

Emotions, Communities, and Difference in Medieval Europe

Essays in Honor of Barbara H.
Rosenwein

Edited by
Maureen C. Miller and
Edward Wheatley

Emotions, Communities, and Difference in Medieval Europe

This book of eleven essays by an international group of scholars in medieval studies honors the work of Barbara H. Rosenwein, Professor *emerita* of History at Loyola University Chicago. Part I, “Emotions and Communities,” comprises six chapters that make use of Rosenwein’s well-known and widely influential work on the history of emotions and what Rosenwein has called “emotional communities.” These chapters employ a wide variety of source material such as chronicles, monastic records, painting, music theory, and religious practice to elucidate emotional commonalities among the medieval people who experienced them. The five chapters in Part II, “Communities and Difference,” explore different kinds of communities and have difference as their primary theme: difference between the poor and the unfree, between power as wielded by rulers or the clergy, between the western Mediterranean region and the rest of Europe, and between a supposedly great king and lesser ones.

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Barbara H. Rosenwein (photo: Valentina Atturo)

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Preface

When Barbara Rosenwein was an undergraduate at the University of Chicago in the mid-1960s, she brought to her earliest encounters with the Middle Ages much of the best of what that institution had to offer. Still more or less intact were the “College courses” instituted in the 1930s by Robert M. Hutchins, year-long courses that included among others one called simply “Humanities,” another called “Social Sciences,” and a third, “Natural Sciences”; “Western Civilization” was one of a few later additions to the list. Works by Aristotle came at or near the start of the reading list of each of these courses. The Social Sciences course, for example, was not a combination of the standard introductory courses in contemporary economics, sociology, psychology, and so on, but rather a series of inquiries into different approaches to and manifestations of social phenomena as revealed over the course of several centuries in influential books by major writers (“Great Books” being the term that Hutchins and Mortimer Adler used for the evening courses they co-taught for adults). The Western Civilization course was dominated by a brilliant and charismatic former *Gymnasium* professor and to a lesser extent by one of his disciples, also a German immigrant, who happened to be Barbara’s section leader. This legendary course was basically an intellectual history of the West from the Greeks to 1914, which had a notable seven-century gap between Augustine and Anselm, shortly followed by Aquinas and then a triumphantly Burckhardtian Renaissance.

Barbara was curious to know about that gap, and not just what took place during it but why the gap itself existed. From the start, then, perhaps even without realizing it at the time, she was a historiographer as well as a historian. Given her *lycée*- or *Gymnasium*-type general education, which Hutchins had intended that Chicago students have before moving on to more specialized studies, she was at ease in discussing and writing about vast stretches of time, as in her history-major special studies paper on the Faust legend, which incorporated more than a millennium and a half of antecedents. It seemed natural for her to draw upon apt insights from Cicero or Petrarch or Locke or Rousseau or Durkheim or Freud or Weber that might shed light on whatever historical problem she was thinking through at a given moment. How difficult it would be to imagine, let alone find, a

third-year college student better prepared to begin the study of medieval history, as Barbara did, through the lens of the French *annaliste* approach.

This recollection of Barbara the apprentice serves as a preface to the editors' introductory chapter reflecting upon the accomplishments of Barbara the mature scholar, extraordinary in themselves but rendered in particularly sharp focus by being placed within the full range of innovative scholarship in medieval studies during the past half century. Reflections of another sort are found in that chapter as well as in all those that constitute the main body of this volume, namely reflections of the influences that Barbara has had on all of the contributors to this Festschrift, former students and colleagues alike. All of them – or if I may join in – all of us, in addition to being citizens of the large international community of appreciative readers of Barbara's writings, are also part of that more select but still by no means small community of those who are personally indebted to her for generous criticism, advice, and encouragement. How fortunate we all are that she was curious about the gap.

Lester K. Little

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All the scholars who contributed chapters have provided the most crucial support to the development of this volume: their intellectual generosity, consummate collegiality, and gracious patience with two first-time editors were deeply appreciated. We are grateful to Lester K. Little for his encouragement throughout the project, his sage comments on the introduction, and his preface. Special thanks are owed to Tom Gray, who initially signed the volume for Ashgate and carried it with him to Routledge, as well as to his worthy successor, Max Novick. Key financial support for illustrations, editing, and indexing were provided by the Illinois Medieval Association (thanks again to Mark Johnson); Father Thomas J. Regan, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences; Dr. Robert O. Bucholz, Chair of the Department of History at Loyola; and both Carla Hesse, Executive Dean for the College of Letters and Science, and the Abigail Reynolds Hodgen Publication Fund at the University of California, Berkeley. Clara Leon translated the chapters of Dominique Iogna-Prat and Monique Bourin with care and copy-edited the entire volume. Her gracious and meticulous assistance made all the difference as the volume came together; we are deeply grateful for her collaboration.

We thank, above all, Barbara H. Rosenwein. The celebration of her career at the Newberry was memorable not only for the intellectual testaments to

her influence and collaboration, but also for the outpouring of gratitude for her wise and compassionate mentorship; her inspirational example; her tireless efforts on behalf of friends, students, and the field at large. Her scholarship and teaching are enduring legacies, but her friendship is the greatest gift of all.

Abbreviations

The Douay-Rheims translation has been used for all passages of Scripture since it is closest to the language of the Vulgate Latin translation most widely known in medieval Europe.

ChLA	<i>Chartae Latinae Antiquiores</i> , eds. Albert Bruckner, Robert Marichal (Olten and Lausanne: Urs Graf, 1954–).
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina (Turnhout: Brepols, 1953–).
CCCM	Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis (Turnhout: Brepols, 1966–).
MGH	<i>Monumenta Germaniae historica</i> , with subseries:
Diplomata	<i>Diplomata regum et imperatorum Germaniae</i> (Hannover: Hahn, 1893–).
SSRM	<i>Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum</i> , ed. Bruno Krusch, William Levison, 7 vols. (Hannover: Hahn, 1885–1919).
SS	<i>Scriptores</i> in folio, 32 vols. (Hannover: Hahn, 1826–1934).
SSRG	<i>Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim edii</i> t (Hannover: Hahn, 1871–).
PL	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus</i> , Ser. Lat., ed. J.P. Migne, 221 vols. (Paris: Garnier, 1844–1864).
SC	<i>Sources chrétiennes</i> (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1941–).



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1 A road to the history of emotions

Social, cultural, and
interdisciplinary approaches to
the Middle Ages, c. 1966–2016

Maureen C. Miller and Edward Wheatley

Medieval emotions was one of three “current trends in history and theory” showcased in a panel at the 2016 meetings of the Medieval Academy of America, and at the center of this session, and the lively discussion it provoked, was the work of Barbara H. Rosenwein.¹ From the 1998 publication of her volume *Anger’s Past*, Rosenwein has both critiqued the assumptions underpinning studies of medieval emotions and developed her own methodological and theoretical approach to the history of emotions.² One can see some glimmerings of this interest in the inner life and its outward expression in her very first published article on Cluniac liturgy as ritual aggression,³ but in truth her road to the history of emotions passed through other topics. Rosenwein’s scholarship is rich and varied, full of experimentation and exploration of ideas, methodologies, and sources. While it is less common to encounter such a diversity of interests in one career, several characteristics and themes prominent in Rosenwein’s work are more broadly representative of developments in medieval studies over the second half of the twentieth century and the opening decade and a half of the twenty-first. The interdisciplinarity of her scholarship, its emphases on religion and other aspects of society, and its focus on social groups, are more widely evident in recent approaches to the medieval past. Both the broader resonance and impact of Rosenwein’s work, moreover, make manifest the enduring value of focusing on social groups and interactions.

Interdisciplinarity

The discipline of history has long had an imperial sense of its own purview: the entire past was the historian’s domain. Into the early twentieth century, however, its practitioners privileged only a limited swath of this ample past. Politics, particularly the high politics of politics and rulers, and elite intellectual activity, the great ideas of philosophers and theologians, dominated historical narration.⁴ The emergence of several new disciplines over the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries engaged with the past in different ways and, either implicitly or explicitly, challenged history’s dominion. Archeology, for example, expanded the very extent of the known

past while developing new scientific tools to find and date artifacts.⁵ Other new disciplines, while addressing the present, used the past to articulate and test theories. For sociology's founder, Auguste Comte (1798–1857), history was merely a method of sociology, the “final science,” and for Max Weber (1864–1920), the past was essential to his rationalization thesis.⁶ The prominence of evolutionary theory in the early development of anthropology also engaged the past, and even after evolutionary approaches to the study of culture were rejected – for example, by Franz Boas (1858–1942) and his students in relation to race – this new social science embraced the study of historical processes in the development and contact of cultures.⁷ Psychoanalysis – most influentially in Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents* – also drew on the past in articulating theories of personal development.⁸

The most influential twentieth-century movement within historical studies, the *Annales*, responded to this ferment of the emergence of new social sciences by calling for *histoire totale*. Key here for medievalists was Marc Bloch, who as a student was part of Max Weber's Vienna circle, and whose classic *La Société féodale* (1939) drew upon sociology, art, literature, and geography. Defining history as “the science of men in time,” Bloch asserted that “the variety of historical evidence is nearly infinite.”⁹ Although one might see history's move toward interdisciplinarity as a mere reassertion of disciplinary hegemony, other disciplines, of course, did not cede the field: this was tremendously fruitful in the study of the Middle Ages. Even before Bloch and the *annalistes* articulated their influential ideal of “total history,” medievalists formed multi-disciplinary alliances – such as the Medieval Academy of America, founded in 1925 – and by the 1960s exchanges among chronological allies gave birth to numerous interdisciplinary programs in medieval studies.¹⁰

Barbara Rosenwein entered the University of Chicago in 1962 and both her undergraduate and graduate studies were deeply influenced by its interdisciplinary “Core Curriculum.”¹¹ The interdisciplinary character of her work is evident in both its theoretical engagements and in the sources utilized. From her earliest publications Rosenwein overtly drew on theoretical perspectives from other disciplines. “Feudal War,” her very first article, used psychoanalytic theory to conceptualize Cluny's relentless liturgy as ritualized aggression, while *Rhinoceros Bound*, her first monograph, invoked the Durkheimian concept of anomie to explain gifts to Cluny as a socially constructive response to rapid social change and political disorder in tenth-century Francia.¹² Her second monograph, *To Be the Neighbor of Saint Peter*, drew upon anthropological theory – particularly, Marcel Mauss's observations on the “potlatch” of the Trobriand islanders – to understand the social meaning of Cluny's property and *Negotiating Space* used anthropological work on *tapu* (taboo) to explore immunities.¹³ Rosenwein's most recent work has moved from the social to the natural sciences for theoretical insights. In *Generations of Feelings* she turns to the field of genetics and its concept of gene mosaicism to understand

how and why individuals express emotions differently depending on their environment.¹⁴

In her use of sources, Rosenwein also crossed disciplinary boundaries. Teaching, apparently, liberated her to move beyond the usual documentary and hagiographical sources that are the mainstays of Cluniac studies. In the very first edition of her highly successful textbook, *A Short History of the Middle Ages*, images as well as words are evidence. The provincialization of the late Roman empire is presented through a sculpted head from Palmyra and a tombstone from near Carthage; the Franks Casket visualizes the amalgamation of Roman, Jewish, Christian, and Germanic traditions in the eighth century.¹⁵ The study of emotions further widened her evidentiary interdisciplinarity. First came poetry, in *Emotional Communities*, and then, in *Generations of Feeling*, troubadour songs, tomb sculptures, and manuscript illuminations, paintings of Christ's passion, and musical diagrams illustrating Gerson's theory of passions.¹⁶

This interdisciplinary broadening of source bases characterized work in medieval studies more generally. A very early harbinger in history was Ernst H. Kantorowicz's *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (1957), which drew upon polemical tracts, images, and liturgical works.¹⁷ Studies of the history of medieval liturgy were, more generally, in the vanguard of employing manuscript illustrations and architecture as sources.¹⁸ Images – visual, literary, and cultural – were also an early fruitful theme in historical work on the Middle Ages: from images of peasants in art, sermons, and didactic literature to images of the women in *chansons de geste* and in medieval art.¹⁹ Historians' use of visual and material sources intensified from the 1990s. The work of Caroline Walker Bynum, for example, focused predominantly on textual sources in the 1980s, but began taking artifacts and images into account in *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (1991) and *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200–1336* (1995). Her scholarship in the new millennium has focused intensively on visual and material sources in relation to texts.²⁰

Beyond the discipline of history, the utilization of sources normally the purview of other fields was equally intense and fruitful. The work of art historian Jeffrey F. Hamburger, for example, has brought together art, theology, and women's history in a particularly compelling fashion.²¹ The relationship between images and ideas has been very productively explored, as has the role of architecture, artifacts, and images in ritual.²² Musicologists too have become more prominent within medieval studies as they have engaged more systematically with historical and material sources.²³ Scholars of the varied medieval literatures, Latin and vernacular, have also drawn creatively on new sources.²⁴

The interdisciplinary theoretical borrowings evident in Rosenwein's scholarship have also been more widely practiced in medieval studies. Historians such as Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie in his book *Montaillou, village*

Occitan de 1294 à 1324 and Jean-Claude Schmitt in his *Le Saint lévrier*, applied the ethnographic tools of cultural anthropology to medieval communities, and those studying medieval rituals and ceremony engaged extensively with anthropological and sociological theories.²⁵ Theories from these disciplines have also been fruitfully applied to medieval literature, particularly the drama.²⁶ Psychoanalytic theory has had a more limited impact, mainly within gender studies.²⁷ Although in literary studies psychoanalytic readings are not as common as they were in the second half of the twentieth century, monographs using this theoretical approach continue to appear.²⁸ The turn to the theories and methods of the natural sciences, however, has gained considerable traction. Within history, the study of epidemics of infectious diseases, particularly the great pandemics of plague at either end of the Middle Ages – the first, called “Justinianic,” from 541 to 750 and the second, the “Black Death,” which struck with great force in the mid-fourteenth century but also recurred frequently over the next four centuries – has enlivened debate over what pathogens were at work and how societies responded.²⁹ Michael McCormick’s “Initiative for the Science of the Human Past” at Harvard University has been sponsoring work on climate change and has other collaborations afoot on historical genetics, while Patrick Geary at the Institute for Advanced Study is leading a project to use genetic data to revise our understanding of the migrations of peoples.³⁰ The natural sciences have been integral to the relatively recent appearance of two areas of scholarship addressing medieval literature: animal studies and disability studies.³¹

Religion and other aspects of society

Rosenwein began her career studying medieval religion through the history and sources of the great Burgundian monastery of Cluny and its dependencies. Her interest, however, was more in religious behaviors and institutional practices as a lens on society, as expressions and fulfillments of human needs, than in theology or mentalities. Cluny’s emphasis on custom and law in monastic practice affirmed stability in a period of rapid social change.³² Its relations with donors “worked as social glue,” creating connections and interrelations “in an age of fragmentation and social dislocation.”³³ Even as her research agenda broadened, religious practice and thought remained significant to it: ecclesiastical exemptions are treated extensively along with royal immunities in her *Negotiating Space*, and in her books on emotions religious figures (Augustine, Gregory the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Jean Gerson) and texts (Jonas’s *Vita Columbani*, Aelred of Rievaulx’s *De speculo caritatis* and *De spirituali amicitia*) provide key case studies. As editor of the series “Conjunctions of Religion and Power in the Medieval Past” with Cornell University Press, Rosenwein supported new approaches to medieval religious history, contributing to the ongoing vitality of the study of belief during the Middle Ages.

In the 1990s Cluny led Rosenwein to a new research topic: the construction of space. The privileges of exemption this monastery received from both temporal and spiritual authorities prompted her wide-ranging study of medieval immunities and exemptions. Tracing the different uses of these grants, she argued that the construction of space served various political, religious, and social strategies: to assert sovereignty while limiting the potential interventions of the state; to protect religious communities; and to negotiate alliances and re-alliances.³⁴ *Negotiating Space* was intensely focused on words and meaning: what *immunitas* meant in different situations, in the usages of varied actors, in different places and times. It also pondered what effects these words and meanings had, what they could and could not create. While immersed in this work, a serendipitous invitation to comment on a 1995 conference panel organized around “The Social Construction of Anger” made her suddenly aware of the many little words she had been overlooking in her documents. As she recounted to Jan Plamper in a 2010 interview,

Historians are trained to use a text like this [one describing a gift by Euraldus, out of love and good will, to his beloved wife Doddana] to discuss the people involved in transactions as well as the nature and location of the property. But they are not encouraged to see that the text also contains considerable evidence of feeling, evoking, as it does, a “beloved” wife to whom is given a gift “out of love and good will.” These are normally considered commonplaces of no consequence. But one might wonder why and how such things became “commonplace.” It might behoove us to take such expressions of sentiment seriously. To be sure, “beloved” and “love” are little words. But emotions are often expressed briefly. “I love you” is a short statement. However, it can have a remarkable impact. In fact, I myself did not see the emotions in historical documents until I was alerted to look for them.³⁵

Look for them, she then did. With the publication of *Anger's Past* in 1998 and *Emotional Communities* in 2006, Rosenwein moved to the forefront of a growing group of scholars in several disciplines examining the history of emotions. Among them were other historians such as William Reddy³⁶ and Darrin M. McMahon;³⁷ literary scholars such as C. Stephen Jaeger³⁸ and Lisa Renee Perfetti;³⁹ and scholars of philosophy such as Simo Knuuttila.⁴⁰

All of these intellectual interests – religion, space, and emotions – have been major research areas in medieval studies over the second half of the twentieth century and the opening years of the twenty-first. Among historians, work on religion has taken on new prominence. Before the mid-twentieth century, confessional approaches dominated the writing of religious history keeping many professional historians at bay. The influence of the *Annales* and the rise of social historical approaches – like Rosenwein's – brought new dynamism to the field while at the same time departments of

religion, often staffed by chaplains and theologians, began to be transformed into programs on religious studies with interdisciplinary faculties trained at leading universities. In 2009, the American Historical Association's magazine *Perspectives on History* published an article entitled "A New Found Religion? The Field Surges among AHA Members."

Based on a statistical analysis of member interests, Robert B. Townsend reported that "specialists in religious history recently surpassed all other topical categories," displacing the former leader, cultural history.⁴¹ Medievalists have been a particularly powerful part of this shift. From its establishment in 1997, thirteen of the twenty-one books awarded the Medieval Institute's Otto Gründler Prize focused on religion.⁴² Excellent historical work on Christianity – by scholars such as John Van Engen, Caroline Walker Bynum, Richard Pfaff, Miri Rubin, Dyan Elliott – and on medieval heresies – by R. I. Moore, Carol Lansing, Christine Caldwell Ames – has been accomplished,⁴³ and the histories of Judaism and Islam during the Middle Ages are garnering increased attention through the work of scholars such as Jeremy Cohen, Marina Rustow, David Nirenberg, Ira M. Lapidus, Carole Hillenbrand, Olivia Remie Constable, Brian Catlos, and Jonathan P. Berkey.⁴⁴

Research on religion has also intensified in other disciplines of medieval studies. Although ever a mainstay of medieval musicology, philosophy, and art history, due to the predominantly religious origin and preservation of sources, emphasis on religious meanings and contexts, rather than on technical or stylistic qualities, has foregrounded belief and practices. The foundation of programs in sacred music at leading universities – such as the Institutes for Sacred Music at the Catholic University of America in 1965, and at Yale University in 1973 – and the establishment of the North American Academy of Liturgy in 1973, have promoted and supported medieval liturgical scholarship and valorized attention to religious meanings and institutional settings.⁴⁵ In literary studies the sheer number of texts based on religious beliefs and practices (e.g., Dante's *Divine Comedy*, William Langland's *Piers Plowman*, the Gawain-poet's *Pearl*, *Patience*, and *Cleanliness*, as well as the vast corpus of religious drama) has long necessitated attention to religion, but in recent years there has been greater attention to literature's sociocultural function within both Christian and non-Christian communities.⁴⁶

Space has also been a growing area of research over the period. Historians and art historians have chiefly pursued this theme in studies of urban space and cartography, sometimes overlapping as in Daniel Lord Smail's *Imagined Cartographies: Possession and Identity in Late Medieval Marseille*.⁴⁷ The new fields of environmental and landscape history, however, are also exploring medieval spaces from novel perspectives.⁴⁸

But it has definitely been the study of emotions that has been the most broadly resonant area of Rosenwein's scholarship. As she herself has narrated, people have been interested in emotions from antiquity – which is one reason her *Generations of Feeling* begins with Cicero – but the origins of

historians' interests in emotions date to the early twentieth century. Johan Huizinga's *Herfsttij der Middeleeuwen* (or *Waning of the Middle Ages*), originally published in 1919, articulated the idea of an emotionally childlike Middle Ages, a view that was taken up by Norbert Elias in *The Civilizing Process* (1939). Shortly thereafter Lucien Febvre also used the forum of the *Annales* to call for histories of emotions. But it would be another forty years until the field began to take off in the 1980s with the work of Peter N. and Carol Z. Stearns. Their research, however, focused on modern American history and was broadly dismissive of the prospects for studying the history of emotions before the eighteenth century.⁴⁹ Rosenwein's most important intervention was championing not only the possibility of writing histories of pre-modern emotions, but also offering scholars a trenchant critique of the theoretical underpinnings of work in the field and a new approach to orient research.⁵⁰ This was a highly significant contribution.

It began, moreover, much earlier than the American Historical Review article that is now universally cited. *Anger's Past*, the collection of essays Rosenwein developed from a 1995 conference session, marked the beginning of a two-decades-long commitment on her part to capture and analyze a most elusive subject. In presenting those essays, though, she did not appeal to an eminent social scientist to assist in her investigation, as in her previous books. On the contrary, she introduced readers right at the start to the eminent antagonist who provoked her interest, namely, Norbert Elias, he of *The Civilizing Process*.⁵¹ Had this work been translated from the German and widely discussed in a timely way, perhaps it would have been regarded as a "Great Book" in Chicago. As it happened, though, the book's diffusion – and acclaim – came only in the 1980s. By the time of Rosenwein's *Emotional Communities* (2006), Elias's posthumous status had been elevated, according to the *New York Times*, to "theoretical guru," yet in her introduction she deflated that status definitively.⁵² Against Elias's nineteenth-century evolutionary model, she established her thesis of the emotional community.⁵³

The great boom in publication on medieval emotions followed. Beyond hundreds of articles and shorter publications about emotions in the medieval world, important monographs and essay collections about the history of emotions, some limited to specific periods and others with broader historical scope, continue to appear and to make use of Rosenwein's work.⁵⁴ Centers and projects – such as the Australian Research Council's Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions established in 2011 and Ute Frevert's project on the history of emotions at the Max-Planck-Institut für Bildungsforschung in Berlin – have been established and new serials founded.⁵⁵ The output has been so prodigious that overviews and analyses of developments within specific areas have begun to appear, such as Jan Plamper's "Emotional Turn? Feelings in Russian History and Culture" and *The History of Emotions: An Introduction*.⁵⁶

Rosenwein's concept of emotional communities, one of her most significant contributions to the field, has proven invaluable to a number of scholars