

ními pozicemi psychologického relativismu a etnocentrismu. Ve filologicko-kognitivním rozboru samotných *Hovorů* ukazuje, že Fingeretta vede jeho době míněná hermeneutická orientace na historický kontext a naivní předpoklady o lidské psychologii k přehnaným a nakonec mylným závěrům.

Knihu jako celek nelze než vřele doporučit napříč celým spektrem odborného publika se zájmem o teoretizaci náboženství. Editorický záměr „propojovat kognici a kulturu“ v dialogu mezi žhavou současností a letitou akademickou tradicí se více než vydařil. Třebaže se kniha vyznačuje značným tematickým rozptylem, konstrukce dvou rovin rozhovoru, tj. autorů s „jejich“ klasiky a kognitivních přístupů se sociokulturními, drží dílo podivuhodně pohromadě. „Mentální kultura“ přesvědčivě ukazuje, že kognice a kultura v současné kognitivní vědě o náboženství už (dávno) nestojí proti sobě.

TOMÁŠ HAMPEJS

Anthony Bale, *Feeling Persecuted: Christians, Jews and Images of Violence in the Middle Ages*,

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Christian-Jewish relations during the Middle Ages and the history of anti-Semitism have been subjects of much scholarly discussion through the years. Physical violence, persecution, anti-Jewish propaganda, as well as the everyday relationships between Christians and Jews have puzzled historians, who either saw “anti-Jewish medieval mentalities” as the foundation of a long history of anti-Jewish persecution or rejected this idea and tried to examine these relations in their historical and local contexts.

Anthony Bale’s book *Feeling Persecuted: Christians, Jews and Images of Violence in the Middle Ages* intends to bring new in-

sights to this discussion by analyzing textual and visual sources from around Europe, mainly from the High and Late Middle Ages. These sources include cultural artifacts, manuscripts, legends, architecture, lullabies etc. In Bale’s own words, “this book explores the various imaginative ways in which persecution and pain were welcomed into the everyday worlds and cultural lives of medieval people ... I trace the relationship between feeling and persecution, from cognition to actualization” (p. 11-12). In other words, Bale’s book aims to find how rhetorical examples and images of violence against the Jews were connected with everyday Christian religious experience. By analyzing this connection, the author also contributes to the wider discussion of the origins of modern anti-Semitism, challenging the idea that violence against the Jews in modern times was born in the Middle Ages.

Even though the book lacks a formal introduction, Chapter One, “He Who is in Pain is Alive”, presents some of the philosophical and methodological preliminaries of the survey. Having as points of departure (1) the notion that we should be able to understand how people in medieval society felt in order to understand how they thought, and (2) the Aristotelian definition of fear as “a painful and troubled feeling caused by the impression of an imminent evil that causes destruction or pain” (p. 12), but also the concept of fear as being socially and culturally constructed, Bale seeks to understand how feelings of fear and pain were welcomed in the medieval world. Unlike in modern times, in which people tend to avoid such feelings, fear and pain – as extreme feelings – were often valorized in the Middle Ages, as they were seen as a part of proper character building, allowing medieval people to interlink “behavior, emotion and morality” (p. 12). This meant that feelings could serve as tools to demonstrate certain behaviors and build a certain moral code. Most pertinently, feelings of fear and pain could be evoked through images of violence and persecution.

Bale also introduces the notion of *affect*, which “refers to the connection of the mind with the physiological, of emotions with ideas, of feeling with intellect” (p. 19). As

suggested by the author, affectivity can be a very useful term, as it allows both the way communities shaped the individual (as feelings are considered to be socially constructed) and the way that individuals experienced feelings to be understood. Affectivity is also a kind of *moral education*, where people experience strong feelings by confronting images of violence. It is also important to keep in mind that medieval readers/viewers had a more personal relationship to books and images, as “they did not see books and pictures as something separate from themselves” (p. 19). Readers/viewers were touched by the images, which could operate as ways of creating affective responses. Moreover, books and images could stimulate affective memory through strong and violent images and serve as mnemonic devices (p. 21-22).

In Chapter Two, “The Violence of Memory: Seven Kinds of ‘Jewish’ Torture”, Bale bases his analysis on a medieval artifact (an ivory statue of the Virgin Mary holding the infant Jesus, which, on the reverse side, also presents the scene of King Herod watching the slaughter of the Holy Innocents, with their mothers looking on in agony) and the verses of several late medieval mock-lullabies. He discusses issues such as rhetorical violence, which creates a kind of violent shock to the viewer/reader, and of violence as a mnemonic, creating powerful images that have the ability to move the audience. Especially, when it comes to the statue of the Virgin Mary, Bale argues that “the movement between Jew and Christian, violence and pity, facilitates and demands a physical, emotional and somatic movement” (p. 40). Having as a point of departure Jody Enders’ argument, “the memory image was persuasive and dramatic because it was violent” (Jody Enders, *The Medieval Theatre of Cruelty*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1999, 66, quoted at p. 35), the author suggests that in order to have intimate and personal religious experience, there was a need for memorable and strong images, such as reconstructions of the Passion of Jesus Christ. Both the statue of the Virgin Mary and the lullabies could create memorable and powerful images and place the Passion into the central position of

everyday life, fostering an intimate religious experience among the Christian audience.

Chapter Three, “The Jewish Profile and the History of Ugliness”, discusses medieval representations of Jews in order to show that despite the fact that modern “racial” stereotypes, especially those used by Nazi propaganda, “are indebted to medieval modes of representation” (p. 65), these visual images and descriptions – especially the profile depiction of Jews, as seen in many medieval manuscripts – had a different meaning in the Middle Ages. Bale argues that these specific depictions of Jews and Jewish ugliness were intended to create an affect through “the discourse of the opposites” (p. 78): the medieval viewer or reader could understand Christian beauty by contrasting it to Jewish ugliness. The visual image was disturbed or fragmented because of this juxtaposition, and, in this way, a strong feeling was conveyed to the audience. In Bale’s words, “medieval visual images and textual descriptions of the Jews are best understood as affective memory-images, designed to bring the edifying and pleasurable experience of fear, violence and contrast into the medieval reader/viewer’s aesthetic world” (p. 65). Thus, Jewish ugliness was connected more to an effort to experience Christ’s Passion in a solipsistic manner than to a “racial” stereotype.

In Chapter Four, “The Jew’s Hand and the Virgin’s Bier”, Bale explores the visual and textual representations of the Jew Jephonius, whose arm was purportedly amputated at the Funeral or Dormition of the Virgin Mary, after he tried to touch the bier. Bale argues that the aim of medieval iconography was not to represent reality (or the real world) but rather “it solicited the imaginations of its audience, to fit its images into (previously encountered) schemata” (p. 96). Therefore, the representations of Jephonius in particular and Jews in general were used as strong affective devices, so that the audience could be led to remember and feel the Passion and Christian victimhood.

Both Chapter Five, “Visiting Calvary: Contrition, Intimacy and Virtual Persecution”, and Chapter Six, “Making Calvary”, discuss the role of Jerusalem in the imagination of Christians in the Late Middle Ages.

Bale notes that the Jerusalem of Christ's Passion was remade by medieval Christian memory in order to bring it into the familiar world, into "medieval intimate and cultural lives" (p. 121). This way, the Passion could be re-experienced in a very personal manner – and medieval Christians did not hesitate to subject their most cherished symbols to an assault from Jewry in order to remember the Passion by feeling and experiencing the pain and the terror. The Passion became materialized as well as particularized so that the religious experience could be stronger. In this procedure, the role of the imagined Jerusalem – of Christ's Prison, Calvary and the Cross – played a key role, as its features became familiar, a part of "everyday life". In the same manner, Jews and Jewish violence played a similar role; they were represented in order to evoke strong feelings in the audience so that it could undergo a religious experience. Therefore, Bale argues, "this kind of Jerusalem literally sets the scene for us to reject a strictly historicist reading of Christian-Jewish relations, which sees in an image of violence the report or potential for actual violence" (p. 128).

In Chapter Seven, "Cultures in Pain", Bale examines Jewish artifacts and manuscripts and comes to the conclusion that images of Christian violence and persecution, as depicted in presentations of hunting, had a similar effect on Jewish audiences, which could affectively undergo Passover as a religious experience. At the same time, "[this hunting imagery] speaks to Jews' cultural and financial confidence and integration rather than their exclusion and communal frailty" (p. 182-183).

Most pertinently, in this final chapter of the book and under the subheading "Anti-Semitism: Cause and Effect", Bale discusses the question of the medieval origins of modern anti-Semitism and the modern historiography of Christian-Jewish relations in the Middle Ages.

Bale argues that medieval Christians repeatedly depicted Jewish violence so that they could feel persecuted "for aesthetic, intellectual and devotional reasons" (p. 184) and that we should try to understand this antagonism between Christians and Jews.

This imagined violence could lead to actual physical violence against the Jews, but this was extremely rare. Instead of making generalizations about hatred towards Jews, Bale argues that it would be more useful to look at the specific local and historical circumstances in which actual violence did occur. Against the idea that Christian hatred of Jews was transmitted from generation to generation up to modern times, Bale suggests that "the images of violence and persecution are more rhetorical records of imaginative desire and not manifestos for direct action" (p. 185), and notes that feelings and imagination are not just reflections of the social. Arguing against models such as the "formation of a persecuting society", proposed by Robert I. Moore (Robert I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Authority and Deviance in Western Europe, 950-1250*, Oxford: Blackwell 2007, first ed. 1987), and especially against the kind of Jewish history that has been constructed after the tragic events of the 20th century, which can lead to perceiving anti-Semitism as something that cannot be controlled, Bale suggests that we should not label medieval Christians as anti-Semitic but instead try to examine the role of this imagery in symbolic or actual violence in its historical and social context.

Throughout his book, Bale successfully argues that the role of feelings and of affect has been somewhat neglected in the history of persecution and of medieval Christian-Jewish relations. By examining several sources, he concludes that "recreational persecution is an assertion of one's self-development and a celebration of being in the world" (p. 188). Despite the large number of cases and visual and textual sources that the author analyzes, one type of source is missing – texts written by members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy or by monastic authors, which could show how those in power regarded the Jews. It also appears that even if Bale admits that imaginary violence can lead to the physical kind, he does not answer the question of how this can happen or what the relation between the imaginary and the actual is. Furthermore, physical violence against the Jews, as in the case of heretics, did take place in the Middle Ages. Therefore,

it might be difficult to argue that visual and textual representations of Jewish persecution have nothing to do with the actual violence perpetrated against them.

Bale's book offers a useful insight into the world of feelings of medieval people, but Christian-Jewish relations in the Middle Ages were rather complex and Bale's view is one-sided. A survey that includes the role of feelings as well as the role of power and its mechanisms and takes into account specific local social conditions, complexities and particularities can provide us with a more complete picture of this matter.

Another important insight provided by this study is that it deconstructs the idea of "anti-Semitism" as something that moves from one generation to the next. Anti-Semitism should be studied in its historical context instead of being used in such a way as to label medieval people.

By analyzing medieval texts, pictures and buildings but neglecting texts by members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and monastic orders, and by sometimes overstating the role of feelings, Bale's conclusions can sometimes be monolithic or even one-sided. However, all in all, his book manages to bring some new insights not only into the historiography of Christian-Jewish relations but also into the history of medieval persecution. By understanding the role of feelings and affect, we have the possibility of creating a more complete picture of medieval culture.

STAMATIA NOUTSOU

Isabelle Prochaska-Meyer, Kaminchu: Spirituelle Heilerinnen in Okinawa,

**(Vienna Studies on East Asia 2),
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In her extensive work about female spiritual healers (*kaminchu*) in Okinawa,

which is based on her doctoral thesis, Isabelle Prochaska-Meyer takes the reader on a journey from prehistoric times through the Kingdom of Ryūkyū to modern times and shows the erratic history of attitudes towards women who are considered to be spiritually gifted. Her historical approach leads to an interpretation of the phenomenon of *kaminchu* and their functions in the past and today, where they contribute to the identity of the local community, which is presented as different from the rest of Japan. While women in religious functions were well respected and even given important positions in the society of the ancient kingdom, later attempts to modernize the society of Okinawa went hand in hand with a campaign to "enlighten" the citizens and make spiritual healers, then called *yuta*, and their clients appear backward and superstitious, an attitude that still affects the perception of them.

In the first main chapter (p. 24-77) we learn about the history of Okinawa with a focus on the history of women and their positions in society regarding religious functions. This is important from two perspectives – first, the implementation of a system of women priests on various levels of officialdom and in families has an effect on the concept of female spirituality; second, knowing about the economic ties and cultural exchange with the Chinese empire, which led to a degree of sinicization in the kingdom of Ryūkyū, makes one understand why, for example, the Chinese horoscope is very important in rituals involving ancestor worship and healing, which are most often connected to the condition of deceased family members.

The second chapter (p. 78-117) is dedicated to religion in Okinawa as a whole and introduces the reader to the idea of the spiritual power of women as protecting sisters, from which some researchers have concluded that Okinawan society might have been a matriarchal system in the past. This theory, however, can be questioned since the spiritually gifted sister protects the brother and is therefore in his service, so to say. Aside from ancestor worship, the author draws our attention to the importance of nature and the places where spiritual entities