

“Othering” a Neighbour: Perceptions of the French Body in the Early Modern German Lands

Irina Savinetskaya

The human body lies in the centre of collective images and is one of the key elements in the perception of self and other.¹ Already in 1527 Agrippa of Nettesheim believed that “several nations have some particular marks of distinction, which are the more immediate marks of Heaven; so that a man may easily discern of what nation such or such a stranger may be, by his Voice, Speech, Tone, Design, Conversation, Diet, Love or Hatred, Anger and Malice, and the like.”² It is therefore not surprising that representations of other nations largely centre on the issue of the body. Being understood broadly, the body encompasses such spheres as sexuality, gender, appearance, morals and medicine. This article attempts to describe various elements of the image of the “French” body in the German lands, trace its origins and establish their relation to each other as well as to the self-image of the Germans.

Resorting to the expression of Gonthier-Louis Fink, “auto-stereotypes and hetero-stereotypes are often a curious cocktail of tradition and modernity.”³ While studying national images it becomes clear that their development cannot be regarded as a linear process. A national image appears to be a construct assorted from various members taken from the stock of common representations, “conventions and commonplaces inherited from a pre-existing textual tradition.”⁴ The assortment of characteristics depends on the epoch and author’s intentions. Thus, at times of crises between nations certain unfavourable characteristics are being invoked and reinforced, while at times of peace and good relations patterns of plausible representations seem to be playing a more significant role. Also, the image of an “other” can either represent a role model or a negative example depending on the author’s sense of belonging to his or her

¹ Elena Agazzi, “Body” in *Imagology. The Cultural Construction and Literary Representation of National Characters. A Critical Survey*, ed. Manfred Beller and Joep Leerssen (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), 270-72.

² Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa of Nettesheim, *The Vanity of Arts and Sciences* (London: J. C. for S. Speed, 1676), 127.

³ Gonthier-Louis Fink, “Réflexions sur l’Imagologie,” *Recherches germaniques* 23 (1993): 19.

⁴ Joep Leerssen, “National Identity and National Stereotype” (<http://www.imagologica.eu/leerssen> – last access December 28, 2012).

own group. The set of variable common national characteristics is certainly not permanent and undergoes changes throughout epochs depending on historical, social and cultural circumstances. However, it seems that the changes occur very slowly with tradition playing a leading role.

The hetero-image of the French in early Modern Germany has a long-standing pre-existing literary tradition dating back to the Antiquity and the Middle Ages featuring the works of Caesar, Diodorus, Pomponius Mela, Isidore of Seville, Otto of Freising, Konrad of Magdeburg and others.⁵ With the rediscovery of ancient texts in the Renaissance, the climate theory and the theory of the four humours started to play a significant role along with the already existing patterns of representation. The climate theory originated from the works of Aristotle, Galen and Hippocrates and although it was never entirely abandoned in the Middle Ages it became much more popular in the Early Modern period.⁶ The theory divided the world into the northern cold, the southern hot and the temperate middle climate zones each of which defined the morals and physical appearance of peoples living there. Thus, each nation was assigned certain characteristics based on its geographical origins.

In the fifth century Hippocrates developed a theory according to which the heat, cold, humidity and aridity were the primary elements of human bodies. The influence of climate through the medium of weather, soil properties, etc. preconditioned the combination of these elements in human bodies. The balance of the four humours was believed to be an underlying principle behind peoples' characters. In *On the Temperaments* Galen identified the four main temperaments based on the predominating combination of two out of the four humours. The four temperaments elaborated by Galen were sanguine, choleric, melancholic and phlegmatic in which the combination of the warm and moist, warm and dry, cold and dry or cold and moist dominated accordingly.

Another field of knowledge which also flourished in the Renaissance and influenced the perception of nations was astrology. Planets and zodiacal signs were believed to govern countries and peoples and define their characters. Thus, the Jews were considered to be governed by Scorpio, France by Mercury (and sometimes by Jupiter), Germany by Mars, etc. Mars was tightly related to the stereotype of the Germans being fearless warriors. The belief that France was ruled by Mercury, the God who had given knowledge to the Egyptians, led to a stereotype of the French being versed in letters. At the same time, the perception of Mercury as volatile and inconstant; flying from one place to another was interconnected with the stereotype of the French being inconsistent. Already in the thirteenth century Alexander of Roes claimed that *inconstantia* was among

⁵ For an overview, see for example: Ingomar Weiler, "Ethnographische Typisierungen im antiken und mittelalterlichen Vorfeld der 'Völkertafel'," in *Europäischer Völkerspiegel. Imagologisch-ethnographische Studien zu den Völkertafeln des frühen 18. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Franz K. Stanzel (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag C. Winter, 1999), 97-119.

⁶ Waldemar Zachariasiewicz, "Klimatheorie und Nationalcharakter auf der 'Völkertafel'," in *Europäischer Völkerspiegel*, ed. Stanzel, 119-39.

the main characteristics of the French.⁷ At the beginning of the sixteenth century Martin Luther stated in the *Tischreden* (1531-1546) that in matters of love the French were to be regarded fickle: "In amoribus Germani ambiciosi, Galli leves."⁸ Sebastian Münster (1544) also claimed that the French were to be considered "nachlässig" (fickle),⁹ while Scaliger (1561) thought of them as "leichtsinnig" (frivolous).¹⁰

The rediscovery of Tacitus' *Germania* in the mid-fifteenth century played one of the most crucial roles in the early modern self-fashioning of the Germans. The image of the Germans created by Tacitus served the purpose of a "Sittenspiegel": by describing a foreign barbarous people in a plausible light, Tacitus wanted to express his stance on the current moral state of Rome.¹¹ German humanists eagerly adopted Tacitus' strategy to show the superiority of the German nation above Romanic peoples. This brought about new directions and dynamics in the self-fashioning of the Germans as well as in representations of the French in the Early Modern German lands.

Auto-images of the Germans and German images of the French constructed by German humanists were related on the basis of the principle of "inverted" sameness, using the term of François Hartog.¹² Following Tacitus, the Germans presented themselves as people with strong physique and expressive features. In contrast, the French were often depicted as delicate and effeminate ("weibisch"). Martin Luther stated in the *Tischreden* that "the Germans have a posture of gladiators, unrestrained features, animal-sounding speech, fierce behaviour..." while "the French have delicate posture, pleasant features, charming voice, moderate behaviour..."¹³ In *The Vanity Of Arts and Sciences* Agrippa refers to the same dichotomy: "For who that sees a man marching in more state than a Dunhill-Cock, in gate like a Fencer, a confident Look, a deep Tone, grave Speech, severe in his Carriage, and tatter'd in Habit, that will not straight judge him to be a German? Do we not know the French by their moderate Gate, effeminate Carriage, smiling Countenance, pleasing Voice, courteous Speech, modest Behaviour and careless Habit?"¹⁴ Johann Boehme, the "father of folklore studies" whose work *Omnium Gentium Mores, Leges et Ritus*

⁷ Jean-Marie Moeglin, *Kaisertum und allerchristlicher König 1214 bis 1500* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2010), 294.

⁸ Ruth Florack, *Tiefsinnige Deutsche, Frivole Franzosen – Nationale Stereotype in deutscher und französischer Literatur* (Stuttgart: Metzler Verlag, 2001), 23.

⁹ *Ibidem*, 51.

¹⁰ Edward Reichel, "'Heimath der Schaulust, der Eitelkeit, der Moden und Novitäten' – Frankreich und der Franzose," in *Europäischer Völkerspigel*, ed. Stanzel, 175.

¹¹ Herfried Münkler, *Die Deutschen und ihren Mythen* (Berlin: Rowohlt, 2009), 150.

¹² François Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus. The Representation of the Other in the Writing of History* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1988), 213.

¹³ Florack, *Tiefsinnige Deutsche, Frivole Franzosen*, 23: *Germanus habet gestum gladiatorum, [...] vultum effrenem, vocem bubulam, mores feroces [...] Gallus habet gestum mollem, vultum blandum, vocem dulcisonam, mores modestos.*

¹⁴ Agrippa of Nettesheim, *The Vanity of Arts and Sciences*, 127.

(1520) was translated and reprinted forty times until 1620¹⁵ wrote that the voice of the Germans shows “that they are not in any way effeminate, but very manly.”¹⁶

The stereotype of the effeminacy of the French can be traced back to the Middle Ages. At the beginning of the thirteenth century Jacques de Vitry wrote in his *Historia Occidentalis* that the French “are considered arrogant, delicate and women-like, while the Germans are regarded brutal and are known as heavy drinkers.”¹⁷ In the fourteenth century Konrad of Megenberg mocked the French for being too effeminate to be good soldiers and claimed that they dressed up for a battle as if for a wedding.¹⁸ One can speculate that the origins of the stereotype of the effeminacy of the French lie in the sphere of astrology. In his *Tetrabiblos*, a major astrological work in the Middle Ages and in the Early Modern Times, Ptolemy divided planets into masculine and feminine. According to him, Moon and Venus were feminine planets with predominately moist elements, while Sun, Saturn, Jupiter and Mars were masculine planets with prevailing hot elements. He calls Mercury “common to both genders inasmuch as it produces the dry and the moist alike.” Since the ancient sources describe the French as the worshipers of Mercury it is possible that the stereotype about the effeminacy of the French was associated with the double nature of the planet.

The indifference of the Germans to money and their appearance as opposed to the fondness of the French for luxury was another proverbial pair of mirror-like characteristics. According to Tacitus, the Germans had no interest in gold or silver and did not pay much attention to their clothes or food, leading a simple life. The stereotype of the luxuriousness of the French and Italians was rather widespread. Since luxury was believed to corrupt men and was tightly associated with lechery,¹⁹ by representing themselves as indifferent to luxury, the Germans thus contributed to the development of a discourse on the innocence of the German nation, which was initiated by Enea Silvio Piccolomini and became already a “stock image” by the second half of the sixteenth century.²⁰ In line with this idea, Johann Boehme wrote that at first the Germans did not know what to do with money that were given to the German ambassadors by representatives of other peoples and that only with time they accepted the practice of using money.²¹ A part of the discourse on German innocence was the

¹⁵ Franz Stanzel, “Zur literarischen Imagologie. Eine Einführung,” in *Europäischer Völker-spiegel*, ed. Stanzel, 14.

¹⁶ Johann Boehme, *Omnium gentium mores, leges et ritus, ex multis clarissimis rerum scriptoribus* (Friburgi Brisgoiae, 1526), 196: “Vox quae nil muliebre sonat, sed tota virilis.”

¹⁷ Moeglin, *Kaisertum und allerchristlicher König*, 293.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, 294.

¹⁹ Christopher J. Berry, *The Idea of Luxury: a Conceptual and Historical Investigation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

²⁰ On the discourse about the innocence of the Germans, see: Helmut Puff, *Sodomy in Reformation Germany and Switzerland: 1400-1600* (London and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 130-32.

²¹ Boehme, *Omnium gentium mores, leges et ritus*, 197.

modest dress of German women which according to Johann Boehme was “rather distinguished and decent and that there would be no one who could reprehend them, for their dresses would never have a too low neck.”²²

The French fashion was one of the manifestations of the French fondness for luxury. As Ulinka Rublack writes, “clothing continued to be understood not as something external to the body, that could be simply put on and taken off, or that could function as an abstract sign: rather, it was seen to mould a person and materialize identity.”²³ Since the French clothing was considered intrinsic to the image of the French, the popularity of the French fashion in early modern Germany was often perceived as alarming and disturbing. Some authors represented the French clothing as targeting the German national unity and corrupting the inner strength of the Germans. The often quoted passage from the “School of Tyranny” of Ulrich of Hutten referring to the foreign fashion reads: “it is hardly credible that things which do not originate here are good for those born here. If this was the case, then nature would ensure that they were grown here. This is why one desires them not for everyday usage, but for pleasure. Not to keep up the body, but to indulge it, you (merchants) circulate these tempting things. Thus it is no surprise that health is endangered and that one is prone to suffer every illness. Also you have imported silk and every kind of foreign dress through which the inborn German strength is softened up and the best morals are corrupted, because through you a female obsessiveness about looks and awful effeminacy spreads in the life of man.”²⁴

The *Annals of Bavaria* of Johannes Aventinus contain an interesting passage in which Charlemagne criticises the French fashion and the fondness of the Germans for it. It is obvious that Charlemagne in Aventinus’ chronicle in fact refers to the popularity of the French fashion in the sixteenth-century German lands: “O Germans and free Franks, how imprudent and inconsistent you are! That you adopted the clothes of those, whom you have conquered and overthrown, after you became their lords, is not a good sign: you adopted their clothing and they will take your hearts from you. What are these *welsche* patches and rags? They do not cover the whole body, leaving half of it naked, they are not good, neither for cold nor hot weather, neither for rain nor for wind ... Then a country decree that one should neither buy nor sell the French clothing in Germany was issued.”²⁵

²² *Ibidem*, 205: “Satis honestus hodie foeminarum vestitus est, satis decorus, nihil haberet quod merito reprehendere quis posset. si a quibusdam superne nimium non excaveretur.”

²³ Ulinka Rublack, *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 138.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, 138-39.

²⁵ Caspar Hirschi, *Wettkampf der Nationen: Konstruktionen einer deutschen Ehrgemeinschaft an der Wende vom Mittelalter zur Neuzeit* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2005), 318: “O ir Teutschen und freien Franken, wie seit ir als inbesonnen und unbeständig! das ir deren claidung, die ir überwunden und bestritten habt, der ir herren seit, annembt, ist nit ain guet zaichen, bedeut nichts guets: ir nembt in ire claiden, so werden sie euch eueren herzen nemen. Was sollen dise wälsche flecken und hadem? Decken den ganzen leib nit, lassen in

Another pattern of representing the French body was grounded in xenohomophobia – a term introduced by Rebecca Zorach.²⁶ Xenohomophobia conditions the perception of other nations as homosexuals. As Helmut Puff shows in his study on sodomy in Reformation Germany, the Germans found “people from regions where a Romance language was spoken, suspicious of sexual misdoings.”²⁷ At the same time the French considered the Italians perpetrators of the “Italian vice” or homosexuality. In a similar fashion, the Turks considered Persians homosexuals. The geographical map of xenohomophobia can be expanded, since every nation had fears of homosexuality in regard to its own “others.”

Unreyne liebe is an expression used by Johannes Lichtenberger in his *Pronosticatio zu teutsch* when he referred to the practice of homosexuality in France: “And as much as disorderly acts of lust with the youth are spread in the Italian lands, as much the unchaste love with men as if they were women is common among the French.”²⁸ It is worth highlighting that Lichtenberger's prognostic was called a “medieval bestseller” by Dietrich Kurze, the acknowledged specialist on Lichtenberger. Kurze established that the interest in Lichtenberger's *Pronosticatio* in the German lands was mostly particular at the times of conflicts between Germany and France. Thus, the prognostic was published in an abridged version six times in 1620 and 1621, at the beginning of the Thirty Years War. Between 1686 and 1691, when the French were mostly active at the Rhine, five more editions appeared. In 1813 *Pronosticatio* was published again as a separate book together with a pamphlet against Napoleon.²⁹ This was largely due to the overall anti-French character of the book.

Theophrastus Paracelsus was among the ones who showed great interest in Lichtenberger's work. In 1529 or 1530 he published a reflection on Lichtenberger's prophecies entitled “Interpretation of several figures of Joh. Lichtenberger from the first and third parts.” Paracelsus' work is almost entirely centred on the French and their role in the future of the Christendom. At the very beginning of his work he states that the French are unchaste. He develops his argument by saying that the connection between the rooster and the French is provided by astronomy and that the French are unchaste and arrogant just like

wol halben blos, sein weder für kelt noch für hitz, für regen noch für wind guet... ‘Lies demnach ain landpot ausgen, das man solch Franzosen claiden in Teutschland weder kaufet noch verkauft.’”

²⁶ Rebecca Zorach, “The Matter of Italy: Sodomy and the Scandal of Style in Sixteenth-Century France,” *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 28/3 (1998): 581–609.

²⁷ Puff, *Sodomy in Reformation Germany*, 118.

²⁸ Johannes Lichtenberger, *Pronosticatio zu theutsch* (Heidelberg, 1488), G4a: “wie vyl vnordentliche werck der begerlichkeyt mit iungen vnd umbfahen werden geubet in welschen lande wie vyl der by den Frantzosen vnd sust vyl vnreyner liebe werden vben die mans personen glichsam die frauwen.”

²⁹ Dietrich Kurze, “Prophecy and History: Lichtenberger's Forecasts of Events to Come (from the Fifteenth to the Twentieth Century): Their Reception and Diffusion,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courland Institutes* 21, No. 1/2 (1958): 65.

the roosters are in their very nature: "From the name of the French, who are called the *Galli*, arises their nature which is similar to the nature of roosters, and it has been established by natural philosophers that just as a rooster is full of unchastity and pride, so are the French in their nature filled with unchastity... Thus it is known that on both sides the French and the roosters have the same combination and it is fully supported by astronomers."³⁰

Both the rooster and unchastity were commonly associated with the French. In one of his *Colloquies* (1518) Erasmus gives a conversation between a certain Claudius and his friend Balbus, who has just returned to Holland from France:

Claudius: From a Hollander you're turned into a Frenchman.

Balbus: What? Was I a capon when I left here?

C: Your dress shows you're changed from a Dutchman to a Frenchman.

B: Better this change than turn into a hen! But as a cowl doesn't make a monk, neither do clothes make a Frenchman.³¹

It is clear that Erasmus is playing here with the words *capus* (rooster), *Gallus* (Frenchman), *gallus* (rooster) and *gallina* (hen). In her study of cultural imagery of Italy in the French learned culture, Rebecca Zorach quotes a passage which alludes to the talk between Balbus and Claudius, showing that Italy was important for France in a similar way as France was for Germany: "You could well leave French, but you'll return Italian as well, in your mannerisms and habits, your carriage and your language; in short, you'll have the fur of an Italian, in order to be admired by your countrymen."³²

The stereotype about the unchaste nature of the French was grounded in the climate theory and the theory of the four humours. Starting from the Antiquity and throughout the Middle Ages and Modern Times the French were considered hot-blooded and sanguine while the Germans were believed to be phlegmatic and cold-blooded.³³ Aristotle believed that hot-blooded people ("Young Men") had troubles controlling their sexual desires:

Of the bodily desires, it is the sexual by which they are most swayed and in which they show absence of self-control. They are changeable and

³⁰ Theophrastus Paracelsus, "Auslegung über ettliche Figuren Jo. Liechtenbergers aus dem ersten und dritten teil," in *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Karl Sudhoff (München: Otto Wilhelm Barth, 1923), vol.7, 477: "Von namen der Franzosen, das die Galli heissen, entspringt in aus der natur, die sie haben gleich den hanen, und ist in geben worden von den naturalibus dan zu gleicher weis wie ein han aller unkeuschheit und hoffart voll steckt, also sind auch die Franzosen in irer natur voller unkeuschheit... also wisset, das zu beiden seiten gleiche constellation in Franzosen und in hanen stehen und ist wol bestett von den astronomis."

³¹ Erasmus, "Colloquies," in *Collected Works of Erasmus*, ed. Craig R. Thompson (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1997), vol. 39, 18.

³² Rebecca Zorach, "The Matter of Italy," 582.

³³ Franz Stanzel, "Zur literarischen Imagologie. Eine Einführung," 20-21; Weiler, "Ethnographische Typisierungen," in *ibidem*, 105. The phlegmatic composition of the German bodies was often named as an explanation to a popular stereotype that the Germans were heavy drinkers. Alcohol was believed to warm the cold element inside their bodies.

fickle in their desires, which are violent while they last, but quickly over: their impulses are keen but not deep-rooted, and are like sick people's attacks of hunger and thirst.

Unlike sanguine people, the cold-blooded people ("Elderly Men") are able to easily abstain from sex: Their sensual passions have either altogether gone or have lost their vigour: consequently they do not feel their passions much, and their actions are inspired less by what they do feel than by the love of gain.³⁴

Since the French were considered sanguine and the Spanish choleric, they were regarded as unable to control their sexual desires and therefore unchaste, while the Germans being generally perceived as phlegmatic people were often represented as chaste.³⁵ Thus, for instance already in the thirteenth century, Alexander of Roes believed that *luxuria* or lust were one of the major characteristics of the French.³⁶ The already quoted Agrippa wrote that "for the Love of women is common to all, and there is no person that at one time or other does not feel the Fire thereof; though the women love one way, the men another; young men one way, great personages another way; the poor one way; the rich another way; and, which is more miraculous, according to the difference of Nations and Climates. The Italians are of one humour in the Amours, the Spaniards of another, the French of another, the Germans of another. The same difference of Love appears in the difference of Sex, Age, Dignity, Fortune, and Nation, every one having a different sort of amorous Frenzy... The lascivious French-man trusts in his Obsequiousness, and strives to win his Ladies favour with Songs and merry Discourse. If he grows jealous, he complains of his hard fortune; but if he looses his Love, he reviles her, threatens revenge, and attempts to compass his ends by force. After enjoyment, he neglects her, and marries another. The cold German slowly moves to love; but being once inflam'd, he makes use of art and liberality."³⁷ Johann Boehme quoted Dionysius claiming that the French were hot spirited³⁸ and wrote that the Germans "could not endure thirst and heat unlike the French, but were very tolerant to cold."³⁹

It was believed that the composition of the four elements defined peoples' proneness to certain diseases. Based on the theory of the four humours, Joseph Grünpeck claimed that the sanguine French with predominating warm and moist elements were more susceptible to "Böze Franzos" or syphilis than other peoples:

³⁴ Aristotle, "Rhetoric," in *Complete Works: the Revised Oxford Translation*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), vol. 2, book 2: 12-13.

³⁵ Tilmann Walter, *Unkeuschheit und Werke der Liebe: Diskurse über Sexualität am Beginn der Neuzeit in Deutschland* (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1998), 324.

³⁶ Moeglin, *Kaisertum und allerchristlicher König*, 294.

³⁷ Agrippa of Nettesheim, *The Vanity of Arts and Sciences*, 193-94.

³⁸ Johann Boehme, *Omnium gentium mores, leges et ritus*, 281: "igneamens Gallis."

³⁹ *Ibidem*, 197: "sitim et aestum ut Galli non ferunt, frigorum patientissimi."

...that happened thus, for it has been found that Jupiter, which is a hot and moist planet, rules over France. But life and strength are in warmth and in natural dampness, as the masters of science prove. Therefore, the French are fit by nature, but they fall more easily into such sicknesses, for their bodies are subject to greater harm than others, because they have more blood and more moisture and are more saturated, which moistness and saturation are more prone to rotting, and can sooner be broken up.⁴⁰

It should be noted that at the beginning of the epidemic the French disease was not considered a venereal disease and sexual intercourse was described as only one way out of many of contracting it. Nevertheless even though syphilis was not associated with the stereotype of the "unchaste" nature of the French, the very fact that syphilis became widely known as "mal franços," "böse franços" or simply "franzosen" is in itself noteworthy.

As Mary Douglas argued, the physical body is perceived as a microcosm of the social body and that the body natural provides symbols for the expression of social experience.⁴¹ The naming of the disease after the French in the German lands reveals phobias of an imminent threat coming from the French. The highly contagious new disease was perceived as a danger not only to an individual body of a German, but also to the German national body.⁴² The French disease was one of the elements, along with foreign fashion, that could corrupt the German body and make it less "German". Lamenting on the neglect of German traditions and habits among his contemporaries and on their fondness for foreign fashion, Johannes Agricola wrote: "They wear Italian, Spanish and French clothes, have Italian cardinals, French and Spanish diseases and also carry out Italian practices."⁴³ The betrayal of truly "German" clothing made the German bodies feeble and diseased, claimed Konrad Celtis.⁴⁴

Being "at once an object of desire and derision"⁴⁵ using the notion of Homi K. Bhabha, France played a crucial role in the development of German consciousness at the time. The idea that the French fashion and the French disease could somehow diminish the "Germanness" of German bodies reveals phobias of superiority of a perceivably more powerful neighbour. The fact that the French learned culture showed almost no interest in Germany until the mid-

⁴⁰ Merrill Moore and Harry C. Solomon, "Joseph Grünpeck and his Neat Treatise (1496) on the French Evil. A Translation with a Biographical Note," in *British Journal of Venereal Diseases* 11/1 (1935): 21.

⁴¹ See: Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology* (New York: Routledge, 1996).

⁴² Being the disease of "others," syphilis received the name of the French or Spanish disease in Italy, the Naples disease in France, the French disease in England, the Spanish disease in Holland and Portugal, the German disease in Poland, Polish in Russia and Portuguese or Persian in India.

⁴³ Puff, *Sodomy in Reformation Germany*, 134.

⁴⁴ Rublack, *Dressing Up*, 132.

⁴⁵ Homi K. Bhabha, "The other question: stereotype, discrimination and the discourse of colonialism," in *The Location of Culture* (London, New York: Routledge, 1994), 67.

eighteenth century⁴⁶ indicates that France did not perceive Germany as a threat to its national body. For France it was Italy that played the same role as *Gallia* did for *Germania*, inciting an “abstract cultural desire mixed with fear”⁴⁷ and generating similar discourses of contagion and invasion. After all, at this time syphilis was known in France as *mal de Naples*, sodomy as the Italian vice, and the Italians were blamed for making the French too effeminate with their style, as Rebecca Zorach demonstrates in her article. These conclusions reveal striking similarities between conventions in stereotyping. Perhaps, we should not limit ourselves to simply bringing anthropological methods of research into medieval and early modern material, but also focus on achieving a complex understanding of mechanisms and themes involved in the image construction of “others” throughout history.

⁴⁶ Fink, “Réflexions sur l’imagologie,” 29.

⁴⁷ Rebecca Zorach, “The Matter of Italy,” 605.

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VON GERHARD JARITZ

GEDRUCKT MIT UNTERSTÜTZUNG DER KULTURABTEILUNG
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**KULTUR
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Vorwort

Die vorliegende Ausgabe von *Medium Aevum Quotidianum* soll neuerlich die Breite vermitteln, in welcher Bereiche des mittelalterlichen und frühneuzeitlichen Alltags in der Quellenüberlieferung unterschiedlichster Inhalte, Autoren, Datierung, Provenienz und sozialer Gruppierungen auftreten können.

Während sich Francesca Battista mit „erotischen“ Musterbriefen des Heinrich von Iserna aus dem dreizehnten Jahrhundert beschäftigt, konzentriert sich Jan Odstrčilík auf anonyme Texte böhmischer Herkunft in einer Handschrift des vierzehnten Jahrhunderts aus der Corpus Christi Library in Cambridge, welche sich mit dem Eintritt Gottes in die menschliche Seele auseinandersetzen. Auch Kateřina Horníčková widmet sich Lebensäußerungen im böhmischen Raum und zwar den Reliquiensammlungen von Angehörigen der Prager Eliten bereits vor dem Zeitraum und den diesbezüglichen Bestrebungen Kaiser Karls IV.

Elisabeth Vavra untersucht Totentanz-Darstellungen des deutschsprachigen Raumes aus dem fünfzehnten und sechzehnten Jahrhundert und kann feststellen, dass die in diesen auftretenden Kleidungsdarstellungen der wiedergegebenen Protagonisten zur Kenntlichmachung der Standeszugehörigkeit derselben dienen sollten und nicht, um visuell auf deren standestypische Verfehlungen hinzuweisen. Ievgen A. Khalkov untersucht die letztwilligen Verfügungen der Bewohner der Venezianischen und Genueser Handelstationen von Tana am Schwarzen Meer aus den Dreißigerjahren des fünfzehnten Jahrhunderts hinsichtlich ihrer Aussagen zur materiellen Kultur und weist auf die herausragende Stellung des Kleidungswesens hin. Irina Savinetskaya liefert Ergebnisse ihrer Forschungen zur Konstruktion des Fremdbildes von Franzosen in deutschen Quellen des fünfzehnten und sechzehnten Jahrhunderts und deren Verhältnis zur Selbstbeurteilung der Deutschen.

Damit liefern die sechs Beiträge wichtige Ergebnisse zu Alltag, spiritueller und materieller Kultur von Angehörigen unterschiedlicher sozialer Schichten profaner und klerikaler Provenienz. Sie können dadurch mithelfen, die komparative Erforschung mittelalterlicher und frühneuzeitlicher Lebensgestaltung erfolgreich voranzutreiben.

Gerhard Jaritz