers to any form of social organization which bundles values, rules or models of relations or behaviors based on mutual expectations.[19]

As Gadi Algazi has noted, historians tend to feel more comfortable with the narrower understanding of what an institution is, whereas for comparative purposes »we may find ourselves using the same term to refer to perhaps related but still radically different phenomena«. This is certainly a serious problem. And the methodological answer for such problem, as Algazi also points out, can only be pragmatic: to switch definitions at will and, particularly,

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16   Shatzmiller, Economic Performance and Economic Growth, 140.

17   Narotzky and Manzano, The Ḥisba, the Muḥtasib, 33-34.

18   Foucault, Subject and Power, 791.

19   Revel, Institution et le social, 64. Also relevant Scott, *Institutions and Organizations*, 48-55, quoted by Humfress, Institutionalisation between Theory and Practice, 21-24.

to describe institutional shaping or behaviour in terms of social processes. Following this approach, a fruitful discussion on institutions will not deal with them as well-established, essential entities, but rather as institutionalization processes in which »a significant part of the process happens ex post facto, as messy past realities are endowed with new meanings, as improvised practices are formalized and regularized, in ways that may not have been possible within their actual, contingent contexts«.[20] This is crucial. The following discussion tries to uncover how the conflictual making of institutions gives form to norms and practices that stem from power relations. By focusing on the performative aspect of this process, I will try to identify the boundaries created by the social regularities which are behind institutions. How this process takes place in Islamic and Western social formations is fundamentally what our project *Power and Institutions in Medieval Islam and Christendom (PIMIC)* is about.

What institutions need to be compared: codification as a case study

Processes of institutionalization of legal entities provide excellent cases for comparison between different social formations. Legal entities are concrete, are complex and are also historical, which makes them perfect subjects for a sort of analysis that, as we will see, very much resembles the peeling of an epistemological onion, whose successive layers hide gross misconceptions. I will illustrate this by focusing on the institution of legal codification, meaning by this the making of authoritative and written legal traditions. This discussion, which is based on recent scholarship on this topic, examines some issues concerning the shaping of codification in medieval societies.

A first look at codification brings an undeniable, yet superficial assessment: state codification was unknown in the Islamic social formation, whereas in Christian medieval societies (including Byzantium) kings and emperors did codify the law. Caliphs never issued a legal code or a set of laws, whereas Christian sovereigns, including the Roman popes, promulgated legislation under a great variety of forms and purposes. Departing from this premise, it would be tempting to follow Max Weber's characterization of Islamic rulings as not based on codified, systematic and therefore »rational« law, but rather on the arbitrary and ad-hoc elements that shaped the personal rulings of those who were in charge of administering justice: the famous *qāḍī justice*[21] which »knows no rational rules of decision« because judges resort to common sense and expediency instead of conforming either to the letter of the codified law or to »the rational procedure of evidence« introduced by the state.[22]

This view is misleading. In the first place, codification of the law was not the rule in medieval societies, but rather the exception. Roman law had originally »developed as a non-codified system« and it was only as late as 438 AD when what we could properly term a ›state‹ codification was officially promulgated in the form of the *Codex Theodosianus*. The *Codex* included relevant imperial legislation, but not the legal opinions by the *iuris periti*, experts of high repute whose legal intepretations enjoyed a similar status to the normative texts issued by the legislator in the Roman legal system. The promulgation of these legal opinions as imperial law had to wait until 533 and the emperor Justinian's *Digest*. The following year Justinian issued (a second edition of) his own authoritative collection of imperial consti-

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20 Algazi, Comparing Medieval Institutions, 6, 12; Melville, Institutionnalité médiévale, 244.

21 The Arabic transliteration follows the guidelines of UNGEGN (United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (1972), cf. http://www.eki.ee/wgrs/rom1_ar.pdf (retrieved 10 June 2015).

22 Weber, *Economy and Society*, 976-980. A critique of Weber's concept of rationality (»a chimaera made up, like most chimaeras, of real features in unreal combination«) in Crone, Weber, Islamic Law, and the Rise of Capitalism, 251.

tutions: the *Codex Justinianus*. This codification seems to herald the entry to a territory of legal certainty. Previous sources of imperial legislation were explicitly abrogated. New laws, issued after 534 AD, continued to be promulgated and were collected together (unofficially) as the so-called *Novellae Constitutiones*. However, as B. Stolte has shown, this was not the point of arrival, but rather that of departure for a complex process of elaboration undertaken by Byzantine jurists who wrote Greek interpretations on the (predominately) Latin texts of the *Corpus*. These translations, summaries and commentaries were widely used in teaching, thus serving as intermediaries between the Justinianic texts and their users in courts. »In theory the original texts remained binding. In practice, however, this role was soon taken over by intermediaries«.[23] The result was that the Justinianic codification was never cancelled, but became a kind of storehouse »from which system, method, terminology, rules and teaching material could be and were taken«.[24] E. Conte and M. Ryan express the same idea when they stress that »the force of the codification resided to a great extent in the activity of the schools, in learned exegesis of the sort that Justinian had sought to preempt and the authority of the school was a direct result of authority of that codification«.[25] This may explain why after Justinian there was no other attempt to produce a wholly new legal codification in the Byzantine Empire. The institutional making of authoritative texts in Byzantium was, therefore, a mixture of imperial ideals, scholarly traditions and legal practices.

It is significant that almost no early medieval western ruler issued a codification on such scale – a puzzling exception being the Visigothic *Liber Iudicum*. Carolingian capitularies were not conceived as a legislative corpus, but were rather expressions of royal will, »whose grounds of normativity shifted from case to case«, something that may explain why the collections of capitularies were made on private initiative.[26] Probably, it was not by chance that the rediscovery and rearrangement of the Justinianic *Corpus Iuris* in the West coincided with the Gregorian reform, which emphasized the power of the popes. If there was anything in the West that resembled the Justinianic codification it was the compilation of canon law by Gratian in his *Decretum* in the middle of the twelfth century, which was followed by the compilation of papal decretals few decades later. But these were not neat and tidy codifications, as shown by the different recensions of the *Decretum* and the fact that official collections of papal decretals coexisted with other collections compiled on private initiative. The former stemmed from papal authority, although their purpose was not to supplant existing texts, nor is there any evidence showing that these »official« collections were more authoritative than those compiled by private initiative. Their role as institutionalized items of legal codification »was not solely an outcome of legislative activity by the popes, but also of academic attention (...) It was this aspic of academic commentary, of comparison, contrast, resolution and disputation which enhanced institutional continuity«.[27]

Therefore, when we deal with medieval codification we need to get rid of our contemporary ideas, which are significantly moulded by our own institutional conceptions.[28] Originally, codification was not a routine practice associated with royal or imperial sovereignty.

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23 Stolte, Codification in Byzantium, 64.

24 Stolte, Codification in Byzantium, 73.

25 Conte and Ryan, Codification in the Western Middle Ages, 83.

26 Conte and Ryan, Codification in the Western Middle Ages, 78.

27 Conte and Ryan, Codification in the Western Middle Ages, 79, 90-91.

28 Humfress, Institutionalisation between Theory and Practice, 17.

It was exceptional. The process by virtue of which it became the basis of a particular legal system involved not only the enforcement of political power; it also brought in the authority that stemmed from the activities of legal academics, lawyers and judges. This legal community was responsible for turning codified law into a recognizable set of social regularities, which included teachings and learnings, procedures and enactments. Exegesis and commentary »encouraged a continuing engagement with the same ideas and arguments across generations (...) and quickly privileged received opinion as a force in argument«.[29] How and by whom this legal argument was enacted and enforced depended on particular circumstances and on the concrete balances of power at each particular juncture, but what is relevant for this discussion is that in Byzantium and the Latin West the early configuration of this institution was the result of a number of social interactions, which included political power as one among other participants.

The results, though, were very different. By the early fourteenth century the work of western lawyers, judges and students of law in Italy was producing standard legal works, such as the well-known manuals on the normative aspects regarding fiefs known as the *Libri Feudorum* or *Consuetudines Feudorum*, which contained descriptions on how litigation should be conducted.[30] Nothing of the sort happened in Byzantium, where the high level of abstraction achieved by the Western *ius commune* in the later Middle Ages was never attained. Stolte argues that the absence of independent cities in the empire is a possible explanation for a divergence that may reflect, in the last analysis, the lack of power of Byzantine legal professionals in the face of the imperial administration. Stolte, though, also toys with an alluring idea: Byzantium was the necessary »heir« of Roman law, a *hereditas* that had to be accepted as a whole with no possibility of rejecting parts of it; the West was a legatee of Roman law, meaning that parts of the classical heritage could be rejected whereas others were accepted, and this is exactly what happened from the end of the eleventh century onwards, when portions of the Roman tradition were incorporated into Western legal systems once their potential to speak to contemporary concerns and events had been recognised.[31]

As a consequence, by the thirteenth century some western rulers were able to promulgate legal codes of considerable scope and ambition. In 1231 the emperor Frederick II issued the *Liber Augustalis* for the kingdom of Sicily, while a few years later in Castile Alfonso X published the so-called *Siete Partidas*. By then some aspects had taken a very peculiar twist. The latter code included, for instance, some dispositions regarding the organization of the *studia generalia*, the schools that provided the teaching of different disciplines, among them decretals and laws. According to this law, each studium had to be authorized by the king, the emperor or the pope.[32] Moreover, the *Partidas* stated the obligation for all *studia* to have bookshops (*estaciones*) which stored books that were »true in text and gloss« (*verdaderos de testo e de glosa*) so that students could lease them to make their own books or correct those they already had. These bookshops had to be authorized by the rector of the *studium*, who was required to examine books and make sure that they were »good, legible and true« (*buenos,*

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29 Conte and Ryan, Codification in the Western Middle Ages, 94.

30 Conte and Ryan, Codification in the Western Middle Ages, 91.

31 Stolte, Codification in Byzantium, 73-74.

32 *Partida II, Titulo XXXI, ley I,* »Estudio es ayuntamiento de maestros e de escolares que es fecho en algun lugar con voluntad e entendimiento de aprender saberes (...); e este estudio debe establescido por mandado de Papa o de Emperador, o del Rey«.

e legibles, e verdaderos); if they were not, the bookshops could not be approved unless their books were amended.[33] By the middle of the thirteenth century, therefore, the academic activities of intellectual engagement, which were an essential part of the process of codification, had become regulated in an institutional framework – the *studia* – which depended on the authorization of political power and whose intellectual contents – *buenos libros, e legibles, e verdaderos de testo, e de glosa* – were closely scrutinized. The social interactions that were producing authoritative texts were beginning to be effectively controlled by power and I would suggest that this trend was specific to the Latin West.

What about Islamic medieval codification? In this case the common view holds that there is no question of legislation issued by a government.[34] The main sources of Islamic law are the Qur'an and the *sunna* of the Prophet as reflected in the *ḥadīth*-s, the traditions verified by chains of trustworthy transmitters, which report the teachings, deeds and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad. These *ḥadīth*-s were collected and discussed by specialists, the *'ulamā'*, who widely debated their transmission, authenticity and normative contents. *Ḥadīth*-s were eventually collected in the form of *muṣannaf* (classified) works throughout the ninth/third century. Six of these compilations came to be regarded as more authoritative than others: namely, the *Ṣaḥīḥ* by al-Bukhārī (d. 870/256), the *Ṣaḥīḥ* by Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj (875/261), and the works by Abū Da'ūd, al-Tirmidhī, al-Nasā'ī and Ibn Māja. All in all they make up the Six Books that have enjoyed almost universal recognition as the accepted corpus of traditions in Sunni Islam.[35]

Therefore, Islamic law emerged as a jurists' law, created by private specialists who were independent from the government, at least in principle. As J. Schacht remarked, »legal science, and not the state, plays the part of a legislator, and scholarly handbooks have the force of law«.[36] Moreover, Schacht considered most of the *ḥadīth* corpus as the result of the activities of legal scholars, who managed to confer authority to their rulings by projecting back to the Prophet what had originally been local practices at the main centres of Islamic learning. Although some may disagree with this part of Schacht's arguments, the overwhelming scholarly character of the elaboration of Islamic law is unquestionable. As a matter of fact, what we are seeing here is exactly the same process of scholarly commentary, comparison, contrast, resolution and disputation that Conte and Ryan saw developing in Italy from the end of the eleventh century onwards. The only difference is that this happened at a much earlier date in the *dār al-islām* and that, in theory, the state was not involved in this process. But the »aspic of academic commentary, comparison, contrast, resolution and disputation which enhanced institutional continuity« was exactly the same.

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33 *Partida II, Título XXXI, ley xi,* »Estacionarios ha menester que aya en todo estudio general, para ser complido, que tenga en sus estaciones, buenos libros, e legibles, e verdaderos de testo, e de glosa, que los loguen a los escolares para fazer por ellos los libros de nuevo, o para emendar los que tovieren escritos. E tal tienda o estación como ésta, non la debe ninguno tener, sin otorgamiento del rector del estudio. E el rector, ante que le dé licencia para esto, debe fazer esaminar primeramente los libros de aquel que devía tener la estación, para saber si son buenos, e legibles, e verdaderos. E aquel que fallare que non tiene tales libros, no le debe consentir que sea estacionario, nin logue a los escolares los libros, a menos de ser bien emendados primeramente«.

34 Jokisch, *Islamic Imperial Law*, however, has challenged this view as he argues that classical Islamic law was originally conceived as an imperial law drafted »on the drawing board by a couple of state jurists in Baghdad« under the instructions of caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd (786-809/170-193). I find this view extremely stimulating, although it has been recently criticized by specialists and, therefore, in the following discussion I will stick to the traditional interpretation.

35 Robson, Ḥadīth.

36 J. Schacht, Introduction to Islamic Law, 5, quoted by Fierro, Codifying the Law, 99.

To make things even more interesting, Maribel Fierro has shown that the notion of the codification of law was not alien to some Islamic rulers. The scholar Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ (d. 756/139) advised the Abbasid caliph al-Manṣūr (754-775/136-158) to prepare a collection of norms and opinions of scholars based on his decision »according to the inspiration«. This shows an early social milieu – Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ was of Iranian origins – in which the possibility of a caliph issuing decrees based on his religious authority had not been totally discarded yet. Later Sunni caliphs would not even have dared to consider such possibility, but this was not the case of the Ismāʿīlī branch of Shiʿism, which established the so-called Fatimid caliphate in north Africa and later in Egypt during the tenth/fourth century. Based on the idea that as *imām*-s they had been divinely appointed and were infallible, the third Fatimid caliph, al-Manṣūr (946-953/334-341), issued a religious compilation »which was probably the first official Fatimid code«. A few years later, his successor caliph al-Muʿizz (953-975/341-365) ordered the famous al-Qāḍī al-Nuʿmān to compose a work called *Daʿāʾ im al-islām* (The Supports of Islam), which was an attempt to systematize aspects related to the roots of law and the Ismāʿīlī traditions. The book was composed by al-Nuʿmān, and caliph al-Muʿizz revised it, rejected what he thought was unsound and corrected its final contents.[37]

Therefore, codification was not an alien concept in the Islamicate social formation. Certain compilations of *ḥadīth* enjoyed a quasi-canonical status, as a result of the relentless work of scholars who performed the social regularities that created the Islamic schools of law. But also, as we have just seen, early Sunni caliphs and later Fatimids were obliquely tempted to adopt quasi-Justinianic ways, which demonstrates that codification fostered by the central goverment was always a possibility. That this possibility never became a feature of most of Islamic Medieval polities brings us again to the central question.

Why Islamic medieval institutions became so different from Western Medieval institutions

The answer that I want to propose for this question perhaps is not the only possible one, but I think it brings us to the right way of understanding the whole issue. It arises from two propositions: the first points to the separation between power and authority that emerged at an early and critical stage in the Islamic polity; the second deals with the distinctive notion of community that emerged as a result of this and helped to shape the self-definition of Muslim societies and the making of the social regularities that performed processes of institutionalization in early Islam.

a) The divergent paths of power and authority in early Islam

I have mentioned above the proposal that Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ made to the first Abbasid caliph in the middle of the eighth/beginning of the third H. century concerning the possibility of promulgating some sort of religious legislation. One century later even such a timid project would have been unthinkable in Sunni Islam – although not in the Ismāʿīlī branch of Shiʿism, as we have seen – because caliphs had ceased to claim the overarching religious authority that once had tinted their office.

The historical process is well known. The early ʿAbbāsid caliphate was a crucial period in the definition of the notions of power and authority within the Islamic Sunni polity. Early ninth/second century Baghdad witnessed a bitter theological dispute over the issue of the createdness of the Qurʾan, in which religious scholars supported the divine essence of the revealed text and strongly disputed the idea that it had been created by God, an opinion held

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37 Fierro, Codifying the Law, 103-112.

by the so-called Mu'tazilites, who were supported by most of the early 'Abbāsid caliphs and particularly by al-Ma'mūn (813-833/198-218). On top of this was the question of man's responsibility for his acts and his power of choice between good and evil, an issue which was advocated by the Mu'tazilites and also strongly denied by religious scholars, who considered this view on free will a limitation upon the power of God.[38]

The fierce rivalry that confronted both sides found expression in some bitter exchanges. Particularly revealing are the comments by caliph al-Ma'mūn in the letters in which he announced the establishment of the *miḥna*, a sort of tribunal which he set up in order to impose his views on the createdness of the Qur'an. The caliph attacked those religious scholars who were seduced by the ignorance of the masses and made a fallacious link between themselves and the *sunna*, making themselves out to be »the people of truth, religion and unity«. Al-Ma'mūn explicitly disdained ordinary people who were uncapable of leading themselves and were in the hands of incapable guides: a contemptous view that was the opposite of the »sunnite communitarian spirit«.[39]

The struggle ended with the defeat of the caliphs – the *miḥna* was abolished fifteen years after al-Ma'mūn's death – and the uncontested supremacy of scholars regarding authority on dogma. The victory of the religious establishment was so complete that later Sunni caliphs had their sway seriously curtailed and had no role in the doctrinal definition of Islam: the bulk of religious authority was in the hands of the *'ulamā'*, scholars who based their social standing on the monopoly of knowledge and drew their prestige from recognition by their peers. The emergence of scholarly networks across the increasing political divisions within the *dār al-islām* tended to reinforce a religious authority which, unlike temporal rule, knew no other boundaries than those of the Muslim community, the *umma*, itself. The result was the development of an ideal notion of authority that resided in the Muslim community, the *umma*, a comprehensive social body shaped by shared religious beliefs with no traces of inequality or special privileges among its ranks. The unfolding of political events confirmed that the *umma* was not politically bound up with its nominal rulers, the caliphs, as significant parts of the community became increasingly detached from their political rule.[40] What really cemented the unity of the *umma* was the acceptance of the religious law, the *sharī'a*, the supremacy of which extended throughout the whole *dār al-islām*. As a matter of fact, »it was to the *sharī'a*, not to the *imām* or the caliph, that the believer owed its allegiance«.[41]

The Muslim *umma* was considered by Islamic theodicy as the final and definitive community, which culminated salvation history. There had been other communities in the past, but as recipient of the message of the Prophet, the unity of the *umma* was quintessential to the contents of his revelation. This was further strengthened by the famous *ḥadīth*: »Truly, my *umma* will never agree together on an error«, which was always mentioned as the main justification for the prevalence of »consensus« (*ijmā'*) as a source of law. This consensus was the result of the activities of the *'ulamā'*, who claimed the monopoly of the authority that sprang from the community.[42] In addition, the peculiar chains of transmission of knowledge among them were a token of the basic agreement that defined the Islamic *umma* despite the existence of political boundaries.

38　Crone and Hinds, *God's Caliph*, 92-99.

39　Sourdel, Politique religieuse, 44; Hynds, Miḥna.

40　Lapidus, Separation of State and Religion, 383; Narotzky and Manzano, The Ḥisba, the Muḥtasib, 36-37.

41　Lambton, *State and Government*, 14.

42　Narotzky and Manzano, The Ḥisba, the Muḥtasib, 35.

As guardians of the understanding of the Revelation, as compilers or interpreters of traditions, as makers of the Islamic legal system, or even as models of pious behaviour, religious scholars consolidated a social ascendancy that ideally presented itself as stemming from the community with no dependence on political power. Obviously, such independence was not always real (as shown, for instance, by the appointment of chief *qāḍīs* by the rulers) but what is relevant here is the self representation of this class, the ideal identity of a group whose members frequently fashioned themselves as moral antagonists of the sovereigns. Rejection of any interaction with political power was illustrated by countless stories showing *‘ulamā’* refusing their appointment as *qāḍī*, lambasting the luxury of the powerful, or sailing with dignity in a sea of corruption, as epitomized by the case of the religious scholar who would not even accept an invitation by a governor to spend a social evening with him, because, as he explained, »were anyone to see me visiting you, he would presume that I was seeking the vanities and goods of this world and would revile me«.[43]

The historical narrative that supported these claims insisted that only the first four caliphs who succeeded the prophet Muḥammad – the so-called *rāshidūn* or orthodox caliphs – had truly held the prerogatives of the imamate, whereas later caliphs had corrupted their power by turning it into worldly kingship (*mulk*). The long term result was that the sunni *‘ulamā’* »did not admit the existence of the state as an institution on its own right and considered the emergence of a temporal state as a separate institution to be a usurpation due to the intrusion of elements of corruption into the community«.[44] What was at stake here was the dilemma of an empire rapidly built upon the high expectations of a salvational creed and routinely ruled under the low practices of human government. Certainly, religious legitimacy was always an essential part in the configuration of power, but this legitimacy was not so much a quality of power itself as the result of moral approval by the religious establishment. Based on a strongly hierarchical and basically secular structure, power in Islamic polities always faced a deficit of legitimacy, a permanent tension with the non-hierarchical authority of the *umma* represented by the *‘ulamā’*, who appealed directly to the Qur’an and the Sunna of the Prophet as a basis for their legal, political or moral judgments.[45]

This tension may explain the widespread tendency of medieval Islamic rulers to build *ex-novo* palatine cities away from their former capitals, where the grip of the religious establishment was always very strong. Although the practice of founding cities by sovereigns went back to ancient times, noteworthy is the number and geographical extension of these new cities, which combined courtly, bureaucratic and military functions with the typical elements of Islamic urban milieus, like markets, mosques, baths or artisan activities. However, the design of these cities was always determined by the predominance of the »palace« that housed the bureaucratic, military and courtly apparatus, which was made up of a complex network of social ties, political relations, legitimising practices and public representations. One of the most spectacular examples of this trend is the complex of Sāmarrā’, where the Abbasid caliph al-Mu‘taṣim (d. 842/227), attempted to move his capital away from Baghdad. Similar cases include the Buwayhid palatine complex of Fanā Khusraw in Fars, the Ghaznavid site of Lashkar i-Bāzār, in modern day Afghanistan, the Aghlabid palatine cities of al-‘Abbāsiyya and

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43   The anecdote refers to Sa‘d b. Mas‘ūd, one of the group of ten scholars sent by caliph ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz to teach law in Qayrawān, and it is reproduced by the eleventh/fifth century scholar al-Mālikī, *Riyāḍ al-Nufūs fī ṭabaqat ‘ulamā’ al-Qayrawān wa Ifrīqiya*, ed. H. Mu’nis, 68; it is quoted by Coulson, Doctrine and Practice, 213.

44   Lambton, *State and Government*, 17.

45   Narotzky and Manzano, The Ḥisba, the Muḥtasib, 37-38.

Raqqā near Qayrawān, or the Umayyad city of Madīnat al-Zahrāʿ near Cordoba, among many others. All of these cities were founded between the second/ninth and the fifth/eleventh centuries and all of them seem to fit into the model of »disembedded capitals«, i.e. capitals created by rulers seeking to found a new power base in a conscious policy of breaking away from existing institutions and patterns of authority.[46]

The diverging paths between power and authority in Islamic polities widened in the course of time. Caliphal rule became more and more temporal in the context of increasingly complex societies, while new forms of government loosely related to the Caliphate emerged at a later stage in the fragmented political landscape of the *dār al-islām*. As political power was clad with illegal taxes, iniquitous administrators, brutal militaries and profligate rulers, the moral authority of the community remained unscathed in theory, and this favoured a vision in which the state »was regarded as a merely transient phenomenon, and although possessed of temporal power, lacking any intrinsic authority of its own«.[47]

It is my contention that the state's deficit of authority and the community's lack of power were a decisive factor in the peculiar configuration of Islamic institutions. Social regularities which gave rise to institutions were always constrained either by the lack of legitimacy of rulers, or by the absence of coercive tools on the part of the community. This deficit of power or authority marked institutional shaping in the *dār al-islām*: institutions that emanated from political, administrative or social power were based, at best, on *de facto* political, administrative or social praxis; at worst, on practices that incorporated highly disruptive elements, like violence (including archival violence); those that derived from authority were rooted, at best, on moral principles, on the values that held together the community, on the consensus that was advocated by the *ʿulamāʾ*; at worst, on religious interpretations that were open to controversy and, therefore, to sectarianism. This is why Islamic medieval institutions usually look less recognizable, less prominent, less assertive than their European counterparts to western eyes moulded on institutional models where such deficit rarely occurred.

In contrast, western medieval institutions were characterized by a blend of authority and power, whose balance varied enormously depending on time and place, but which was always present in their historical shaping. In my opinion, this mixture of power and authority was caused by the emergence in the west of »land-based, and potentially localized, polities« as opposed to the tax-based polities that were prevalent in the *dār al-islām*.[48] In pre-capitalist societies land was always a difficult asset to manage. Its localized exploitation implied tight and continuous control not only over the territory, but also over the people who lived and worked on it. Land-based polities required social regularities, which had as one of their main objectives the creation of forms of legitimate action that could replace the exertion of continuous and localised violence. And this is where authority increasingly met power throughout the western Middle Ages. When facing such a complex resource as land (and the people who lived and worked on it) power was powerless without the unfettered backing of authority. Marc Bloch expressed this with striking clarity when he stated that the feudal system »extended and consolidated these methods whereby men exploited men, and combining inextricably the right to the revenues from the land with the right to *exercise authority*, it fashioned from all this the true manor of medieval times.«[49]

46　Joffe, Disembedded Capitals, 551-552, 568; Airlie, Palace Complex, 263-264.

47　Gibb, Heritage of Islam, I, 12-13, quoted by Lambton, *State and Government*, 17.

48　The distinction between land-based and tax-based polities follows Wickam, *Framing the Early Middle Ages*, 60-61, 144-150.

49　Bloch, *Feudal Society*, 2, 443.

In contrast to the land-based polities, tax states could be run on power resulting from a combination of coercion, administrative control, and collaboration or identification of the wealthy and locally powerful with government officials. Authority was not an indispensable asset here, because in any case most of the taxes raised by the Islamic states were blatantly illegal from the point of view of religious orthodoxy. The wealthy and locally powerful were legitimized by their partnership with the central government, and as for the administrative control, it only required an experienced bureaucracy. Authority resided elsewhere: in the circles of *'ulamā'* who devoted their lives to study legal and religious disciplines and whose loathing of the impious fiscal practices of the government contributed to increase their social standing, as they could weave their own identity, which portrayed an ideal (but not always real) independence from the state.

The different political cultures that emerged from land-based and tax-based social formations help to explain the different shapes that their institutions took. The increasing divergence between authority and power in the Islamic social formation produced institutions which lacked either of these ingredients in their constitution and definition. As a consequence, contenders for social and political dominion always had a limited range of tools at their disposal. The only exceptions were those cases in which movements of religious reform had a political programme that sought to seize power with the backing of authority. Medieval sectarian movements such as the Fatimids, the Almoravids or the Almohads proposed radical reshuffles of existing orders with new model armies and legitimacies. Their inability to change in a significant way the institutional landscapes they encountered is a token of their strenghth. The final section of this paper deals with one element of this institutional landscape.

b) The making of an Islamic institution: the case of the ḥisba

My work with Susana Narotzky, a social anthropologist, has allowed us to show that some peculiar components of the social regularities that sprang from the *umma* affected the shape of institutions attached to the community and were consistent with the terms of its self-definition.[50] This is the case of the *ḥisba*, a central element in Islam, which basically means the obligation that every Muslim has to enforce Good and to do anything to prevent Evil in everyday life, performing the mandate of »commanding the Good and forbidding the Evil«.[51]

This general moral principle became attached to a particular office, the so-called *muḥtasib*, which is documented in Baghdad for the first time during the rule of al-Ma'mūn, a caliph who, as we have seen above, was particularly hostile to the religious authority of the *'ulama'*. The duties of the *muḥtasib* included traditional functions of the market inspector, which were not very different from those held by urban officials called *aediles* and *agoranomoi* in classical times: the accuracy of measures in the market place, the quality of goods sold, fairness in exchange or the physical maintenance of the market environment in terms of hygiene and construction norms. In Byzantium, the *Book of the Eparch*, composed in the tenth century, followed this trend and regulated production standards and exchange norms regarding the activities of notaries, money-lenders, bakers, perfumers, butchers, etc.[52]

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50   What follows is a summary of Narotzky and Manzano, The Ḥisba, the Muḥtasib, 38-54.

51   Cook, *Commanding Right*, 9-10.

52   It is interesting, however, that it has a short proemium in which emperor Leo VI (886-912) remarks God's giving of the Tables of the Law as a means to foster fairness in human transactions and to prevent the supremacy of the powerful upon the weak.

The so-called *ṣāḥib al-sūq* had already existed in early Islam; the functions of the *muḥta-sib* were probably not very different from these predecessors. But in the ninth/second century the office of the *muḥtasib* included not only the duties of market inspection; it also incorporated the obligations of the *ḥisba*, such as making sure that men went to prayer, abstained from alcohol, and refrained from usury, and that women behaved with modesty. The *muḥtasib* was in charge of the markets, but he had also the duty of »commanding the Good and forbidding the Evil«, so that private morality determined public practices.

This aspect of the office was underlined by *ḥisba* treaties written in this period, like the one by a certain Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar (828-901/213-289) who had been born in al-Andalus, but spent most of his life in Qayrawān and compiled a number of responses to consultations he had received on the *ḥisba*. The questions addressed to Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar showed the mixed character of the institution as they touched issues such as the legality of fixing prices for bakers and other food merchants along with the appropriateness of attending parties with people playing musical instruments or of women entering baths or crying at funerals. Lack of observation of any of these rules could result in the expulsion of wrongdoers from the market.[53] Later treaties of *ḥisba* made it clear that the institutional framework of the office addressed the personal responsibility of each individual toward the community under the law of God. And again it has to be stressed the idea that the *umma* extended seamlessly throughout the whole *dār al-islām*.

The ideal of the *ḥisba* was, therefore, to embed into the economic issues of the market the moral aspects of human behaviour. This is where the *muḥtasib* played a decisive role as he was entrusted with the surveillance of the morality of social transactions. The idea was to channel economic practices into the framework of the general well-being of the *umma*, which was, in the last analysis, from where the legitimacy of the *muḥtasib* stemmed. This helps to explain the casuistic approach of the *ḥisba*, which failed to produce rigid institutional frameworks, as its main aim was to incorporate the holy tradition into everyday life and was continuously transforming its practical value. Flexibility of contract and economic behaviour were therefore linked to the enactment of moral practices that defined the identity of the person as a member of the community, of the *umma*.

These values of the *umma* have striking similarities with the concept of »moral economy« as defined by E.P. Thompson in his explanation of the logic of the food riots in eighteenth-century England. Thompson described a set of reciprocal obligations and responsibilities embedded in a ›paternalist‹, patron-client economy that could be at odds with the effects of increasingly open markets and free trade.[54] Contrary to the demise of the moral economy in the West, it is possible to see how enduring and peculiar the Islamic moral economy has been in the fact that it has become institutionalised in the *ḥisba*. This institution has been able to accommodate flexibility while preserving (some say as a mere fiction) an inalienable moral core. The ideal objective pursued by the *ḥisba* produced form, binding the individual and the community in a simultaneous search for wellbeing. In our work, Nartozki and I concluded that in the long term, the resilience of the moral economy instituted by the *ḥisba*, produced different possible articulations of economic development from those in the west, up to the present day.

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53 Garciá Gómez, Ordenanzas del Zoco, 270, 274, 276, 277, 281, 296.

54 Thompson, Moral Economy, 134-136.

Conclusions

Institutions are excellent tools for comparative analysis. The social regularities that perform them produce certain patterns that can be contrasted among different social formations. The textual record left by institutions mentioned above is only one of these patterns, which might also include systems of governance, forms of transmission of knowledge, or even material remains attached to specific institutions. In all these cases it is possible to identify common elements that take different forms because of marked differences in their institutional shaping.

Comparative analysis, however, may be hindered by approaches that seek to highlight the role of institutions as makers of the unique road to western modernity. The New Institutional Economics' school has succeded in identifying the powerful social impact of institutions, but the results of its work have been hindered by its obsession to stress ahistorical categories like failure or success, or efficiency and inefficiency in its analysis of institutional development. This is why our approach tries to stress the conflictual making of institutions as a result of power relations emerging in the Islamic and western social formations.

When this approach is tested regarding a particular case study such as codification, the results are extremely interesting. Modern institutional perceptions have to be abandoned when confronted with historical evidence that shows a high degree of interaction (and dispute) between different actors, such as political power, scholars and judges, whose work on legal commentary, comparison, resolution and disputation was pivotal in the making of institutional continuity. Crucially, these activities can be similarly documented in the Latin West, in Byzantium and in the *dār al-islām*. But their outcome was very different in each case: by the end of the thirteenth century social interactions were producing authoritative legal texts in the west, but there are clear signs that political power had started to control their contents. Byzantine imperial codification did not foster this development; it just provided a system, terminology and rules with no further known legal elaborations. Codification was not an alien concept to the Islamic social formation, but it was the compilation of knowledge that was mainly produced in this institutional process, as a result of which the authority of scholars, who had engaged on legal commentary, resolution and disputation, became reinforced.

Why was this the case? My thesis is that the institutions that emerged in the *dār al-islām* always had a deficit either of power or of authority, as a result of the manifest divergence between these two notions within the Islamic polity from the early ninth/second century onwards. Institutions that emanated from political or social power were based on a *de facto* praxis that was enough to levy resources, but had no authority as it was consistently denied by holders of legitimacy: scholars and men of religion who could claim their role as custodians of the religious legacy enshrined in moral principles. In contrast, the Medieval West produced institutions, which combined varying degrees of power and authority notwithstanding their character or origins. This was the result of the institutional *crystallization* of social relations which, in the last analysis, were always land-based and localized and, therefore, needed a combination of power and legitimacy to enforce their rule successfully. The result was that the community became stronger in the *dār al-islām* and was able to perform distinctive institutions like the ḥisba, which enshrined principles of moral economy that have proved extremely resilient up to the present day.

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Visions of Community
Comparative Approaches to Ethnicity, Region and Empire in Christianity, Islam and Buddhism (400-1600 CE) (VISCOM)

Walter Pohl and Andre Gingrich*

General aims

Visions of Community (VISCOM) is an interdisciplinary project funded by the Austrian Research Fund FWF under the SFB (*Spezialforschungsbereich*) funding line. This includes five project leaders and about 15 other (junior and mid-career) researchers at the University of Vienna and the Austrian Academy of Sciences. VISCOM started in 2011, and has successfully gone through an extension reviewing process in 2014. By consequence, the second funding period runs until February 2019. This format is ideal for in-depth interdisciplinary research in the humanities – eight years offer the opportunity to familiarize each other with current insights, research approaches and methodological problems in the respective disciplines and fields, and to develop workable comparative perspectives. Close long-term cooperation allows addressing issues that have usually been looked at separately: the project looks at ›visions‹ and concepts of community, and at the shaping of communities on the ground; it studies religious frames of reference in connection with social and political practices; it compares a diversity of selected European and Asian case studies in order to find out which level of qualitative comparison may be adequate in which case; and it combines source-based analyses with theoretical and methodological efforts to enable a broader applicability of the project results.[1]

The leading research question is in what ways ideas and discourses that aimed at constructing spiritual communities and transcending existing social groupings came to influence or legitimize the shaping of particular communities: of empires or territorial polities, of tribes or ethnic groups, of urban or rural populations, but also of monastic and other religious communities. How did complex pre-modern societies conceptualize and construct social coherence, both in society at large, and for smaller groupings within them? VISCOM addresses this guiding intellectual question to a number of spatially and chronologically quite distinct cases in medieval Eurasia: early medieval Europe; medieval South Arabia and neighbouring regions; imperial and post-imperial Tibet in its relationship with Buddhist India; high to late medieval Central Europe; and late medieval Dalmatia. Among others, VISCOM deals with Christian constructions of community in early medieval exegetical and eschatological texts;

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1 Pohl, Meanings of Community; Gingrich, Medieval Eurasian Communities.

with forms of identification regarding tribal and Islamic communities in South Arabia; with spiritual texts written in post-imperial Tibetan monasteries; with the production and the uses of an inclusive collection of saints' lives in high and late medieval Austria; or with conflicts and their legal documentation in a fifteenth-century Dalmatian city.

All three ›universal‹ religions could be used to legitimize imperial rule – in the Christian Roman Empire of Late Antiquity, in the early Islamic Caliphate and in the Tibetan Empire of the seventh to ninth centuries. These were powerful aggregates of universal ambitions, but were also torn by their inner contradictions, and their limits soon became obvious. The three religions thus also supported other – regional, urban, local or ethnic – forms of community. With all due caution, the project goes beyond the textual level to reconstruct the social and cultural context of ways in which communities were ›imagined‹. How were political, ethnic, tribal, territorial, civic communities and identities encoded by systems of belief? How did they interact with spiritual groupings that transcended them? How could particular communities be legitimized and distinguished from others by overarching religious discourses? These questions clearly go beyond binary oppositions such as between theory and practice, or between the religious and the secular. They push toward better methods for understanding past societies in which all sides of these oppositions were deeply entangled, but not simply one and the same.

On a first level, therefore, VISCOM relies on diligent disciplinary source work as a basis for comparative studies. On a second level, existing models for community building and their relevance for identity formation in these societies are critically reviewed, and new models developed where necessary. This is where trans- and cross-cultural comparison becomes essential. So far, comparative studies in these historical fields mostly have operated on a rather general level, often relying on handbook knowledge to assess state-building processes or the forms of religious integration in different societies. The interdisciplinary approach of the proposed project makes a more complex and more differentiated interpretation possible. The aim is not only to gain new insights about the past societies under scrutiny, but also to evolve an improved and up-dated understanding of the problems of communities and identities – whether religious, social, ethnic, or otherwise – and of their potential for resistance to, or compliance with imperial polities. On the basis of this focused qualitative comparison, and accompanied by theoretical reflections, questions of comparative methods in interdisciplinary medieval studies in general are addressed.[2] First results of comparative reflections, also based on an international conference, were published in 2015 in a theme issue of the journal ›History and Anthropology‹.[3]

Project parts
The first project part *(VISCOM P02: Christian discourse and political identities in early medieval Europe; PL: Walter Pohl)* addresses the role of Christianity in the shaping of communities in late antique and early medieval Europe. That was a formative period in which important resources for later developments in the history of Europe were accumulated: eventually, this led to the emergence of a complex political landscape shaped by Christian, ethnic, imperial, civic and territorial identifications.[4] Contrary to what historians have long believed, the ethnic (›national‹) identities that were created between c. 300 and c. 1100 AD were

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2   Gingrich, Comparative Methods; Gingrich, Methodology.

3   Gingrich and Lutter, Visions of Community.

4   Pohl, Strategies of Identification; Pohl, Christian and Barbarian Identities.

neither stable nor lasting, although they established models of legitimate polities that could be re-used, for instance by modern nationalism. What developed in the period was a general consensus about the – ethnic and Christian – legitimation of power and about modes of social distinction and integration. A set of differentiated Christian discourses framed political cultures in which the religious sphere was considered (to an extent) as distinct from worldly power and at the same time was seen as deeply intertwined with it.[5] An important goal of this project part is to grasp these tensions between political and religious elements, often resulting in considerable contradictions but also in many attempts to reach a new balance. We try to think in terms of dynamic tensions rather than in juxtaposed and clear-cut categories, to historicize our concepts, and to root this methodological effort in meticulous source-work. In this respect, the comparison with Islamic and Buddhist societies is immensely valuable to pick scholarly routines of interpretation apart, to ask new questions, and to put the history of the Latin West in its wider intercontinental and Eurasian perspectives.[6]

The second project part *(VISCOM P03: South Arabia between Late Antiquity and Early Modernity, PL: Andre Gingrich)* has grouped its main research activities into five topical clusters, including ›Demographic diversity and social organization‹, ›Dynamics between states and tribes‹, ›Genealogy, historiography, and source criticism‹, ›The interconnectedness of religious and tribal visions of community‹, and ›Islamic legal visions of community: war, welfare, and taxes‹. In its focus on medieval Arabic-Islamic Yemeni history, it has addressed a number of important research issues, such as the specific circumstances of the fairly late emergence of Islamic Zaydi ›enclaves of learning‹ in the northern plateaus in the eleventh and twelfth centuries with ensuing processes of establishing hypergamy. Of particular interest is the tenth-century author al-Hamdānī, who lived at a crucial time when the Zaydi imamate in the Yemen was but shortly established and certain tribal communities had to reassert their South-Arabianness in opposition to the new religious movement.[7] Al-Hamdani – especially with his geographic/territorial writing, but also with the genealogical parts of his work al-Iklil – was one of the most prominent figures of this tribal self-assessment. Among other core topics, this project part has addressed the factors underlying the historical longevity of tribal territories in central Yemen. One focus will also be on the extent to which local endogamy and regional isogamy, with a correspondingly strong position of women, provided a key for fairly continuous property relations in agricultural village forms of landholding, thereby perpetuating the acknowledged continuity of communal territorial borders in much of Upper Yemen. Through these social mechanisms, one of the basic forms of rural ›visions of community‹ throughout Upper Yemen's medieval history was maintained and perpetuated with only slow and gradual transformations.[8]

The third project part *(VISCOM P06: Social and Cultural Communities across Medieval Monastic, Urban, and Courtly Cultures in High and Late Medieval Central Europe; PL: Christina Lutter)* aims at looking at central research categories of VISCOM – religion, ethnicity, and empire – from a bottom-up perspective relating them to more operative categories of social belonging effectuated ›on the ground‹ of local and regional societal levels and in inter-regional relations depending both on personal networks and on institutional affiliations. The

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5   Heydemann, Biblical Israel and the Christian gentes.

6   See Pohl *et al., Visions of Community.*

7   Mahoney, Political Construction of a Tribal Genealogy.

8   Gingrich, Envisioning Medieval Communities in Asia.

focus lies on processes of this type of community-building in the thirteenth and fourteenth century and their political significance in neighbouring regions in the South-East of the Holy Roman Empire – Austria and Styria, Bohemia and Moravia. Shared key questions focused on monasteries, towns/cities, and noble/courtly culture as social spaces where forms of belonging were negotiated. They are approached by means of several case studies drawing on different types of source material (narrative texts; material culture; charters, administrative and economic records). First results of this work make clear that the social spaces proposed as units of analysis were even more entangled both in terms of overlapping narrations and media of community representations and in terms of interacting personal as well as institutional networks than originally supposed.[9]

The fourth project part *(VISCOM P07: Society, Statehood and Religion at the Fringe of the Late Medieval Balkans: Case Studies from Dalmatia; PL: Oliver Schmitt)* focuses on Late Medieval Dalmatia whose rural and urban communities are analyzed in two regional case studies (Split and Korčula) on the base of an extraordinary wealth of primary sources. In its theoretical approach, the project part combines the assessment of microhistory with that of *»Lebenswelten«* (life worlds) in order to provide thick descriptions of how community was enacted in social practice and in discourse. The analysis of published normative and unpublished archival evidence underlines the importance of constitutional patterns of community building, especially the gap between patricians and non-patricians, while religious and ethnic elements did not play a major role. Research concentrated on pastoral communities, and the socio-cultural networks of a patrician dynasty and the family of two peasant leaders. First results offer evidence for a high awareness of various layers of social and constitutional belonging: an intimate knowledge of written local law even with non-patricians, enacting communitarian belonging in numerous cases of petty daily conflicts demonstrates that belonging to and being loyal to communities was essential for structuring Late Medieval Dalmatian society. A close scrutiny of sources reveals, however, that constitutional boundaries between communities were permeable and objects of negotiation – a high degree of community awareness did not exclude social and economic contacts across symbolical boundaries. The interplay of tight socio-constitutional rules and their flexible interpretation in social practice were key elements of the analysis.[10]

The fifth project part *(P04: The Tibetan Empire and the Formation of Buddhist Civilisation in the Highlands; PL: Helmut Krasser †/Vincent Eltschinger)* conducts research into the period reaching from the heyday of the Tibetan Empire (seventh to ninth centuries) to the post-imperial context of the Buddhist Renaissance as it gained momentum from the eleventh century onwards. In this latter period especially, the universalist programme of civilisation represented by Buddhism encountered older traditions and principles of community building anchored in a tribal order represented by patrilineal clans.[11] Until well into the post-imperial period, largely regionally-oriented ancestral lineages formed a fundamental constitutive element of the polities of the Highlands. The tensions arising from this encounter proved to be essential for the way Buddhism established itself in the post-imperial period (eleventh to early seventeenth century), as aristocratic hegemonies based around specific Buddhist

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9   Lutter, *Vita communis* in Central European Monastic Landscapes; Lutter, Social Groups, Personal Relations, and the Making of Communities; Gruber, The City as a Commune.

10 Schmitt, Korčula sous la domination; Schmitt, Addressing Community in Late Medieval Dalmatia. See also Gruber *et al., Eine Kulturgeschichte der Überlieferung*.

11 Hazod, Tribal Mobility and Religious Fixation.

monastic networks rose in Central Tibet and beyond. These interrelations between local tradition and Buddhist discourse have thus far been under-represented in modern Tibetology, and VISCOM has enabled the researchers involved to address this question. Based on in-depth studies of primary (and hitherto unedited) source texts, they investigate decisive elements of the political, religious and narrative visions of community that established themselves as a consequence of the Empire and Buddhism. More specifically, studying the Sa Skya monastic network in the region of lower Central Tibet has proved exceptionally valuable. By focusing on the corpus of hagiographical texts emanating from that network, and analysing not only the monastic landscapes they represented but also their self-conception and forms of expression, the research undertaken in this context has augmented the project's interdisciplinary methodology and provided comparative insights about medieval monastic communities in differing cultural settings.

Transversal Working Groups
As regular platforms for interdisciplinary exchange, VISCOM has established transversal working groups, a format that has proven very successful in allowing in-depth comparison. The topics were developed bottom-up on the basis of common interests emerging in disciplinary work. The collaborative volume ›Meanings of Community across Medieval Eurasia‹ assembles substantial results from some of these working groups. The first of these experiences, sketched briefly in the following (and amply treated in the ›Meanings of Community‹ volume), has demonstrated the chances, but also the problems of cross-cultural comparison.

A comparative adventure: ›Enclaves of learning‹[12]
The comparison between Christian and Tibetan monasteries emerged directly from work done in the project parts. In a next step, it led to the inclusion of the so-called *hijra* in Yemen, named after the retreat of the inmates, who often claimed descent from the Prophet Muhammad's family. Medieval Southwest Arabian *hijras* are a largely understudied phenomenon, and have rarely been compared to Western or Tibetan monasteries. At first glance, parallels between these three forms of community impose themselves: localized, self-styled communities, at least notionally bounded against the outside world, focusing on spiritual practice and the transmission of – mostly sacred – knowledge, concerned with the development of religious doctrine, under the protection of surrounding aristocrats or tribal leaders for whom they fulfil religious, legal and social functions, prevalently funded by pious donations, and connected to but also in competition with similar institutions. But the comparison also runs into problems that the working group soon had to face.

The term monastery comes from the Christian tradition, where it coexists with *claustrum*, cloister, which underlines its boundedness. Already the eighteenth-century Jesuit missionaries in East Asia noticed the striking similarities of Buddhist ›monasteries‹ with Western ones. Tibet, however, has no single term for monastery; apart from ›*gompa*‹ there are several other terms which underline different aspects of these institutions. Hijras are in many respects a functional and legal equivalent, but can hardly be called ›monasteries‹ along these lines. It also has to be taken into account that all three forms of religious community saw much variation and changed over time, which also becomes obvious by confronting eighth/ninth century and thirteenth/fourteenth century monasteries in the West. How can the range of phenomena to be compared be conceptualized, and distinguished from similar centres of

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12 See Kramer, Spiritual Communities across Medieval Eurasia, and the other articles in the same section; Hovden and Kramer, Wondering about Comparison.

learning such as cathedral schools or madrasas? After some discussion about possible names for the working group, ›enclaves of learning‹ was chosen to highlight the distinct character of these marked-out areas, and their role in knowledge transfer and learning. However, this label is also debatable, as became clear in the course of the work: boundedness constitutes a point of comparison – how open were the respective communities, legally or pragmatically? In Tibetan Buddhist and European Christian monasteries, membership implied renunciation of the world for life. But that did not impede various contacts with the outside world. Monks and lamas performed services for the surrounding laity and local rulers and visited their households. Similarly, Christian monasteries have been described as ›powerhouses of prayer‹ in a network of exchanges with the surrounding population.

One pragmatic difficulty that arose was the rather different character of the sources, and their very uneven accessibility, which shape our view of these medieval communities. In Tibet as in Yemen, only a fraction of the existing written sources have actually been studied; in both areas, access is currently hampered by the political situation. Early medieval Europe offers mostly well-edited texts, whereas late medieval sources are extremely numerous. On the whole, a great variety of texts shed light on medieval European monasteries – not least, charters and other documents about their economic basis and their transactions with the outside world, a type of source mostly lacking for medieval Yemen and Tibet. What all three cultural spheres have in common are the biographies of founders, members, patrons and holy men, which can broadly be defined as ›hagiography‹. Christian saints' lives mostly abound in stories about miracles, often at the saint's grave. Tibetan texts emphasize a saint's previous rebirths and his relations to a master and his spiritual lineage in order to guarantee the purity of spiritual knowledge. The right Islamic tradition, and its defence against other Islamic currents, takes centre stage in many Yemeni biographies. The Asian traditions focus more on the key role of the spiritual teacher than most Western monastic texts. Christian monasteries reflected more about their institution as such, its spiritual practices, its rule and organisation and its position in society. Thus, the uneven transmission of sources can in itself yield interesting comparative insights.

One Transversal Working Group deals more generally with ›*Spiritual Visions of Community: Texts, Sites and Interactions*‹. Among others, this group addresses the overarching concepts of religious community, such as the ›*populus Christianus*‹ and the ›*umma*‹. Both terms could also be used for much more particular communities – for instance, the population of a specific diocese or parish in the West, or single peoples or tribes (even non-Islamic Turks) in early Islamic usage. One of the more specific topics of the working group is ›Cross-Cultural Perspectives on the End of Times‹.[13] Eschatological ideas were common in all three religious spheres, and some comparative research has already been done in the field. What is interesting in our project design is that we can compare Christian and Islamic ideas of the end of times, both of which were based on the Old Testament and developed in an interesting conjunction with the Alexander romance, with Hindu and Buddhist ones set in quite another context, and based on cyclical perceptions of time. What was the impact of eschatological expectations on feelings of community? Among others, the apocalyptic peoples Gog and Magog could accentuate the othering of enemies, specifically steppe peoples, in both Christian and Islamic contexts.

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13   Wieser *et al.*, Abendländische Apokalyptik; Wieser, Making Ends Meet.

Another Transversal Working Group addresses *Urban Communities and Non-Urban Sites and Centres.* One often-noted difference between Western European and Asian cities has, at least since Max Weber, been the notion of a civic community regulated by law and administered by autonomous bodies, such as city councils, mostly absent from the East.[14] Still, there is more to the comparison, and some relevant themes have already been explored, for instance, functions, urbanism and spatial organization. The Transversal Working Group ›*Tribes and Ethnicity*‹ raises comparative questions that have hardly been addressed so far. Why are some tribal systems so time-resistant, for instance in contemporary Yemen, and can pose serious problems to states in the area? Why could ethnicity become a basis for state-building elsewhere, such as in early medieval Europe? Why did it matter so little in other contexts (such as late medieval Dalmatia)? In what ways religions endorsed or channeled ethnic identities and their political uses obviously differed considerably between our case studies. One issue also raised in this context is ›*Kinship and Gender*‹. Genealogical thinking is an important way in which sedentary and pastoral humans have envisioned social relations and world orders. It can be applied, in a narrower sense, to kinship and descent, but also in a wider sense to a range of other phenomena – for instance, to the spiritual genealogies of Tibetan Buddhist lamas or to the pictorial representations of the filiation of late medieval Christian orders. Significant differences in the role of genealogies emerge between early medieval Europe and the early Islamic world.[15] In South Arabia, tribal leaders often saw their groups as connected to eponymous tribal ancestors, which supported notions of common origins for certain tribes, whereas in the West, this was only sometimes achieved by means of a distant connection with the sons of Noah. In early medieval Europe, genealogies are mainly transmitted for ruling dynasties and the high aristocracy, if at all, whereas the genealogical interest is much better documented in the Islamic World. The frequent political uses of ethnicity in the West, and the relative insignificance of genealogical constructions of social relations may therefore just be two sides of a coin.

In terms of project design, the VISCOM approach to comparison can be summed up as follows:

The case studies to be compared are conducted by specialists within their disciplinary context on the basis of original sources.

We do not compare Christendom, the Islamic and the Buddhist World, or the respective religions, as a whole, but have selected more specific and regionalized case studies.

Comparison requires some understanding of the ways in which conclusions were reached on the basis of the sources in all cases compared.

The phenomena to be compared are constituted in the course of an interdisciplinary dialogue on the basis of preliminary results from the disciplinary studies within the thematic frame of VISCOM.

Modern scholarly concepts are historicized by taking contemporary perceptions and 'native knowledge' into account.

Careful comparison therefore is an open process, and takes time.

There should be the opportunity to reflect on the comparative process and its methodological implications as an integral part of the research.

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14   Gruber, The City as a Commune.

15   Pohl, Genealogy; Mahoney, Political Construction of a Tribal Genealogy; Gingrich, Medieval Eurasian Communities.

The ambition of VISCOM is to cover a broad range of historical research from work with the sources, their critique and their interpretation, to addressing large issues with the help of comparative studies, accompanied by methodological reflection.

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The Legal Status of
Religious Minorities in the
Euro-Mediterranean World (RELMIN)

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One of the key challenges facing Europe since the end of the Second World War has been to confirm and protect the rights of minority religious groups: Jews in particular, but also Catholics or Protestants (in countries where one or the other group is a minority) and members of other religions who have immigrated into the European Union: Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs and others. The freedom to practice one's religion is a fundamental right inscribed in the laws of the Union and of its member states. Yet in practice, religious expression is perceived differently in various member states and by the members of the diverse religious communities that cohabit in those states. The wearing of a Sikh Turban, a Catholic Holy Week procession, or the call of a muezzin issuing forth from a loudspeaker atop a minaret: each such public expression of religion poses a series of questions involving distinctions between public and private spheres, between religious and cultural symbols, between the identities of religious communities and national polities. The situation is complicated by two contrasting but not mutually exclusive phenomena: an increasing secularization of European societies and a reaffirmation of religious identities. While the broad principles of religious freedom are universally acknowledged, the contours of that freedom in the daily lives of Europeans of all religions (or without religion) vary from one member state to another and are frequently subjects of debate and polemics.

The issues of religious diversity and of the regulation of pluralistic European societies are not new. On the contrary, religious diversity in Europe is grounded in the practice of Christian and Muslim states of the European Middle Ages. In the Christian Roman Empire of the fifth and sixth centuries, emperors banned paganism yet allowed Jews limited freedoms, creating a protected but subordinate status for the empire's Jewish subjects. In the wake of the Muslim conquests of much of the former Roman/Byzantine Empire, Muslim rulers accorded to Jews and Christians the status of *dhimmī*s[1], protected minorities that enjoyed broad religious freedoms and judicial autonomy, but whose social and political status was inferior to that of Muslims. In Christian kingdoms of medieval Europe, Jews (and in some cases Muslims) were accepted as subordinate minorities who could maintain their synagogues and mosques and openly practice their religions. Towards the end of the Middle Ages, the status of these religious minorities became increasingly precarious in many European states: minorities faced violence and often expulsion: this is the case for Christians and Jews in Almohad Spain (twelfth and thirteenth centuries), for Jews in many medieval and early modern states, and for Muslims in Sicily (thirteenth century) and Spain (fifteenth and sixteenth centuries).

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1 The Arabic transliteration follows the guidelines of UNGEGN (United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (1972), cf. http://www.eki.ee/wgrs/rom1_ar.pdf (retrieved 10 June 2015).

A rich and diverse corpus of legal texts dealing with religious minorities

The legal status of these minorities in European societies, precarious as it at times proved to be, was grounded in fundamental legal and sacred texts and in the traditions of learned commentaries to those texts. A number of imperial laws concerning Jews were promulgated in the fourth and fifth centuries and subsequently were reissued in the *Codex Theodosianus* promulgated by Theodosius II in 438. Various laws decree protection of synagogues, respect for the Sabbath (Jews may not be summoned to court on a Saturday), etc. Moreover, a hierarchy of Jewish officials was recognized and given, quite explicitly, the same privileges as the high officials of the Christian church, creating what Amnon Linder has called a ›Jewish Church‹[2]. It has often been posited that legal restrictions on Jews are driven by theological considerations. A so-called ›Augustinian doctrine‹ of Judaism relegated Jews to a protected but subordinated social and legal status. In various works, Augustine addresses the role of Jews in Christian society. In the *City of God*,[3] he explains that the Jews who put Jesus to death and failed to believe in him were in consequence crushed by the Romans and sent into exile among the nations. Since they are found everywhere, they serve as witnesses, ›living letters of the law‹: proof in the flesh both of the truth of the scriptures which they preserve in the original Hebrew and of the humiliation meted out by Christ to those of his people who refuse to recognize Him as their Lord. While Christian heretics (such as the Donatists) should be compelled to conform to the Catholic faith, Jews should be allowed to live in peace among Christians. They preserve in error the ancient covenant and through their error, and their subservient place in Christian society, serve as unwitting witnesses to the superior truth of Christianity. Moreover, the Jews will, of their own will, massively convert to Christianity at the end of time: this, indeed, will be one of the signs that the end is near. For Jean Juster, the 4th- and 5th-century emperors translated this theological vision into a legal programme, creating a protected and inferior legal and social status for Jews in a now Christian Roman Empire.[4] Yet in fact, as Capucine Nemo-Pekelman has shown, these Christian emperors are in no way establishing a coherent, theologically centred Jewry law: rather their laws are more often than not reacting to specific situations at the request of various individuals—sometimes bishops or imperial officials, sometimes Jews.[5] When the jurists working for Theodosius II codify these laws, they do indeed group most of them together in a chapter devoted primarily to Jews, showing an attempt to lay the groundwork for specific restrictions concerning Jews. If anything, it is the theologians, such as Augustine, who are responding to social and legal realities and not the other way around: confronted with Emperors who issued legal guarantees to Jews, they found theological justifications for a social status quo that they had not chosen, that explained why Christians allowed Jews to live in their midst.[6]

In Muslim societies, *Qur'ān* and *Ḥadīth* define the status of the *dhimmī*, protected minorities (principally Jews and Christians). This status on the whole accorded them protection from the violence and expulsions that often faced Jews and Muslims in late medieval Europe. Hundreds of legal texts from Muslim Spain, Sicily and elsewhere testify to the role of religious minorities and to the legal questions posed by their daily relations with the Muslim

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2   Linder, The Legal Status of the Jews in the Roman Empire, 157.

3   Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XVIII : 46.

4   Juster, *Les Juifs dans l'Empire romain*.

5   Nemo-Pekelman, *Rome et ses citoyens Juifs.*

6   I have developed this argument in greater detail in Tolan, Lex alterius.

majorities. *Fatwās* (judicial consultations) and *ḥisba* manuals (regulations concerning marketplaces and urban space) deal with everything from the reliability of Jewish and Christian witnesses in court trials to dress restrictions. Some of these texts also deal with the situation of Muslims who found themselves in the position of minorities among Christians, whether temporarily (on Italian ships, for example) or permanently (under the dominion of Christian kings of Sicily or Spain).

While Jews were everywhere the minority, their relations with the adherents of other religions were also based on sacred texts (the Torah) and on the legal opinions of the Talmud. Various Jewish authors of Medieval Europe, from Cordova to Krakow, in texts such as biblical commentaries, letters, or responsa, offered legal advice to fellow Jews on the proper and legal limits to relations with Christians and Muslims.

There is thus a rich and varied corpus of texts dealing with the legal status of religious minorities in pre-modern Europe. These texts, in Latin, Arabic, Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic (and also in Medieval Spanish, Portuguese, and other European vernaculars), are dispersed in libraries and archives across Europe.

The ERC project RELMIN (www.relmin.eu) has created a database containing many of these texts. The database (http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin) contains texts in the original languages (principally Latin, Arabic, Greek and Hebrew, but also in the European vernacular languages). The database is consultable in English and in French: each text is translated and a brief commentary, explaining its historical significance, is included, as are references to the relevant bibliography. These sources are fully searchable, in the various languages used. The use of thematic keywords will allow comparative searches of texts from different religious traditions (e.g., ablutions or dietary restrictions). The website also allows access to the various seminars and conferences organized by the project (text, audio and video), to the proceedings of the conferences, and to other articles posted by members of the RELMIN research team. This database provides a unique and valuable tool for researchers in the history of minority law and in the history of interreligious relations. It serves as an eloquent testimony to the permanence and ubiquity of interreligious cohabitation in Europe.

Interdisciplinary and cross-cultural research on the status of minorities in pre-modern Europe
RELMIN's team and collaborators have embarked on the comparative study of these sources and have explored their implications for research in the history of interreligious relations. The database was put together by a team including myself, 4 doctoral students, 13 post-docs and a number of invited guest scholars. The team of researchers assembled in Nantes is interdisciplinary (including scholars in law, religion, history, Greek, Latin, and Arabic) and international (with members from France, Spain, the UK, Israel, Algeria, Italy, Poland, Turkey, Canada, and the USA).

In March 2011, I organized with Maribel Fierro a conference at the Centro Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC) in Madrid a conference on *The Legal Status of Ḏimmī-s in the Islamic West*; we subsequently published the acts of this conference as the first volume in our collection Religion and Law in Medieval Christian and Muslim Societies with Brepols publishers.[7] There had been no previous volume devoted to the legal status of *dhimmī*s in al-Andalus and the Maghreb. This is all the more surprising since the treatment of *dhimmī*s, in Muslim Spain and in the rest of the classical *dār al-islam*, has provoked interest and con-

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7   Fierro and Tolan, *The Legal Status of dimmi-s*.

troversy since the nineteenth century. Indeed, for some nineteenth-century scholars of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (Jewish studies), Muslim Spain evoked a golden age, when Jews benefited from tolerance and as a result contributed fully to the rich intellectual and cultural life of Andalusian society. These scholars contrasted the situation in al-Andalus with that of Christian Europe, which they often saw as a vale of tears punctuated by persecution and expulsion. In Peninsular historiography, debate about the »tolerant« or »intolerant« nature of medieval Muslim and Christian societies has often masked controversy about the roots of problems of contemporary Spain: praising Muslim tolerance and heaping the blame for Spain's problems onto the Catholic Inquisition was a good way to attack the modern Spanish Catholic church and the conservative regimes closely aligned with it.

But more fundamentally, our work was useful in showing the diversity and complexity of *dhimmī* communities and their relationships with Muslim rulers. The articles collected here call into question the textbook images of a *dhimmī* system, supposedly based on the Pact of 'Umar, traditionally dated to the reign of 'Umar I (634-644), which some historians date to that of 'Umar II (717-20), in fact a document whose most extensive written versions date from the twelfth century.[8] This text purports to be a letter from the Christian community of an unnamed Syrian city to the Caliph 'Umar. The Christians submit themselves to the Caliph's rule and promise not to proselytize, to build new churches or monasteries, to hold religious ceremonies in public, or to display crosses outside their churches. They are not to prevent anyone from converting to Islam. They are not to imitate the dress of Muslims, but to wear specific and recognizable clothing, in particular the *zunnār*, a distinctive belt. They also commit themselves to providing hospitality for traveling Muslims, to offer them their seats, and to show them deference. According to the traditional narrative, this *dhimma* system, elaborated by the Umayyads in eighth-century Syria, was systematically applied to Christian and Jewish communities in the lands conquered by Muslims (and subsequently to other communities to which *dhimmī* status was accorded). A key aspect of the system (curiously omitted from the Pact of 'Umar) is specific taxation: above all the *jizya* (capitulation tax), but also the *kharāj* (tax on land held by non-Muslims). Antoine Fattal's groundbreaking monograph on the *dhimmī* system, published in Lebanon in 1958, has remained the standard treatment of the question for over fifty years.[9]

Yet in fact when one looks closely at the early legal texts or chronicles from both the Mashreq and the Maghreb, there is little evidence for a standard, uniform *dhimmī* system, but rather a wide variety of local adaptations. Even for the *jizya*, often presented as the linchpin of this system, there is no standard model. For Alfonso Carmona, the classic *jizya* model (to the extent one ever existed) was in fact a product of the Abbasids: he shows how in the period of the Islamic conquest of Spain, fiscal policy towards conquered Christians was quite varied and often based on practical considerations and respect for local traditions. The »*jizya*« could at times be imposed on individuals but also on groups; sometimes it was levied on lands (blurring the distinction between *jizya* and *kharāj*).[10] As Annliese Nef shows, the *jizya* was not systematically levied either in seventh-century Egypt or in ninth-century Sicily.[11]

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8   Oulddali, Ahmed, Notice n°1068, projet RELMIN, Le statut légal des minorités religieuses dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen (Ve- XVe siècle), edition électronique Telma, IRHT, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes – Orléans. Retrieved on 16 May 2015: http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin/extrait1068/.

9   Fattal, *Le statut légal des non-musulmans.*

10 Carmona, Doctrina sobre la ǧizya en el Occidente islámico pre-moderno.

11 Nef, Le statut des ḏimmī-s dans la Sicile aghlabide.

Marina Rustow mentions cases of exemptions from *jizya* accorded to individual *dhimmī*s in Mamluk Egypt.[12] Fifteenth-century Tlemcen *muftī* Qāsim al-ʿUqbānī was asked whether the *jizya* is to be imposed on all Jews or only those who live in the cities; as one might expect, he affirmed the principle that it applied to all male Jews who lived as *dhimmī*s under the protection of Muslim rulers: but the very fact that the question was raised, as Elise Voguet suggests, indicates that rural Jews were often in practice exempted from paying.[13]

The same wide variance in practice could be shown in other purported stipulations of the *dhimmī* system. Fifteenth-century Tlemcen *muftī* Sīdī Muḥammad al-ʿUqbānī affirms that local Jews ride horses and wear turbans, just like Muslims (as Elise Voguet shows). Or take the example of church bells: one frequently reads that Christians were prohibited or discouraged from bell-ringing. In fact, here too, practice varied widely, as I have shown elsewhere.[14] Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr's eleventh-century manual *al-Kāfī fī fiqh ahl al-madīna*, analyzed by Christian Müller, which details restrictions on *dhimmī*s, says nothing about restrictions on bell-ringing; nor are *dhimmī*s prohibited from riding horses (although they may not own them).[15]

The sixth to eleventh centuries are a crucial formative period for Jewish communities in Byzantium and Latin Europe: this is also a period for which sources are scarce and about which historians have often had to speculate on the basis of scant evidence. Just as there had been no volume on the status of *dhimmī*s in the Islamic west, there seemed a need for a fresh synthesis on the legal status of Jews in this key period. For this reason I organized with Nicholas de Lange, Capucine Nemo-Pekelman and Laurence Foschia a conference in the Royal Abbey of Fontevraud in October 2011 on »Jews in Early Christian Law: Byzantium and the Latin West, 6th-11th centuries« (published as volume 2 in the RELMIN series).[16] The legal sources studied in this volume provide a relative wealth of textual material concerning Jews, and for certain areas and periods are the principal sources. While this makes them particularly valuable, it also makes their interpretation difficult, given the lack of corroborative sources. When the council of Vannes in 465 prohibits Christian clerics from sharing meals with Jews, does this mean that there were Jews in Brittany and that clerics had been eating with them? Or does this prohibition reflect debates among the bishops present, motivated by theological concerns rather than practical issues?[17] The lack of context (and notably of any evidence of Jewish presence in Brittany before 1209), makes the latter answer more probable, but still uncertain.

Indeed, some historians have doubted the very existence of Jewish communities north of the Alps and the Pyrenees before the eleventh century.[18] Could the Jew of some of the legal texts be a straw man, a »hermeneutical Jew« like that of many Christian anti-Jewish polemical works? While the Jew with whom one should not eat (according to Church councils such as

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12 Rustow, The Legal Status of ḏimmī-s in the Fatimid East.

13 Voguet, Les communautés juives du Maghreb central.

14 Tolan, *Sons of Ishmael*, 147-160.

15 Müller, Non-Muslims as Part of Islamic law.

16 Tolan *et al.*, *Jews in Early Christian Law.*

17 Nemo-Pekelman, Capucine, Notice n°40867, projet RELMIN, Le statut légal des minorités religieuses dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen (Ve- XVe siècle), edition électronique Telma, IRHT, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes – Orléans. Retrieved on 16 May 2015: http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin/extrait40867.

18 This was the view put forward by Michael Toch in his unpublished oral contribution to the Fontevraud conference, based on arguments developed in the final chapter of Toch, *The Economic History of European Jews*. See also Toch, The Jews in Europe.

that of Vannes) may well correspond to theological concerns (and hence to »hermeneutical« Jews), some stipulations in the Carolingian legislation discussed by Philippe Depreux clearly do not: when various ninth- and tenth-century legal texts use formulas such as *»Iudei et ceteri mercatores«* (»Jews and other merchants«), they clearly mean not Old Testament Jews, but real individuals present in Carolingian towns – indeed, the formulation shows that the Jew is seen as the merchant *par excellence*.[19] Yet Jewish settlement in the Empire was uneven: principally in Italy and southern Gaul (including Lyon), with only occasional evidence of the presence of Jews, principally travelling merchants, in the northern and eastern parts of the Empire. It is only in the eleventh century that Jews begin to settle north of the Alps in any significant numbers, in particular in the towns of the Rhine valley, with the encouragement of local authorities, lay and ecclesiastical.

It is also impossible to know, in the great majority of cases, to what extent these laws were enforced and obeyed. What are we to make of the fact that certain measures are repeated frequently? For Ralph Mathisen, the prohibitions of intermarriage and of Jewish office-holding, in fifth and sixth-century imperial legislation, were ineffectual: the repetition of these measures is a sign of the impotence of the emperors to enforce the laws, rather than an indication of real Jewish social and legal inferiority. The severe anti-Jewish laws proclaimed by Visigothic councils and kings were sporadically enforced at best.[20] Yet for Bat-Sheva Albert, the repetition of certain measures (including those concerning Jews) could above all indicate a king's (or a council's) need to reaffirm certain legal principles, and does not necessarily indicate whether or not the laws were respected.[21] Thus repeated laws against Jews owning Christian slaves may say more about the zeal of the Christian legislators than about social realities. As Rachel Stocking shows, when the third council of Seville (c. 624) reacts to accusations that forced converts are presenting their Christian neighbors' children for baptism to avoid baptizing their own children, we cannot know the truth behind these allegations – but it is clear that the bishops take advantage of the accusation to affirm their authority.[22]

Yet in other cases we have clear evidence that many laws were not observed – even by the kings that proclaimed them. In Visigothic Spain, councils and kings regularly ruled that Jews could not be placed in positions of authority over Christians; yet King Erwig (680-687), in reiterating these prohibitions, allows an exception if such employment is in the public interest – a rather large loophole. In other cases we have exemptions or privileges granted to specific Jews, individuals or communities: The imperial letters of protection for individual Jews, granted by Louis the Pious' court around 825, which for Johannes Heil were a reaction to attempts to challenge the Jews' economic situation by baptizing and thereby removing their servants from their households.[23] Indeed, if these Jews took the trouble to seek out these privileges and the emperors to grant them, they must have responded to real needs. We know that in the Middle Ages the power of justice was a source of income, both through fines and through granting (or selling) of exemptions or privileges: that certainly seems to be the case here.

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19   Depreux, Les juifs dans le droit carolingien.

20   Mathisen, The Citizenship and Legal Status of Jews in Roman Law.

21   Bat-Sheva, Les communautés juives.

22   Stocking, Forced Converts, »Crypto-Judaism«, and Children.

23   Heil, Getting them in or Keeping them out?

The cities and towns of Europe and the Mediterranean World constituted a crucial space to study interreligious relations in the Middle Ages: both because it was above all in cities that members of different faiths lived cheek by jowl and had to work out how to compromise between the requirements of their religious law and the realities of day-to-day interaction, and because the sources which we have at our disposition give a large place to the cities, and in particular to the urban elites of the different religious communities. For these reasons Stéphane Boissellier and I thought it worthwhile to organize a conference on »Religious cohabitation in European towns (10th-15th centuries)« at the Fondation des Treilles in Tourtour, Provence (published as volume 3 of our Brepols collection).[24]

We dealt principally, though not exclusively, with legal sources: imperial and royal laws, urban charters and statutes, canon law, legal commentaries, learned legal opinions (in the form of *fatwās* or *responsa*), etc. The presupposition was that these sources, underused by social and urban historians, could yield precious evidence of day to day contact between members of different religious communities living in the same city. The subjects ranged from the twelfth century to the fifteenth and from Portugal to Hungary, Crete and the Mamluk sultanate. Yet the cities of this broad region faced similar problems and challenges, and their legal scholars (in general members of the religious elite) worked under similar constraints and with similar methods and textual sources. Hence it is indeed possible to draw at least tentative conclusions on several key issues. First of all, legal texts can provide indications of the range and types of interreligious contact, and of the tensions or legal problems such contact could cause. Secondly, and somewhat paradoxically, such contact is attested principally in the texts of laws that attempt to limit or control it. In the absence of corroborating evidence, we may wonder to what extent such laws were effective in limiting and controlling contact, and indeed to what extent they reflect real social concerns of an urban elite, rather than abstract intellectual exercises by a clerical clique.

These cities are politically very different: some dominated by princes who rule over a large territory, some run by an oligarchy of prominent citizens. They all have complex and stratified social hierarchies: our focus on the role of religious minorities must not blind us to the fact that religious difference is merely one distinguishing factor (albeit an important one) among many: wealth, birth, language, profession, etc. Often these hierarchies are inscribed in the very monuments and layout of the city: in the case of »colonial« Venetian Candia (Heraklion), as Aleida Paudice shows, Venetian Catholic monuments dominate the city-scape, with distinct (and subordinated) spaces for Greek Christian and Jewish communities.[25] Space is conditioned to reflect these hierarchies, as is time: Elisheva Baumgarten shows, through the example of medieval Hebrew texts dealing with issues of calendars and chronology, that Ashkenazi Jews were familiar with the rhythms of the Christian calendar, the various feast days of the saints, etc.[26] Jews of Crete or Ashkenaz recognized the spatial and temporal symbols of their own subordination to Christian rule, which did not of course prevent them from providing subversive readings of the dominant discourse (for example, by denigrating the saints to whom churches were built and whose feast days were celebrated).

We have seen that the sources that tell us most about interreligious social relations are often legal texts that attempt to regulate them: how can we know to what extent (if any) these attempts were successful? Tahar Mansouri demonstrates how commonly Mālikī `*ulamā'* in

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24 Tolan and Boissellier, *Religious Cohabitation in European Towns.*

25 Paudice, Religious Identity and Space in Venetian Candia.

26 Baumgarten, Christian Time in a Jewish Miscellany.

the Maghreb criticized Muslim rulers for favoring Jews and Christians, in disrespect of the proper hierarchy between Muslims and *dhimmī*s.[27] Pierre Moukarzel paints a similar picture in the Mamluk sultanate: men of religion objected to the privileges shown to European merchants: allowing them to eschew sumptuary laws and ride horses, permitting them to be judged by the sultan's court and not the qāḍī, etc.[28] Were these merchants to be considered *dhimmī*s? Foreigners protected by an *amān*? Hence one of the frequent themes of many of these legal sources, from *fatwās* and *responsa* to papal bulls, is that the proper hierarchies between faithful and infidel are not being respected.

Indeed, many jurists and scholars seem to rail to little effect against firmly entrenched social practices. Two Mālikī *fatwās*, one from the twelfth century and one from the fifteenth, discourage Muslim traders from venturing to the *dar al-ḥarb*, as Dominique Valérian demonstrates, but this did not prevent Muslim merchants from traveling to European ports.[29] Katalin Szende notes that some Hungarian royal laws concerning Jews represent an attempt to respond to papal and episcopal pressures more than they reflect any real royal will to regulate or restrict Christian-Jewish interaction.[30] It is moreover often difficult to know when these texts reflect lived social reality and when they merely are intellectual exercises concerning hypothetical cases. When (in Farid Bouchiba's article) Ibn Rushd discusses the slaughter of an animal jointly owned by a Muslim and a *dhimmī*, we seem to be in the presence of an interesting example of economic partnership.[31] Yet when the same author discusses whether or not Muslims can eat grasshoppers that have been killed by Mazdeans, we realize we are in an intellectual exercise based on the commentary of authoritative Eastern texts, far from any social realities of Andalusian cities.

Various European polities expelled their Jewish or Muslim subjects between the twelfth and seventeenth centuries. The expulsions were recorded and commemorated by Jews and Muslims in exile, for whom the experience of expulsion and exile became a touchstone for the construction of community identities in their new homes. With a group of scholars from Budapest and Heidelberg working on the dynamics of diasporas we organized a conference at the Central European University in Budapest in June 2013 on *Expulsion and Diaspora Formation: Religious and Ethnic Identities in Flux from Antiquity to the Seventeenth Century*.[32] The questions we addressed were: How does the experience of expulsion create, deconstruct, or transform group identities? To what extent do diasporas create cultural identities bridging large spans of time and space? How do the far-flung elements of those diasporas see their links to each other and to the (real or mythicized) land of origin?

A wave of expulsions of Jews in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries amounts to what one could call a first age of expulsion. In 1182, Philippe II expelled the Jews from the French Royal domain. In the following decades, Jews were expelled from Brittany (1240), Gascony (1287), Anjou (1289), England (1290), and France (1306): not to mention many more local expulsions, notably from English and French towns.[33] Some of these expulsions were short-

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27 Mansouri, Les dhimmis dans les documents de chancellerie.

28 Moukarzel, La législation des autorités religieuses et politiques.

29 Valérian, La présence des musulmans étrangers dans les ports chrétiens.

30 Szende, Laws, Loans, Literates.

31 Bouchiba, Cohabitation religieuse et pratiques alimentaires.

32 Tolan, Expulsion and Diaspora Formation.

33 For a comparative study of the expulsions of 1290, 1306 and 1492, see Kriegel, Mobilisation politique et modernisation organique.

lived, others long-lasting; the causes and consequences of each are different. Yet each would confirm the stereotype of the Jew as essentially rootless, a foreigner who, since he or she is not part of the community, can be expelled from it. While each of these events is different, they occur against a common background of economic and social upheaval and of growing violence against Jews. From the late fifteenth century, fresh expulsions compelled Jews to leave Spain (1492), Portugal (1497), Provence (1501), and various Italian and German towns. Muslims were expelled from Sicily in 1224 and settled in the southern Italian town of Lucera; in 1300, King Charles I sold into slavery the Lucera Muslims who refused to accept baptism. Muslims were expelled from the various Iberian kingdoms over the course of the sixteenth century and in 1609 the Moriscos (nominally Christian descendants of Spanish Muslims) were in turn expelled.

The expelled arrive in a new host society, which often welcomes them with some ambivalence, if not with suspicion or hostility. How do the new involuntary immigrants integrate their new homelands? This of course depends on a wide variety of factors: language, diet, religion, etc. And of course small numbers integrate more readily than large groups, which are more likely to cling to a specific group identity within the larger society. An important element is the attitude of the authorities of the new lands of exile. A Diaspora community, in theory, conserves its distinct identity (linguistic, cultural, religious, etc.) within a foreign host society. But in fact, of course, the degrees of assimilation and acculturation vary widely, and over time certain diaspora communities blend into the host societies completely. Others keep a distinctive identity while adopting important elements of their host cultures: within the Medieval Jewish diaspora, Iraqi Jews and English Jews resemble in many ways more their respective host cultures than they do each other. Indeed the Medieval Jewish experience is a prime example of what some scholars have referred to as a diaspora within a diaspora. After 1492 the notion of *galut* (exile), which traditionally referred to Jews' exile from Israel, came to refer to their new exile from the Iberian Peninsula, referred to as *galut sefarad*. In other words, it seems that common sentiment of a diaspora culture in exile grew up through difficult adjustments to new host communities. The extent to which the Sefarad immigrants succeeded in imposing their own distinct culture is testified by the »Sefardization« of many other Mediterranean Jewish communities of the Ottoman Empire and North Africa.

Iberian Muslims, like their Jewish counterparts, formed a new diaspora community in areas where their numbers were significant (in parts of North Africa in particular). For Jewish and Muslim descendants of these exiles (or for those who identified themselves as such), the narratives of expulsion and persecution became founding myths of a communal or diasporic identity. They also became stock figures of European literature: the rootless Morisco is already a striking figure in Cervantes; he will be rediscovered by European and American romantics of the nineteenth century, whose travels to Andalusia become the occasion for musings on a lost world of beauty and chivalry. Expulsion and its memory live on in narratives that often seek to simplify or deny all the hybridity and ambiguity of the diaspora or exile status: caught between isolation and assimilation, between breaking with the past and dreaming of its renewal.

2013 would have marked the 100th birthday of Bernhard Blumenkranz. Born in Vienna, Blumenkranz fled the Anschluß and settled in Switzerland and (after the war) France, where he initiated a series of groundbreaking studies on the history of medieval Jewish-Christian relations. The anniversary was the occasion for us to reflect on the legacy of Blumenkranz, his lasting impact on work in the field and the directions the field has moved since his death in 1989. With Vienna-based colleagues Martha Keil and Philippe Buc, we organized a conference there bringing together prominent scholars in the field from France, Austria, other

European countries, North America and Israel: the proceedings have been published as volume 6 of our series.[34] The volume brings together 16 essays representing new research in fields in which Blumenkranz was a pioneer: the relationship between the Medieval Church and Jewish communities, the question of proselytization and conversion of Jews, the cartography of Jewish communities, and the representation of Jews in Christian art.

Throughout the RELMIN project, we have faced the problem of the functions of law: to what extent did laws concerning religious minorities reflect real social practice and to what extent were they reflections of abstract religious and legal principles? We addressed these issues in a conference organized at the Casa Arabe in Córdoba in April 2014 entitled »Law and Religious Minorities in Medieval Societies: between Theory and Praxis« (publication in 2015 as volume 7 of the RELMIN series). We examined a number of cases in which jurists engaged in the building or maintenance of barriers between majority and minority communities: prohibitions or restrictions of Christian participation in Muslim funerals, festivals, etc. (as Herman Teule shows); restrictions on marriage; restrictions on »infidels« bathing with the faithful in public baths (Marisa Bueno). Language use could also help minority communities express and consolidate legal traditions and institutions: as David Wasserstein shows, Jewish communities in the Muslim world had more success doing this (through the use of Hebrew & Aramaic) than did Christian communities (who tended to adopt Arabic as a liturgical language).

While such legal documents show a will to separate and distinguish along religious divides, others show attempts to incorporate members of other faith groups into legal systems. For Mark Cohen, *dhimmī* legal systems in twelfth-century Egypt are an integral part of overarching Muslim legal system; one could almost say that Maimonides serves as a Jewish mufti. While *shari'a* in theory prohibited *dhimmī*s from appearing as accusers or witnesses in Muslim courts, various Maliki jurists strive to find appropriate and specific ways for *dhimmī*s to swear oaths and more generally to participate in the legal system (Camilla Adang; Delfina Serrano). And Ana Echevarria examines the parallel integration of mudejar legal system into Castilian legal system. Moreover, the legal institutions and practices of the dominant culture often have a profound impact on the minority legal systems: Herman Teule gave examples of how Syrian Christian law is influenced by Muslim law, while Johannes Pahlitzsch examines the adoption and adaptation of the *waqf* system into Melkite law.

Our final conference, in October 2014, brought together 38 colleagues from all over the world for a series of lectures and round-table debates in which we drew conclusions from our five years of collective work in a number of thematic areas: the constitution of authoritative corpus of law in Medieval Jewish, Christian and Muslim societies; understanding the role of religious difference in the establishment of a specific legal status; the use of social criteria to distinguish and separate religious communities; and the question of access to justice by members of religious minorities. The conference acts will be published in 2016.

In addition to the proceedings of the conferences, we are publishing dissertations of the PhD students and post-docs who have worked with RELMIN. Clara Maillard's book, *Les papes et le Maghreb aux XIIIème et XIVème siècles* (RELMIN 4, published in 2014), analyzes over 200 papal letters concerning North Africa. These letters, addressed to Muslim rulers (in particular to Almohad Caliphs), to bishops of Marrakech, to friars resident in North Africa, or to a variety of Christian rulers, are an important source for the history of Christian

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34 Buc *et al., Jews and Christians in Medieval Europe.*

mission to Maghreb and Christian communities there. Her conclusion is that the papacy was guided throughout this period by a flexible pragmatism in its dealings with the Maghreb; this should prove a useful corrective to interpretations of medieval Christian-Muslim relations that exaggerate the role ideology plays in shaping events, even as it illuminates the real limits of the power of later medieval popes.

Youna Masset's *La procédure judiciaire et les minorités religieuses dans la couronne d'Aragon aux XIIème-XIème siècles* (to be published in 2016) examines the place of Muslims and especially Jews in the court system of the crown of Aragon. While in theory Jews and Muslims had judicial autonomy for internal community affairs, in practice this was often compromised both from above (as royal justice expanded at the expense of lower jurisdictions) and from below (as Jews or Muslims unsatisfied with the judgment rendered by Jewish or Muslim judges could and often did appeal to municipal or royal judges).

Finally, two theses examine in detail the place given to *dhimmī*s in two important Mālikī texts from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Farid Bouchiba (*Le statut légal des dhimmī-s en al-Andalus selon les auteurs malikites, VII-X siècles : Étude de la condition juridique du juif et chrétien en terre d'Islam*; to be published in 2016) focuses on the *al-Bayān wa l-taḥṣīl wa l-shar wa l-tawjīh wa l-taʻlīl fī masāʼil al-Mustakhraja,* magnum opus of one of the most important jurists of Islamic Spain, Ibn Rushd al-Jadd (d. 1126), qāḍī of Cairo (and grandfather of the philosopher Averroes). Geraldine Jenvrin (*Élaboration du statut légal du dhimmī dans la doctrine malikite andalouse (XIe-XIIIe): Exégèses coraniques et sciences juridiques*; to be published in 2017) examines the same issues of the place of *dhimmī*s in Islamic society through the perspective of one of the middle ages' principal Qurʼān commentaries, written by Cordoban scholar al-Qurṭubī (d. 1276).

What, then, can be gained from the comparative approach we have taken in RELMIN? Let us look at a few examples, of how these legal texts deal with key issues in interconfessional relations: food and the sharing of meals, sexual relations and clothing restrictions, delimitation of sacred or cultic space, and access to justice. Each of these subjects has been the object of discussion and debate over the five years of the project and the comparative approach has proved fruitful in each case.

Over sixty of the texts in the RELMIN database deal with food in one way or another: which foods one can eat or cannot eat, the possibility (or not) of »contamination« of food or drink through contact with an infidel, the legality (or not) of buying food from an infidel or sharing a meal with him. We have seen that the council of Vannes in 465 prohibits Christian clerics from sharing meals with Jews. Food prohibitions – what one can eat, and above all with whom one can eat – have often been used to mark and separate the faithful from outsiders.[35] Rena Lauer shows how Jewish authorities in Crete worried about the effects of Jews using gentile bake-houses; Farid Bouchiba gives examples of how Mālikī jurists tried carefully to determine which meat was licit, depending on who killed the animal in what circumstances.[36] Ashkenazi Jews often sold cuts of meat that they considered non-kosher (notably the hind quarters) to Christians: either directly to consumers or to Christian butchers. This provokes the ire of various ecclesiastical authorities. The synod of Esztergom in Hungary in the early twelfth century prohibited Christians from buying meat that had been

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35   Freidenreich, *Foreigners and their Food.*

36   Rena Lauer, Jewish Women in Venetian Candia; Bouchiba, Cohabitation religieuse et pratiques alimentaires.

»spurned« by Jews.[37] We find similar prohibitions reiterated by popes such as Innocent III in 1208 and in civil legislation, notably in Catalonia in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[38] We also find Jewish authorities, such as Solomon Ibn Adret of Catalonia, addressing the question of whether meat touched by a gentile butcher is permissible to Jews.[39] While the consumption of meat prepared by *dhimmī* butchers was in theory legal according to Muslim law, it provoked the unease of some Mālikī jurists such as Abū Zayd al-Qayrawānī who discouraged it.[40]

Wine is of course illegal for Muslims but permitted for *dhimmī*s: Adday Hernández López gives an in-depth exploration of the problems posed by the sale of wine, legitimate when between *dhimmī*s but illegal if a Muslim is involved.[41] Christian and Jewish writers addressed the question of whether wine could be corrupted through contact with infidels, rendering it unfit for consumption or for use in the Eucharist.[42] Eating and drinking with infidels posed problems in part because it could lead to other kinds of intimacy. A 1267 synod of the Polish Church ruled:

»We prohibit all Christians of this province under the penalty of excommunication (the following): they should not accept that a Jew or a Jewess to cohabit with them, nor should they dare to eat and drink with them, or dance and hop merrily with them during their weddings or feasts. Christians should not buy meat and other food from Jews, so that Jews, who regard them as enemies, could not fraudulently poison Christians.[43]«

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37 Mazur, Jery, Notice n°254225, projet RELMIN, Le statut légal des minorités religieuses dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen (Ve-XVe siècle), edition électronique Telma, IRHT, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes – Orléans. Retrieved on 15 May 2015: http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin/extrait254225/.

38 Tolan, John, Notice n°30493, projet RELMIN, Le statut légal des minorités religieuses dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen (Ve-XVe siècle), edition électronique Telma, IRHT, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes – Orléans. Retrieved on 15 May 2015: http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin/extrait30493/; Muntane Santiveri, Josep Xavier, Notice n°252412, projet RELMIN, Le statut légal des minorités religieuses dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen (Ve-XVe siècle), edition électronique Telma, IRHT, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes – Orléans. Retrieved on 15 May 2015: http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin/extrait252412/; Muntane Santiveri, Josep Xavier, Notice n°252389, projet RELMIN, Le statut légal des minorités religieuses dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen (Ve-XVe siècle), edition électronique Telma, IRHT, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes – Orléans. Retrieved on 15 May 2015: http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin/extrait252389/.

39 Koryakina, Nadezda, Notice n°252255, projet RELMIN, Le statut légal des minorités religieuses dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen (Ve-XVe siècle), edition électronique Telma, IRHT, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes – Orléans. Retrieved on 15 May 2015: http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin/extrait252255/.

40 Çelebi, Emre, Abī Notice n°252580, projet RELMIN, Le statut légal des minorités religieuses dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen (Ve-XVe siècle), edition électronique Telma, IRHT, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes – Orléans. Retrieved on 15 May 2015: http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin/extrait252580/.

41 Hernández López, La compraventa de vino entre musulmanes y cristianos ḏimmíes.

42 See e. g. Freidenreich, David, Notice n°244091, projet RELMIN, Le statut légal des minorités religieuses dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen (Ve-XVe siècle), edition électronique Telma, IRHT, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes – Orléans. Retrieved on 15 May 2015: http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin/extrait244091/; Koryakina, Nadezda, Notice n°244130, projet RELMIN, Le statut légal des minorités religieuses dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen (Ve-XVe siècle), edition électronique Telma, IRHT, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes – Orléans. Retrieved on 15 May 2015: http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin/extrait244130/; Tolan, John, Notice n°30493, projet RELMIN, Le statut légal des minorités religieuses dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen (Ve-XVe siècle), edition électronique Telma, IRHT, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes – Orléans. Retrieved on 15 May 2015: http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin/extrait30493/.

43 Mazur, Jerzy, Notice n°252878, projet RELMIN, Le statut légal des minorités religieuses dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen (Ve-XVe siècle), edition électronique Telma, IRHT, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes – Orléans. Retrieved on 15 May 2015: http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin/extrait252878/.

The synod posits a fundamental enmity between Jews and Christians: the pretext for prohibiting purchase of food from Jews is that they might try to poison Christians. Yet the rest of the text belies this: the real worry seems to be intimacy between Jews and Christians who eat, drink, dance and party together and who share the same lodgings.

Indeed, the prohibitions of eating and drinking together are often linked with concerns about sexual intimacy. Bathhouses, too, could provide opportunities for illicit interreligious sexual encounter: in Muslim Spain, regulations separated men from women (either assigning to them different *ḥammāms* or different days of the week). The Christians kingdoms tended to segregate not only sexually but according to religion, as Olivia Remie Constable notes, assigning specific days to Jews and Muslims. The usually implicit and occasionally explicit concern is that interreligious frequentation of bath houses could cause unwanted proximity and in some cases sexual intimacy.[44]

It was illegal for Christians to marry non-Christians: Roman Christian emperor Theodosius I in 388 prohibited marriage between Christians and Jews, a prohibition promulgated in the *Theodosian Code* (in 438) and reiterated by the church councils of Orléans 2 (533), Clermont 1 (535) and Orléans 3 (538), from which it was incorporated into Gratian's *Decretum*.[45] Various popes and church councils sought to enforce separation of Christians from non-Christians to avoid opportunities for sexual relations: we see this concern for example in various bulls of Innocent III (1198-1216); under Innocent's direction, the Lateran IV council requires Jews and Muslims to dress differently than Christians so that they might be recognized and that sexual contact with them be shunned.[46] Brian Catlos gives examples of how Aragonese officials sought out and punished Muslim women who had been sexually intimate with Christian men.[47] Preventing interfaith sexual encounters is still an issue in late fifteenth-century Portugal, as François Soyer shows.[48]

Another important issue that has been the object of research and discussion over the last five years is the nature of sacred space. Jurists attempted both to delimit and protect sacred precincts and to define the protection given to places of worship of minority religions. In the

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44   Constable, From Hygiene to Heresy.

45   Nemo-Pekelman, Capucine, Notice n°136982, projet RELMIN, Le statut légal des minorités religieuses dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen (Ve- XVe siècle), edition électronique Telma, IRHT, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes - Orléans. Retrieved on 15 May 2015: http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin/extrait136982/; Freidenreich, David, Notice n°238307, projet RELMIN, Le statut légal des minorités religieuses dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen (Ve-XVe siècle), edition électronique Telma, IRHT, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes ... Orléans. Retrieved on 16 May 2015: http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin/extrait238307/; Freidenreich, David, Notice n°238304, projet RELMIN, Le statut légal des minorités religieuses dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen (Ve-XVe siècle), edition électronique Telma, IRHT, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes – Orléans. Retrieved on 16 May 2015: http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin/extrait238304/; Freidenreich, David, Notice n°238305, projet RELMIN, Le statut légal des minorités religieuses dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen (Ve-XVe siècle), edition électronique Telma, IRHT, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes – Orléans. Retrieved on 16 May 2015: http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin/extrait238305/; Sherwood, Jessie, Notice n°40851, projet RELMIN, Le statut légal des minorités religieuses dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen (Ve-XVe siècle), edition électronique Telma, IRHT, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes – Orléans. Retrieved on 16 May 2015: http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin/extrait40851/.

46   Sherwood, Jessie, Notice n°30326, projet RELMIN, Le statut légal des minorités religieuses dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen (Ve- XVe siècle), edition électronique Telma, IRHT, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes - Orléans. Retrieved on 16 May 2015: http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin/extrait30326/; Tolan, Of Milk and Blood. See also Fois, Physical Separation of Jews and Christians.

47   Catlos, Is It Country Air that Makes Infidels Free?

48   François Soyer, Prohibiting Sexual Relations.

face of Christian violence against Jewish synagogues, various Christian Roman Emperors issued laws protecting Jews' rights to practice their cult and to maintain their synagogues.[49] Mālikī jurisprudence from the Middle Ages abounds with references to *kanisa*s: churches and synagogues.[50] Various versions of the Pact of 'Umar affirm that Christians and Jews may not build new synagogues, but in fact this purported rule was enforced only sporadically. Alejandro García Sanjuán traces the doctrinal history of this question, showing how Mālikī jurists came to distinguish territories conquered by force (in which new *kanisa*s could not be built), new cities founded by Muslims (where *dhimmī* sanctuaries were also prohibited), and territories which submitted to Islam by pact (*ṣulḥ*) (where new churches and synagogues could be built).[51] Yet there is in fact little evidence that any ruler tried to enforce such distinctions: when we do have evidence of building restrictions or destructions, it is often attributable to more immediate social or political concerns: such is the case, for example, for the destructions ordered by Muḥammad I in the 850s, at the height of the Cordoban martyrs' movement. Indeed, as Jean-Pierre Molénat suggests, the tripartite distinction may be an *ex post facto* justification of decisions made by ninth-century emirs, who permitted the construction of a number of churches and synagogues in the outlying districts of Cordoba.[52] Most of the text mentioning of these churches and synagogues in the legal sources describe them as essential parts of the urban landscape. They can be used as appropriate places for Christians and Jews to take oaths, as Ahmed Oulddali notes.[53] They also can be seen as places of danger, as Cyrille Aillet shows: some jurists, while not prohibiting Muslims from entering Christian churches, discourage it, since it could lead to contact with sacrilegious images or with impure substances such as blood or wine. Indeed various Arab poets had celebrated churches (and especially monasteries) as pleasure dens where adventurous souls could enjoy Bacchic excess.[54]

A constant concern of these legal scholars is the proper functioning of justice. Ahmed Oulddali has shown how in theory *dhimmī*s were prohibited from bearing witness against Muslims, with a limited number of exceptions.[55] Ibn 'Abd al-Barr addresses at length the question of *dhimmī*s access to the judgment of a Muslim *qāḍī*, as Christian Müller demonstrates.[56] While cases involving two Christians were in theory subject to the judgment of the bishop, they may in some cases be referred to the Muslim *qāḍī*, either at the behest of the bishop or at the request of the adjudicating parties. Why would two Christians (or Jews) prefer to submit their case to the *qāḍī*? There could be a variety of reasons: perceived justice

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49 See, for example, Nemo-Pekelman, Capucine, Notice n°238489, projet RELMIN, Le statut légal des minorités religieuses dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen (Ve-XVe siècle), edition électronique Telma, IRHT, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes – Orléans. Retrieved on 16 May 2015: http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin/extrait238489/; Nemo-Pekelman, Capucine, Notice n°244133, projet RELMIN, Le statut légal des minorités religieuses dans l'espace euro-méditerranéen (Ve-XVe siècle), edition électronique Telma, IRHT, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes – Orléans. Retrieved on 16 May 2015: http://www.cn-telma.fr/relmin/extrait244133/.

50 Bouchiba, Eglises et synagogues en terre d'Islam.

51 Sanjuán, La formación de la doctrina legal.

52 Molénat, La fatwā sur la construction des églises.

53 Oulddali, Recevabilité du témoignage du ḏimmī.

54 Aillet, La construction des frontières interconfessionnelles.

55 Oulddali, Recevabilité du témoignage du ḏimmī.

56 Müller, Non-Muslims as Part of Islamic Law.

or efficiency of the Muslim judicial system, higher expertise concerning the matter at hand (which could involve technical or commercial law), or simply a personal preference for the local *qāḍī* over a specific bishop or rabbi.[57] It would be interesting to know what the Christian and Jewish judges who were being sidestepped thought of this: were they happy to defer to the *qāḍī*-s concerning issues in which they had little competence? Did they resent this circumventing of their authority? No doubt this phenomenon is to be understood in the broader context of competing jurisdictions and of »forum shopping«, a widespread phenomenon in both Muslim and Christian societies in the Middle Ages.[58]

Indeed, the law court is an important place of contact (of conflict and conflict resolution), as Rena Lauer makes clear in her case studies of Jewish women in Candia law courts.[59] Youna Masset shows that the Catalan town of Tortosa had distinct courts for Jewish, Muslim and Christian communities and in theory, in cases involving litigants from two different faith communities, each was to be judged by his or her own judge.[60] Judith Olszowy-Schlanger's contribution to the Vienna conference shows how Jews not only could bring suits against Christians in English law courts; they could even present Hebrew documents as admitted evidence.[61] Many of these documents are bilingual: in some of them, the Jewish contractor opposes a handwritten Hebrew formula attesting to his agreement to the Latin document. This suggests a certain degree of literacy in Latin on the part of English Jews, and in Hebrew for at least a small number of Christians who had to deal with these documents. Adam Bishop has shown how the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem established a justice system in which preference given to witnesses and accusers was calculated on an elaborate religious/ethnic hierarchy, with Latin Christians at the top, followed by Eastern Christians, Jews and Muslims.[62] While legal theory often imposed distinct jurisdictions for religious minorities and for the majority, often there was considerable wiggle-room, and enough competition between jurisdictions, for the clever or lucky to be able to benefit from the situation: Katalin Szende gives examples for Hungarian Jews as does Filomena Barros for Portuguese Muslims.[63] Ahmed Oulddali's case study of a Tlemcen Jew on trial for having insulted Muslims demonstrates how legal disputes between Muslims and *dhimmī*s could generate complex legal problems which were taken quite seriously.[64]

These are just a few examples of the possibilities opened up by RELMIN's cross-disciplinary approach to the legal status of religious minorities. Inevitably, our research has raised as many or more questions than it has answered. It has led us to question the terminology we use to talk about these issues. To what extent can one call, say Syrian or Egyptian Christians of the ninth century a religious »minority« when they clearly outnumber Muslims? The very concepts of »law« and »religion« have been socially constructed in different ways in the diverse societies we have studied (and of course used in ways that do not correspond to

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57   Serrano, Islamic Legal Jurisdiction over dhimmis.

58   Tolan, The Infidel before the Judge.

59   Lauer, Jewish Women in Venetian Candia.

60   Masset, L'intégration des juifs et des musulmans.

61   Olszowy-Schlanger, ›Meet you in Court‹.

62   Bishop, The Treatment of Minorities.

63   Szende, Laws, Loans, Literates; Barros, Les musulmans portugais.

64   Oulddali, Un ḏimmī accusé d'avoir calomnié les musulmans.

our 21st-century use of these terms).[65] RELMIN has put hundreds of texts online with translations and analyses and published over 10 volumes of conference acts and dissertations, but clearly has merely scratched the surface. Thanks to a major grant from the Pays de la Loire region in France, a new institute, the Institut du Pluralisme Religieux et de l'Athéisme (IPRA), has been created in Nantes: its mission is to continue the work of RELMIN and to broaden its scope by including the study of more recent periods in European history.[66]

65 Tolan, Lex alterius.
66 www.ipra.eu

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