

Friedensbegriffe in der Eucharistiefeyer des Römischen Ritus“ schließt mit einem Exkurs über „Maria, die Königin des Friedens“ (275–277).

Die unternommenen Untersuchungen lassen Johannes Paul Chavanne die Eingangsfrage, ob Liturgie als „Feier des Friedens“ bezeichnet werden könne, schließlich in großer Überzeugung positiv beantworten und schlussfolgern: „Ein vertieftes Bewusstsein über diesen Friedensaspekt möge beitragen zu einem Aufbau des Friedens in unserer Zeit. Dieser Friede kommt von Gott: ‚Dominus benedicet populo suo in pace‘ – Der Herr möge sein Volk mit Frieden segnen (vgl. Ps 29,11).“ (281f.)

Alkuin Schachenmayr OCist, Rezension zu: MICHAEL NORTON, *Liturgical Drama and the Reimagining of Medieval Theatre*, Kalamazoo 2017, Medieval Institute Publications, 288 S., ISBN 978-1-58044-262-6, 89 \$.

This book goes into tight focus on a technical term that is widely used in theatre and music history, yet seldom investigated: Liturgical drama. Although it consists of two very basic terms, the expression appears to be more than it is. It is often applied in a superficial manner and has led to many misunderstandings in modern scholarship. By seeking a “play” in the liturgy, many have ignored the significance of liturgical rites during the performance, they have forgotten that there is a difference between clerics and actors, ignored vestments and called them costumes, and misidentified processions as staging (184–185), to name just a few examples. Author Michael Norton distinguishes between, firstly, representational rites and, secondly, religious plays. He advi-

ses universal caution in applying both terms and questions whether religious plays can be counted as drama (6–10).

In his introduction (1–18), Norton explains that many who sought the roots of modern dramatic performance in medieval Christian ritual simply transferred the ancient Greek ritual-and-performance model into the Middle Ages, replacing Greek pagan rites with the Catholic Mass. Although some scholars have warned in past decades that such a search for performance origins could be deeply inaccurate, recent handbooks and theatre history surveys routinely claim that medieval theatre developed out of the Mass and point to the *Quem queritis* trope and the *Visitatio sepulchri* as proof. The term liturgical drama is supremely useful for the argument. But what precisely is liturgical drama supposed to be? Norton credits C. Clifford Flanigan, Nils Holger Petersen and others with “neutering” the uncomfortable term. He concludes that “[t]he bulk of the repertory is made up of liturgical rites whose dramatic nature has only recently been claimed [...] the category crumbles when all are considered together” (6).

In the first chapter (19–53), Norton describes the theatre historian Charles Magnin (1793–1862) and his introduction of the term liturgical drama (“drame liturgique”) during a course taught at the Sorbonne 1834–1835. Magnin was a librarian at the Royal Library in Paris and well regarded. His new term had far-reaching impact among literary scholars, but also among Ultramontanes and monks from the Solesmes movement, who were rediscovering the richness of the Roman Rite after the barren post-Enlightenment years. In this Romantic context of nationwide

French liturgical renewal, the notion of liturgical drama fascinated many experts (29). These early propagators did, however, contribute to a misunderstanding of the term in the long run.

Norton’s second chapter (55–84) shows how the metaphor “liturgical drama” took its course after 1834. It spread quickly and influenced many, achieving quasi-canonical status through Karl Young’s often-printed articles and books, which began appearing around 1910 and are still read today. This chapter continues into postwar literary criticism, the major shifts of the 1960’s, and the socio-anthropological turn of theatre history. Continuing into the 21st century, Norton explains that our understanding of drama, representation, and theatre have changed so profoundly, that the term liturgical drama can hardly go unexamined.

The third chapter (85–110) is devoted to rites collected and printed by scholars in the 17th and 18th centuries, but which were not classified as “dramas”. This chapter poses the question, “What is a drama?”, and shows that the answer is a matter of perspective.

The fourth chapter (111–155) is devoted to primary sources and is the richest in resources. Its main purpose is the presentation of tables that subdivides what others have called liturgical drama into categories more suitable to Norton’s argument: “representational rites”, “religious plays”, and “ambiguously situated representations”. The detailed list of musical texts called liturgical drama according to the context of their preservation within books and manuscript tables (129–147) is of immense value. Most are “rites”, and among these, the *Visitatio sepulchri* predominates. The tables show that

modern editions have divorced the texts from the words and music that surround them. Norton’s work in this chapter is supported by exceptional bibliographical precision.

The fifth chapter (157–178) analyses the single terms “liturgy” and “drama”, claiming that both were not in common usage before 1500 and that combining them “turns out to be largely meaningless” (157).

In chapter six (179–211), Norton argues that if we call the *Visitatio sepulchri* a “genre”, many misconceptions about theatre and liturgy will result. In fact, the *Quem queritis* and the *Visitatio sepulchri* are merely two among hundreds of rites. Scholars would do well to widen their perspective and not revert to overly determined categories such as rite or play, liturgy or spectacle. Our study of these sources should be liberated from overdetermined categories which date back only to 1834.

Devoted as he is to understanding origins and usage of technical terms, the author appended a glossary (213–219) to his study, as well as an extensive bibliography (221–251). In closing, he provides four (!) indices (253–272). The author’s bibliographical penchant distinguishes his work throughout. In passing, as it were, on page 79, footnote 32 he gives an overview of major publications on liturgical drama in English, German, and French by musicologists who are often ignored by theatre historians. Since it is not easy to find such good bibliographical resources, they are reason enough for acquiring Norton’s book. It is a valuable acquisition for medieval collections, theatre history, and liturgical studies.