

Barbara H. Rosenwein

Even the Devil (Sometimes) has Feelings: Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages

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According to the Burgher of Paris, everyone in the processions at Paris in 1412 ‘cried a lot and shed a lot of tears.’¹ The chronicler Georges Chastellain reported that a criminal being put to death talked to the on-lookers, ‘and he so touched their hearts that all burst into tears of compassion.’² During the funeral procession of Charles VII, says the *Journal de Jean de Roye*, the courtiers, were ‘all dressed in the deepest mourning, which made them very pitiful to see, and because of the great sorrow and grief that they showed for the death of their master, tears were shed and lamentations made by all in that city.’³ Nor were there just floods of tears in these sorts of accounts: princes, in Chastellain’s view, were ‘subject to many passions, such as hatred and envy, . . . and their hearts are veritable dwelling places of such things.’⁴ And thus Philip the Good, according to Chastellain, ‘would devote himself to avenging the dead in the most violent and deadly rage (*aigreur*).’⁵

These and similar passages helped Johan Huizinga illustrate a major thesis of his 1919 publication *Herfsttij der Middeleeuwen*: that, for all its decadence, the late Middle Ages nevertheless continued to represent the innocent childhood of modern man.⁶ That meant, in effect, that the early and high Middle Ages signified man’s infancy. Hence Huizinga’s repeated use of the word ‘still’ (‘nog’ in Dutch) for the fifteenth century, as in his assertion that ‘a conflict between royal princes over a chessboard was *still* as plausible as a motive in the fifteenth century as in Carolingian romance’; or ‘during the fifteenth century the immediate emotional affect is *still* directly expressed in ways that frequently break through the veneer of utility and calculation’; or even ‘life *still* wore the color of fairy tales.’⁷ And, putting the same point another way: ‘Politics are *not yet* completely in the grip of bureaucracy and protocol.’⁸ The Middle Ages was the period of ‘unmediated’ emotion, Huizinga said, of pure, ‘flaming passion.’⁹ ‘Modern man’, he concluded, ‘has, as a rule, no idea of the unrestrained extravagance and inflammability of the medieval heart.’¹⁰

Lucien Febvre, co-founder with Marc Bloch of the *Annales* school of history, much appreciated Huizinga’s work. In a famous article on the emotions in history published in 1942, Febvre saw himself (and has since been seen by many others) as inaugurating emotions history.¹¹ He criticized Huizinga in his article, but only for neglecting to say that the Middle Ages was not alone in its raging passions: such things could emerge at any time, as Febvre was himself witnessing in the Europe of his own day.¹² For his own part, Marc Bloch, so willing to question most old paradigms about the Middle Ages, had no qualms about adopting Huizinga’s generalizations about medieval emotions. Like Huizinga, he called the Middle Ages ‘a civilization in which moral or social convention did not yet require well-bred people to repress their tears and their raptures.’¹³ Not yet; but eventually.

It was only a very intrepid historian who could withstand the juggernaut that this view represented, especially as it was bolstered by Freudian ideas about civilization and its discontents, Elias’s notion of a ‘civilizing process’, Max Weber’s theory of progressive bureaucratization and routinization, and anthropological notions of primitive society. In fact, Huizinga’s picture continues to dominate modern historiography today, even that done by medievalists.¹⁴

There are two major exceptions to this generalization about medievalists. First, there are those who take seriously the development of love as a theme in both religious experience and relations between the sexes. Already in 1957 Jean Leclercq’s *L’Amour des lettres et le désir de Dieu* wrested in its very title at least

two emotions – love and desire – from mankind’s childhood, elevating them to the level of sublime self-expression.¹⁵ His study represents one group rowing against the current.¹⁶

The other is a strand of legal history that views medieval emotions not as childish or impulsive but rather as functional and communicative. The grandfather of such studies was J.E.A. Jolliffe, who as early as 1955 realized that royal anger had effective political meaning and was not simply the

effusion of an Angevin out of control.¹⁷ If Jolliffe had bothered with Huizinga's sources, he would have said that tearful people and vengeful princes served the interests of the state.¹⁸

With Huizinga's paradigm the history of emotions can begin only after the Middle Ages, when passions cease to be natural forces and come under the control of social and moral constraints. With Leclercq and Jolliffe – and their many successors – medieval emotions become religious, interpersonal, or political instruments, and thus open to historical inquiry. If in the Angevin period, for example, *ira* and *malevolentia* filled the gaps where customary remedies were lacking,¹⁹ we may ask when and how royal emotional displays as well as their reception by others were modified in the face of new institutions. Gerd Althoff and Paul Hyams have answered this in very different ways, noting the impact on royal anger of theologians acting as ecclesiastical advisors.²⁰ We may even go beyond Jolliffe, to ask how emotions of ordinary men and women may have shaped and reacted to new political institutions. Hyams and Daniel Smail are exploring this question in relation to legal systems, proposing that emotions such as rancor and hatred lie behind such developments as English common law and civil litigation in late medieval Marseille.²¹

But even these two brave traditions of love and anger privilege the High and Late Middle Ages. Leclercq was thinking of the Cistercians when he spoke of the role of love in monastic life, and Jolliffe was thinking of Henry II. On the whole, their successors have not challenged this periodization, however much they have deepened our sense of the emotional life of the period after 1100.²²

But what of the early Middle Ages? There are good theoretical reasons for them to be equally liberated from the childhood paradigm. In the last two decades cognitivist and social-constructionist psychologists, anthropologists, and sociologists have jettisoned the view that emotions are forces pressing for release and thus undergoing progressive suppression as one moves from childhood to maturity. The cognitivists see emotions as having an assessment role, rather like judgments: emotions come into play when people's goals are changed, forwarded, or thwarted, their honor or well-being ratified, enhanced, or impugned.²³ In this view, emotions make us ready for action, ready (that is) to change goals, strategies, and behaviors. The social constructionists too have much to say here, for it follows as a matter of common sense – and of historical sensibility as well – that goals and notions of well-being, as well as the actions that are appropriate in response to challenges, are all largely socially constructed. Moreover, the social constructionist view helps explain why certain modes of emotional expression are encouraged and valued while others are vilified or mocked. The social construction of emotions declares that emotions cannot exist apart from the society that shapes them.²⁴ Looking at the Paris processions of 1412 through the lenses of the cognitivist/constructionists allows us to say, at the very least, that displays of tears at certain kinds of functions were highly valued at this time, even if in 1919, when Huizinga was writing, they seemed childish and silly.

But when the men and women of fifteenth-century Paris went home from their parade, did they normally value (and display) weeping behavior? Perhaps not. Different communities and contexts may foster different emotional norms. Piroska Nagy's study of the gift of tears shows that in the twelfth century, while some monastic communities fostered the gift, others favored dry eyes.²⁵ The difference went beyond tears, to the very conception of the salvific process. (That is as it should be, since emotions are so closely tied to goals.) But the fact that weeping could have a number of different meanings and values in the same society suggests that, when it comes to emotion, social constructionism may be too global. I propose the idea of emotional communities to root social constructionism in micro-societies. People function, even during one lifetime, within different social groups that have their own modes of interaction, forms of emotional expression, and valuations of particular emotions and emotional gestures. These groups may be as amorphous as an elite in which many members do not know one another personally yet share certain assumptions, goals, and values that have – perforce – emotional components. Or such groups may be as tight as a family around the dinner table. Or they may be somewhere between these two end points of a continuum of personal relations. And, though it is not relevant to this article per se, it is nevertheless important to mention that people may live in more than one such community nearly simultaneously; one can ordinarily move without pain, and even with pleasure, from community to

community, just as one listens with enjoyment to various kinds of music.

Consider once again Huizinga's use of the word 'still.' Where does the infancy of man's history begin? Although the earliest period that Huizinga invokes is the Carolingian, it is quite likely that he, like his contemporary Danish medievalist Vilhelm Grönbech, assumed the Middle Ages to have begun when the Germanic tribes conquered the former Roman Empire.²⁶ The notion of 'pure passion' was bound up with the nineteenth and early twentieth century's ambivalent romance with the Germanic barbarians, 'uninhibited', as Norbert Elias put it, in the 'release of the affects in battle.'²⁷ There is real frisson here, with the barbarian as the 'id', and the superego only slowly taking shape. Thus the medieval knight was said to be not quite as uninhibited as the Germanic warrior, but his passions were nevertheless (in Elias's words) 'open and uninhibited enough.'²⁸ Even Jolliffe, as we have seen, had to wait until the Angevins came on the scene to find uses in royal anger. Yet the notion of emotional communities, founded as it is on cognitivist/constructionist psychology, suggests that every period must have its own (and various) ways of valorizing, restraining, and expressing emotions. Contrary to Huizinga, Bloch, and Elias, there can be no infancy of human emotional life, except in infants. What, then, can we say about the emotional communities of the Early Middle Ages? That is the large question that I wish to begin to explore in the rest of this article. As there is no space here to cover all the contours of these communities, I shall focus on just three communities and on two telling issues for all of them: parent-child relations and the personality of the devil. Even so, it will be something of a whirlwind tour.

A preliminary word about methodology. I will first discuss the emotional community of Bishop Gregory of Tours and Pope Gregory the Great, and for that inquiry I will make use of the corpus of writings each left behind. Then, I shall look at two emotional communities in seventh-century Francia, where the evidence will come from materials written by many different members of those communities. Written texts are thus key in both instances, and perhaps the reader will demur, doubting that texts can tell us much about real emotions. Let me quickly defuse this objection. First, written texts are more or less all we historians have for any of our studies. This is the point of the linguistic turn, but it has not stopped us from writing about politics, society, or culture. Second, emotions are always mediated by words and gestures; we can never have immediate access to them. Psychiatrists and lovers must face this as surely as historians.

There is the further problem that many of our sources are full of commonplaces. But this is no more problematic than the fact that most – some would say all – emotional expressions are scripted. We normally have a choice of scripts, and writers normally have a choice of *topoi*. Indeed, I suggest that commonplaces should be considered the written equivalent of overlearned habits, their very familiarity linking them to emotions, which, in the words of psychologists Isen and Diamond, 'take no effort to be felt and are irresistible.'²⁹ Finally, emotions are so closely linked to words that the historian William Reddy has coined the word 'emotives' to describe them. Much like 'performatives' which change the status of things (e.g. 'I now pronounce you man and wife'), emotions, which in Reddy's view must be stated to be known, transform not only the external world but also the interior one of the utterer.³⁰ 'I love you' realigns a relationship, altering the beloved and the lover at the same time. Since at any given time the emotives that people express are fairly limited by social norms, the performative effect of emotives means that they tend to reinforce internal emotional configurations. I may be trying out 'I love you,' but if I repeat it often enough – if I invest in it – I may come to believe it myself, allowing it to crowd out all other possible emotives.

The two Gregories

With these preliminary remarks in mind, let us turn to the two Gregories, avatars of the late sixth century. The one we call 'the Great' was pope at Rome in 590–604; the bishop of Tours presided over his see 573–c. 594. They did not know one another, although Gregory of Tours knew about and even quoted Pope Gregory. It would be possible to take each of them separately, as members of somewhat different emotional communities. But the similarities are even more striking, no doubt because they both belonged to the clerical elite of the period, which shared common

outlooks, goals, and emotional expectations.³¹ Both men were moderately comfortable revealing emotions and talking about them in action. While they deplored many emotions, neither was rigid in his condemnation. Thus Gregory the Great included *tristitia* (sadness, melancholy) in his list of the seven principal vices,³² but in fact *tristitia* also figured in his writings as a saving grace.³³ In the rich Latin vocabulary available to them, both authors found a host of words to suggest many nuances of emotional expression and behavior. Anger, for example, was indicated by words covering a spectrum of intensities, from the fairly benign *commotus* to the furious *furor*, with *ira*, *iracundia*, *tumens felle*, and *livor* in between.³⁴ For both men, too, there was an emotional self: Gregory the Great revealed his when talking about life in his monastery on the Caelian hill; Gregory of Tours tended to express his own feelings when recalling his childhood or reporting on his family. For both, finally, emotions had communicative functions and, beyond that, transformative effects, bearing out Reddy's emotives.

Let us begin with the bishop of Tours. In his *Vita Patrum* a baby was very sick, and his mother kept weeping (*flebat*) because he might die yet had not been baptized. Finally, taking counsel, she took the infant to the tomb of Illidius, not incidentally the great-grandfather of her child and Gregory's uncle. She lay the boy, who was barely breathing, on the ground and 'kept watch with vigils and prayers in front of the tomb of the bishop.' Just before dawn the child grew strong and, in Gregory's words, making manifest the joys in his heart (*gaudia cordis*) by a preceding laugh (*risu praecedente*), with his mouth opened by divine inspiration, he said, 'Come here.' And she, who had never until now heard the voice of her son. came to [him] trembling with joy (*cum tremore et gaudio*), and said, in wonder (*stupens*), 'What do you want, my most sweet son?'³⁵

The child asked for a cup of water. But the mother first poured out her thanks to Illidius and vowed her son to him. After the child received the water, he drank, became strong, and thereafter ceased to speak until the normal time that children learn to talk.

No doubt this tale is reminiscent of countless miracle stories. And yet it has rarely been noted that in such stories it is emotions – both stated and implied – that drive the narrative and give it meaning. The whole story would be pointless if mothers did not love their children. This is the underlying emotion, so obvious to Gregory that he simply assumes it from the start, and his readers along with him. If this mother's love was aimed particularly at the salvation of her child (hence the emphasis on his unbaptized state), nevertheless his survival was also her goal.

Mother love, parental love: these were key emotions for both Gregories. When a wave of dysentery hit Gaul, Gregory of Tours wrote:

We lost our sweet children, so dear to us, whom we had cherished in our bosoms and carried in our arms. Serving them food with our own hands, we nourished them with very vigilant zeal (*studio sagatiore*). But, wiping away our tears, we say with blessed Job, 'The Lord gave; the Lord hath taken away.' (Job 1.21)³⁶

And Gregory the Great, rather less inclined to give in to such emotions, nevertheless recognized their power. One wave of the Justinianic Plague hit Rome in 590, and Gregory was painfully aware of its toll on the young. Turning to the men of his audience at the end of his homily on St. Felicity, given in the wake of this event, he upbraided them and himself for 'mourning without consolation' (*sine consolatione lugemus*) the children who were lost 'by divine decree.'³⁷ Yet in the same Homily Gregory assured his listeners that Felicity, who lost her seven sons to Roman persecutors, 'could not watch her sons dying without pain (*sine dolore*).'³⁸ And in the same Homily he puzzled over the Gospel passage that had Christ talking to the people while rejecting the attention requested by his mother and kinsmen, who 'stood outside.' 'Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?' (Mt 12.46–50), Jesus is quoted as asking. Gregory explained that this familial repudiation was a pretense (in his words, Jesus was dissembling [*dissimulat*]), because this was not in fact Jesus's mother: the Mary who 'stood outside' signified the Jews and their synagogue.³⁹ So when Gregory of Tours depicted a mother and child, he could count on his readers to fill in the emotional silences. In the miracle story with Illidius, the focus begins with the mother, then shifts to the child and *his* feelings. Here a kind of emotions theory is embedded in the text. The cured

child gives a laugh first, anticipating the joy of his heart (*gaudia cordis risu praecedente patefaciens*). Rather than the emotion preparing us for action, as modern theory would have it, Gregory here sees the gesture as preceding the internal joy. This may go some way in explaining why display seems so important a part of medieval emotional expression, for learned theory is not independent of lived experience.⁴⁰ But the real miracle, the moment for which Gregory uses the word '*divinitus*' (by divine intervention), is the child's call to his mother. She is thereby emotionally trans -formed. We begin with a mother habitually weeping; we end with one 'trembling with joy' and 'in wonder.' The episode concludes with a new take on mother love, as she does not immediately fulfill the child's command but rather remains *in situ*, thanking Illidius and vowing her son to him.

The story is very idealized and conforms to the emotional transformations that a churchman would want to see. But Gregory was right to think that emotions are connected to goals. Even if we may doubt that the episode ever happened – and certainly we know that Gregory cannot have known the emotions of the baby nor, probably, of the mother – Gregory's account nevertheless tells us how he imagined such a moment and thus, at some level, how it would have been felt, at least by him, were he in the shoes of mother and baby.⁴¹

That Gregory did want to tell his readers about the feelings involved in this miracle may have a good deal to do with the fact that it was peopled with his relatives. Many of his other miracle stories are dry and emotionless. Consider, for example, his account of two blind men from Bourges who come to St. Martin's tomb. 'A brightness like a flash burst over them [wrote Gregory] and they merited to see everything.'⁴² No doubt Gregory assumed his readers knew that people came to Martin's tomb in both physical and mental pain and that, when they were cured, they were joyous. But he rarely saw the need to say so. Gregory's emphasis on his own feelings may be part of what Ian Wood has called his 'individuality.' Gregory skewed his *Histories* to include the parts of Gaul significant to his family, and he extolled his family's cults while excluding others. Yet for the most part he kept these family ties a secret, posing as a disinterested observer.⁴³ Most of the emotional bits may be about him, even though he does not say so. For Wood this individuality means that Gregory of Tours may not be so representative of the sixth century as we historians would like to believe. But the same sort of thing may be said about Gregory the Great, whose most passionate passages have to do with himself and the monastery that he founded and lived in.

Given their appreciation of emotions, at least when matters concerned them personally, it is significant that for both Gregories the devil – that being who is neither human nor godly – has feelings. For with the devil we have a virtual emotional tabula rasa, although the Bible does suggest certain associations that may be drawn upon or not. Often, to be sure, the devil just rages (*saevit*), which is not an emotion but rather a form of bestial ferocity.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, at other times, he is a feeling being, possessed mainly by envy. In Gregory of Tours' *Vita Patrum* the devil figures as the first emotional being of the collection, with three different words for envy to describe his feelings: his *livor* leads him to plague saints Romanus and Lipicinus with stones, his *invidia* drives them out of the desert, and even so he remains *aemulus* of their sanctity. But, as a poor woman informs the saints, the devil's envy grows out of his 'fear (*metuit*) that the human race (*genus humanum*) will rise, ennobled its by faith.'⁴⁵ Thus the devil is not just envious but also afraid.

In the *Moralia* of Gregory the Great, more dependent on biblical vocabulary, the devil is similarly inspired by envy (*inuidendo*) as well as anger (*ira*, as in Rev. 12.12: 'the devil has come down to you in great wrath'), fury (*furor*), and even joy (*gaudet*) when he carries off his booty.⁴⁶ In turn the devil has an effect on the emotions of others: he teaches the good servant 'how much to fear (*timeret*)' and, in Gregory's *Pastoral Rule*, he works to extinguish *caritas*.⁴⁷

Repudiating feeling: the court of Clothar II

The importance of this feeling devil becomes clear when we realize that he disappears in a different emotional community, that connected with the court of Clothar II and his son Dagobert, kings of Neustria and Austrasia in the early seventh century.⁴⁸ For this community we have a significant number of texts. Although many of them were written about sixth-century saints, they themselves date from the first half of the seventh century and must be analyzed in that context, which was

dominated by the events of 613–614. In 613 Clothar II wiped out all traces of the old regime by brutally dismembering its root, the matriarch Brunhild, and imposing a *damnatio memoriae* on her branches as well.⁴⁹ As we shall see, the emotional community represented by members of Clothar's court were wary of emotions, particularly those of mothers. This may have been the case not only because of the regime's extreme vilification of Brunhild but also, it seems, because of Clothar's own troubled paternity. A recent study by Ian Wood argues that Clothar was probably not the son of Chilperic I, king of the Merovingian realm based at Soissons, but rather an illegitimate child of Fredegund, Chilperic's wife.⁵⁰ No long-haired sacralty or blood line related him to the Merovingians. He wore the royal crown because of his mother. In what must have been a most impressive public event, she had affirmed publicly, with the support of oaths from three bishops and three hundred *virii optimi*, that Clothar was the son of Chilperic.⁵¹ No wonder he repudiated mothers – and their passions – in general. His position as head of both Neustria and Austrasia was thus based on pure power politics, which, in the context, meant largely his ability to create and retain the support the Frankish nobility. Clothar was amazingly successful, the first Merovingian to unite the two kingdoms under one man's rule. His iron hand is, I think, reflected in the texts produced by courtiers or former courtiers under his and his son's influence. This, in any event, is my hypothesis to account for the effusive mothers and dispassionate heroes of the texts produced by men such as Desiderius of Vienne and Jonas of Bobbio.⁵²

Consider, for example, Jonas's depiction of John of Réomé's reaction to his mother's wish to see him after many years' separation. John had long ago left home to become first a hermit, then a monk, but now he was back in the vicinity of home. His mother, Jonas reports, delighting in his advent, hastened to him, rejoicing (*ovans*) to look upon his countenance. She came to where he was and applied to his assistants to allow her see her long-desired child (*desideratam . . . prolem*) with her own eyes. He declined, recalling the words of the Gospel, 'He who does not leave father and mother is not worthy of me.' (Mt 10.37) Yet he granted her a glimpse, walking past her (*transiens ante aeam*) for a moment 'to satisfy his mother's desire (*desiderium*) yet not weaken the vigor of his religion on account of her allurements (*blandimenta*).' Then he had one of his assistants tell her that she would never see him again in the present life.⁵³

The scene is a virtual repeat of the famous set piece in Jonas's *Vita Columbani*, where the saint's mother tries to prevent him from leaving home. She is struck with pain (*dolore*) and begs him not to go. 'Haven't you heard,' he shoots back, 'He who loves his father and mother more than me is not worthy of me?' She, wailing (*eiulans*) and prostrate on the ground, denies him permission to go; he, jumping over the threshold and his mother, admonishes her to be happy: she will never see him again in this life.⁵⁴

Is such an emotional configuration – a highly emotional mother, a tepid or even callous saint – simply a *topos*, part of a long-hallowed tradition of asceticism, rather than evidence of real emotion? Of course, we cannot deny that it is a *topos*. But when understood as an emotive as well, it may be seen to reflect real emotions – insofar as any words may do so – precisely because it repeats with evident conviction one sort of emotional stance. It is not as though seventh-century authors had no other possibilities. Even within the ascetic tradition, there were choices. We have already seen the two Gregories represent sons and mothers quite lovingly. In the sixth-century *Life of Fulgentius of Ruspe*, a confrontation between a saint and his mother is handled very differently than it is in the *Vitae* of John or Columbanus. Here the hero's mother comes to his monastery wanting to wrest her child from the religious life altogether. But the bishop speaks to her 'calmly' (*aequanimiter*) at the door, gently denying her request, while Fulgentius himself is depicted as suffering deeply, for he 'had always loved' (*semper amaverat*) his mother.⁵⁵ Early seventh-century writers knew at least some of this tenderer tradition, but they chose to ignore it.

Given the premium on 'cool' saints in these materials, it is significant that the devil rarely appears in them, as if the straight-laced atmosphere of the Clotharian court had no use for so dangerous a being. Thus it is not surprising that when he does occasionally enter a story, he is depicted without emotions. Conversely, his main concern is to arouse passions in his victims. For example, feeling nothing himself (or at least nothing that the author sees the need to report), the devil tries to arouse the love (*amores*) of lascivious girls in Saint Columbanus.⁵⁶ Later the old enemy is more

successful with Brunhild, whom he ‘excites by the sting of pride.’⁵⁷ When Athala takes over the abbacy at Bobbio, the Italian monastery founded by Columbanus, the devil stirs up *discordia*, ‘inciting the hearts of some of his subordinates against [the new abbot].’⁵⁸ And so on.⁵⁹ This is tepid stuff.

The emotional late seventh century

Contrast these cool sources with the passionate emotions of the last quarter of the seventh century. Now factional fighting tore at the fabric of the Merovingian polity. For this period it is difficult to point to links between people and texts, as most of the writings that we have are anonymous. Yet we can see in them common political assumptions: they represent the late seventh-century elite in Neustria and Burgundy, who, whatever side they may have been on, shared a common desire for royal access and privilege. Filled with the emotions that fuel discord, they were nevertheless unafraid to emphasize tenderer passions as well. We are in fact in an emotional world reminiscent of the chronicles that inspired Huizinga. Thus the monastic author of the *Passio Leudegarii* wrote that the ‘*duces*, along with their wives, ministers, and their whole *familia*, not to mention the *vulgus populi*, were so united in their love (*amore*) for [Leudegarius]’ that they were ready to lay down their lives for him.⁶⁰ When the wall of an old house collapsed, apparently crushing a bystander, Saint Praejectus began to wail (*cum eiulatibus*) and, entering a nearby church, produced a shower of tears (*lacrimarum inbrem*) as he prayed to God. The bystander was retrieved alive.⁶¹ When Saint Ouen, bishop of Rouen, came to the boundaries of his diocese after a trip to Rome, ‘the *suburbani cives* as well as the *vulgi populus* rolled out in throngs, exulting for joy and at the same time weeping.’ Even the king, queen, and nobles of the palace rejoiced (*laetantes*) and clapped their hands.⁶²

In these texts, the devil, however evil, at the same time seethes with feelings of every sort. He is often envious (*invidus*), as he was with the two Gregories.⁶³ But he also has other emotions: he is terrified (*conterritus*) at the tomb of a saint,⁶⁴ and when he sees monks preoccupied with virtue, he is capable of lamenting (*lugeat*) and even of feeling the ‘greatest grief’ (*maximam merorem*).⁶⁵ Endowing the devil with emotional breadth makes him another player in the politics of the period, a real person whose actions and feelings stir up others.

Curiously – at least at first glance – parents are relegated to the side-lines in these late seventh-century sources, becoming nearly invisible. By contrast with the court of Clothar, which excoriated mothers and their importunate demands, the factions of the late seventh century hardly noticed mothers at all. The *Vita* of Queen Balthild begins with her arrival from England to Gaul;⁶⁶ Saint Leudegarius is said to be nobly born ‘by earthly generosity,’ his parents passed over in silence;⁶⁷ Saint Ouen has a mother and father, but they are simply named in at the start and forgotten thereafter.⁶⁸ Only Praejectus’s mother gets a bit part in his story: in a trance she sees her unborn child come out of her side, and, ‘struck by the vision and trembling, she began to wail (*ullare*) all about, wanting to know what such things might mean for her.’⁶⁹ To a large degree, then, biological mothers have become unimportant in these texts. But they are replaced by loving father and mother figures. Thus the author of the *Passio Praejecti* remarks dryly that the baby saint ‘was born, cried in his cradle, and was fed with milk’ – though no parent seems to be on the scene – but after he was given to archdeacon Genesisius, some real fathering took place: ‘having received him with paternal affection, Genesisius brought him up with all care and educated him.’⁷⁰ Queen Balthild was the biological mother of three sons, but her biographer becomes effusive about her mothering only when she enters the monastery at Chelles: ‘She loved the sisters with the most pious affection (*affectu diligebat*) as if they were her own daughters.’⁷¹ The evidence suggests an elite used more to foster-parentage than home upbringing.

I began this article with the Burgher of Paris’s crowd in tears; I end – or nearly – with an equally emotional throng around Saint Ouen. Was Huizinga right to see such things as the symptoms of a childlike mentality? Clearly not. Jolliffe and Co. are much closer to the mark to understand them as political gestures. But they are not gestures that would work at every point in the early Middle Ages. In the first half of the seventh century, for example, the court of Clothar II would have disdained them; they would have seemed (as they do to some of us today) ‘over the top.’ It is

useful, then, to recall that emotions are assessments of weal or woe, and thus tied not only to ways of communicating but also to the whole set of goals that an individual, a group, a community sets for itself and considers to be in its interests. We have seen three quite different emotional communities in the space of about a century: the first appreciated emotions in moderation; the second was wary in the extreme of feelings, especially those of mothers; and, the third revealed in feelings of every sort. There must have been other communities during that same period, some of which may be ferreted out by medievalists and others of which may never be recovered. But at least we can say, turning Marc Bloch's phrase on its head, that the Middle Ages was 'a civilization in which moral or social conventions (sometimes) *required* well-bred people to express themselves in tears and raptures.'

Notes

- ¹ Alexandre Tuetey, ed., *Journal d'un bourgeois de Paris, 1405–1449* (Paris, 1881), 21.
- ² J.M.B.C. Kervyn de Lettenhove, ed., *Oeuvres de Georges Chastellain*, 8 vols. (Brussels, 1863–66), iii, 461.
- ³ Bernard Édouard de Mondrot and Jean Le Clerc, eds., *Journal de Jean de Roye, connu sous le nom de Chronique scandaleuse, 1460–1483*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1894–1896), i, 22.
- ⁴ *Oeuvres de Georges Chastellain*, iii, 30.
- ⁵ *Oeuvres de Georges Chastellain*, i, 82.
- ⁶ Johan Huizinga, *The Autumn of the Middle Ages*, trans. Rodney J. Payton and Ulrich Mammitzsch (Chicago, 1996); first published in Dutch (Haarlem, 1919). All the quotations in nn. 1–5 above are cited in the first chapter of Huizinga's book, on pp. 3, 3, 7, 15, and 16, respectively. I have used the translations supplied by Payton and Mammitzsch, with modifications where necessary.
- ⁷ Huizinga, *Autumn of the Middle Ages*, 8, 15, and 9. I thank Mayke de Jong for helping me with the Dutch.
- ⁸ Huizinga, *Autumn of the Middle Ages*, 12.
- ⁹ Huizinga, *Autumn of the Middle Ages*, 8.
- ¹⁰ Huizinga, *Autumn of the Middle Ages*, 15.
- ¹¹ But see Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'Eros and Clio: Emotional Paradigms in Medieval Historiography', in *Mediävistik im 21. Jahrhundert*, ed. Hans-Werner Goetz and Jörg Jarnut (Munich, 2003), 427–41, for the argument that emotions history has been done constantly, if not intentionally.
- ¹² For further discussion of Febvre's article see Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'Worrying about Emotions in History', *AHR* 107 (2002), 821–45, esp. 821–3.
- ¹³ Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society*, trans. L.A. Manyon (Chicago, 1961), 73.
- ¹⁴ A point further elaborated in Rosenwein, 'Worrying about Emotions', 826–8.
- ¹⁵ (Paris, 1957), in English as Jean Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God*, trans. C. Misrahi (New York, 1961); see also Jean Leclercq, *Monks and Love in Twelfth-Century France* (Oxford, 1979).
- ¹⁶ It is impossible to list all the works that belong in this group. For one recent example, see Charles Baladier, *Erôs au moyen âge: Amour, désir et délectation morose* (Paris, 1999).
- ¹⁷ J.E.A. Jolliffe, *Angevin Kingship*, 2nd edn. (London, 1963; orig. pub. 1955). Fredric L. Cheyette, *Ermengard of Narbonne and the World of the Troubadours* (Ithaca, NY, 2001), chapter 13, may be said to bridge at last the chasm between the first and second groups adduced here.
- ¹⁸ See Jolliffe's remarks (*Angevin Kingship*, 100 and at n. 4) about the 'purposes of state' revealed by Henry II's threat of vengeance in Peter of Blois, *Epistolae* 5, PL 207, col. 15.
- ¹⁹ Jolliffe, *Angevin Kingship*, 101: 'For that rebuff [of his appeal for an aid from the Cistercians, John] had no customary – we should say, no constitutional – remedy. But he had the *ira et malevolentia*, and it served him well.'
- ²⁰ Gerd Althoff, 'Ira Regis: Prolegomena to a History of Royal Anger', in *Anger's Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages*, ed. Barbara H. Rosenwein (Ithaca, NY, 1998), chapter 3, and Paul Hyams, 'What Did Henry III of England Think in Bed and in French about Kingship and Anger?' in *Anger's Past*, chapter 5.
- ²¹ Paul Hyams, *Rancor and Reconciliation in Medieval England* (Ithaca, NY, 2003); Daniel Smail, *The Consumption of Justice: Emotions, Publicity, and Legal Culture in Marseille, 1264–1423* (Ithaca, NY, 2003).
- ²² Exceptions are the numerous studies of C. Stephen Jaeger and Gerd Althoff, which look at the Ottonian period and even earlier. For examples, see C. Stephen Jaeger, *Ennobling Love: In Search of a Lost Sensibility* (Philadelphia, 1999); and Althoff as above, n. 20.
- ²³ Out of a very large bibliography I choose as particularly noteworthy Keith Oatley, *Best Laid Schemes: The Psychology of Emotions* (Cambridge, 1992); Thomas J. Scheff, *Microsociology: Discourse, Emotion, and Social Structure* (Chicago, 1990). There is further bibliography in Rosenwein, 'Worrying about Emotions', 836–7.
- ²⁴ For the classic overview, see Rom Harré, ed., *The Social Construction of Emotions* (Oxford, 1986).
- ²⁵ Piroška Nagy, *Le don des larmes au Moyen Age* (Paris, 2000).
- ²⁶ See Wilhelm Grönbech, *The Culture of the Teutons* (London, 1931), i, 19: 'There is abundance of passion in the poetry of the Northmen [whom Grönbech makes equivalent to 'Teutons', i.e. Germans], but it appears only as a geysir, up and down, never bursting out and flowing forth in lyrical streams.'
- ²⁷ Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, trans. Edmund Jephcott, 2 vols. in 1 (Oxford, 1994), 157.

- ²⁸ Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, 158.
- ²⁹ Alice M. Isen and Gregory Andrade Diamond, 'Affect and Automaticity', in *Unintended Thought*, ed. James S. Uleman and John A. Bargh (New York, 1989), 139.
- ³⁰ The fullest account is in William M. Reddy, 'Against Constructionism: The Historical Ethnography of Emotions', *Current Anthropology* 38 (1997), 327–51.
- ³¹ For some differences see Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'The Places and Spaces of Emotion', in *Uomo e Spazio nell'alto medioevo* (Spoleto, 2003), 505–36.
- ³² Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Job* 31.45.87, ed. Marcus Adriaen, CCSL 143B, 1610.
- ³³ See Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'Identity and Emotions in the Early Middle Ages', in *Die Suche nach den Ursprüngen. Von der Bedeutung des frühen Mittelalters*, ed. Walter Pohl and Paul Herold (Vienna, 2002), 23–32.
- ³⁴ See the emotion words used in Gregory of Tours, *Vita Patrum*, ed. Bruno Krusch, in MGH SRM i/2, 212–94.
- ³⁵ Gregory of Tours, *Vita Patrum* 2 (4), MGH SRM i/2, 221. All translations in this paper are my own, but I have consulted and learned much from others' translations, in particular, Gregory of Tours, *Life of the Fathers*, trans. Edward James, 2nd edn. (Liverpool, 1991); Gregory of Tours, *The Miracles of the Bishop St. Martin*, trans. Raymond van Dam in his *Saints and their Miracles in Late Antique Gaul* (Princeton, 1993), 199–303.
- ³⁶ Gregory of Tours, *Histories* 5.34, ed. Bruno Krusch and Wilhelm Levison, MGH SRM i/1, 239.
- ³⁷ Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in Euangelia* 3, ed. Raymond Étaix, CCSL 141, 24.
- ³⁸ Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in Euangelia* 3, CCSL 141, 23.
- ³⁹ Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in Euangelia* 3, CCSL 141, 20–21.
- ⁴⁰ This is the premise of 'emotionology.' See Peter N. Stearns with Carol Z. Stearns, 'Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards', *AHR* 90 (1985), 813–36. It is also implied by the notion of 'emotives', since, for Reddy, emotions are like 'overlearned cognitive habits.' See William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge, 2001), 55.
- ⁴¹ See the remarks on 'perspectival thinking' in Martha C. Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (Cambridge, 2001), 146.
- ⁴² Gregory of Tours, *De virtutibus sancti Martini* 2.29, ed. Bruno Krusch, MGH SRM i/2, 169–70.
- ⁴³ Ian Wood, 'The Individuality of Gregory of Tours', in *The World of Gregory of Tours*, ed. Kathleen Mitchell and Ian Wood (Leiden, 2002), 29–46.
- ⁴⁴ E.g. Gregory the Great, *Moralia* 31.11.16, CCSL 143B, 1562: 'diabolus in hoc mundo saeviens.'
- ⁴⁵ Gregory of Tours, *Vita Patrum* 1 (1), MGH SRM i/2, 214.
- ⁴⁶ For the devil's envy, see, e.g., Gregory the Great, *Moralia* 5.46.84, CCSL 143, 281; for *ira*, Gregory the Great, *Moralia* 34.8.18, CCSL 143B, 1745; for *furor*, Gregory the Great, *Moralia* 13.10.12, CCSL 143A, 675; for joy, Gregory the Great, *Moralia* 2.46.72, CCSL 143, 102.
- ⁴⁷ For the devil's lessons in fear, see Gregory the Great, *Moralia* 32.11.14, CCSL 143B, 1639; for his extinguishing of love, see Gregory the Great, *Regula Pastoralis* 3.23 in Grégoire le Grand, *Règle pastorale*, ed. and trans. Bruno Judic, Floribert Rommel, and Charles Morel, Sources chrétiennes 382 (Paris, 1992), 414.
- ⁴⁸ For a more extended discussion of the emotional communities of the seventh century, see the present author's article in *Annales: Histoire – Sciences Sociales* 58 (2003), 1271–92.
- ⁴⁹ For the death of Brunhild, see Fredegar, *Chronicle* 4.42 in *The Fourth Book of the Chronicle of Fredegar with its continuations*, trans. J.M. Wallace-Hadrill (London, 1960), 35; for the line of kings, minus those of Brunhild's progeny, see *Chlotharii II Edictum [Edict of Paris]*, c. 9, MGH Capitularia, Legum Sectio II, Capitularia Regum Francorum, 2 vols. (Hanover, 1883–97), i, 22.
- ⁵⁰ Ian Wood, 'Deconstructing the Merovingian Family', in *The Construction of Communities in the Early Middle Ages: Texts, Resources and Artefacts*, ed. Richard Corradini, Max Diesenberger, and Helmut Reimitz (Leiden, 2003), 149–71, esp. 163–4.
- ⁵¹ Gregory of Tours, *Histories* 8.9, MGH SRM i/1, 376.
- ⁵² On their connection to the court, Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Negotiating Space: Power, Restraint, and Privileges of Immunity in Early Medieval Europe* (Ithaca, NY, 1999), 61–3.
- ⁵³ Jonas, *Vita Iohannis* 6, ed. Bruno Krusch, MGH SRM iii, 509.
- ⁵⁴ Jonas, *Vita Columbani* 1.4, ed. Bruno Krusch, MGH SRM iv, 69.
- ⁵⁵ Ferrandus diaconus Carthaginensis (?), *Vita beati Fulgentii pontificis*, c. 4 in *Vie de Saint Fulgence de Ruspe*, ed. and trans. P.G.-G. Lapeyre (Paris, 1929), 25–7. I thank Leslie Dossey for calling my attention to this text.
- ⁵⁶ Jonas, *Vita Columbani* 1.3, MGH SRM iv, 68.
- ⁵⁷ Jonas, *Vita Columbani* 1.18, MGH SRM iv, 86.
- ⁵⁸ Jonas, *Vita Columbani* 2.1, MGH SRM iv, 113.
- ⁵⁹ In Jonas, *Vita Columbani* 2.22, MGH SRM iv, 142, the devil incites the 'gulae aviditatem' of a nun, who sneaks extra food and drink.
- ⁶⁰ *Passio Leudegarii I* 16, ed. Bruno Krusch, MGH SRM v, 297–8.
- ⁶¹ *Passio Praejecti* 11, ed. Bruno Krusch, MGH SRM v, 232.
- ⁶² *Vita Audoini* 11, ed. Wilhelm Levison, MGH SRM v, 561.
- ⁶³ E.g. *Passio Leudegarii I* 3, MGH SRM v, 286.
- ⁶⁴ *Vita Sanctae Balthildis* 17, ed. Bruno Krusch, MGH SRM ii, 504–5.
- ⁶⁵ *Vita Wandregisili* 15, ed. Bruno Krusch, MGH SRM v, 20–1.
- ⁶⁶ *Vita Balthildis* 2, MGH SRM ii, 483.

⁶⁷ *Passio Leudegarii I* 1, MGH SRM v, 283.

⁶⁸ *Vita Audoini* 1, MGH SRM v, 554.

⁶⁹ *Passio Praejecti* 1, MGH SRM v, 226.

⁷⁰ For his infancy: *Passio Praejecti* 2, MGH SRM v, 227; for Genesisius's welcome, *Passio Praejecti*, 4, MGH SRM v, 228.

⁷¹ *Vita Balthildis* 11, MGH SRM ii, 496.