İSTANBUL UNIVERSITY PRESS

Alman Dili ve Edebiyatı Dergisi
Studien zur deutschen Sprache und Literatur,
SDSL 2025, 53: 1–25

https://doi.org/10.26650/sdsl2024-1539681

Alman Dili ve Edebiyatı Dergisi
Studien zur deutschen Sprache und Literatur

Submitted 27.08.2024
Accepted 21.02.2025

Research Article

Open Access

The Discourse on Money in Early Modern Literature. The Case of Hans Wilhelm Kirchhof's *Wendunmuth* (1563)

Albrecht Classen [1]

[1] University Distinguished Prof., University of Arizona, German Studies, Tucson, AZ, USA

Abstract Since the thirteenth century at the latest, the role of money had become increasingly important in the wake of growing national and international trade, which also found vivid expression in many literary texts. These texts often serve well as mirrors of social and economic transformations, such as the *Schwank* (jest narrative), in which the various poets made fun of many different people and laughed about ordinary situations both in the village and in the city, in a monastery or in a castle. Hence, the explicit thematization of money in these *Schwänke* (plural) does not really surprise us, but scholars have not paid enough attention to this phenomenon. Turning to the voluminous *Wendunmuth* by Hans Wilhelm Kirchhof (1563), we have an excellent opportunity to identify the ubiquitous presence of money in all human relations and the trouble which it has always created. In his short prose texts, we encounter some of the most explicit comments about the huge impact of money on early modern German society.

Keywords money in late medieval literature · jest narratives · Hans Wilhelm Kirchhof · economic criticism · Jews

Citation: Classen, A. (2025). The discourse on money in early modern literature. The case of Hans Wilhelm Kirchhof's *Wendunmuth* (1563). *Alman Dili ve Edebiyatı Dergisi–Studien zur deutschen Sprache und Literatur*, (53), 1-25. https://doi.org/10.26650/sdsl2024-1539681

This work is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License.

2025. Classen, A.

Corresponding author: Albrecht Classen aclassen@arizona.edu

Introduction

Merchants and businesspeople have always needed an abstract payment system: money; otherwise, they could not operate at distant markets or handle larger items in their efforts to buy and sell. They did not, however, necessarily belong to the medieval feudal system in which bartering was the more common mode of exchange, especially in the countryside, following the fall of the western Roman Empire in 476. As we know by now, however, the monetization of medieval Europe began already during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Büttner, 2022), as the vast corpus of chronicles, wills, legal documents, letters, and other texts richly confirms, apart from the highly valuable archaeological and art-historical evidence (Sprenger, 1991). Little wonder that this process was then also mirrored in contemporary literature, which is the topic of this paper, though the focus will rest on sixteenth-century narrative examples. Historians have already discussed the multifaceted functions of money since late antiquity and throughout the Middle Ages (Rössner, 2015), but it is much harder to identify and determine the impact of money on people at the various social levels. Literary evidence, however, normally little considered with respect to the phenomenon of money provides valuable insights into the mental-historical dimension of money as perceived and commented on, particularly by poets of popular texts in the late Middle Ages.

Money in Medieval and Early Modern German Literature

One of the earliest Middle High German poets to address money in its concrete manifestation, i.e., as an economic factor determining all economic and political conditions, was the otherwise unknown Der Stricker. He created, among other major works – see, for instance, his outstanding romance *Daniel von dem Blühenden Tal* (ca. 1215) – the first major collection of tales about a rogue and prankster, the Priest Amîs, which exerted a huge influence far into the sixteenth century (for the first English translation, along with an updated introduction and bibliography, see Der Stricker, 2024). On the surface, the protagonist, a smart and enterprising English priest, collects as much money as he can to support his own generosity and hospitality in financial terms, which appears to be somewhat contradictory. Revealingly, in the course of time, Amîs turns into a ruthless, reckless, and brutal cheater and deceiver who steals money

or mercantile goods from his entirely innocent but rich victims. Curiously, however, at the end, thirty years later, he joins a Cistercian monastery, is appointed soon enough as the next abbot, and brings all his money with him to the great advantage of his monastic community.

It remains puzzling for us how the poet could have idealized his protagonist so much regarding his accomplishments to accumulate enormous wealth by way of trickery and deception (vv. 2251–59). Granted, Amîs certainly utilizes his money for unselfish purposes; instead, it goes toward his many guests, and then toward the good of the Church. However, the ways through which he acquires this money leave us, at least today, rather speechless because there is a definite streak of absurdity in this literary account. We cannot tell what the contemporary audiences, which certainly enjoyed this text considerably (see the large number of manuscripts containing this text, thirteen in total, plus one late fifteenth-century incunabulum: https://handschriftencensus.de/werke/368), thought about this curious phenomenon, but the narrator never injects any sense of criticism. Undoubtedly, money already rules Amîs's world in big terms, and he becomes a total master in the business of acquiring it illicitly, although he is a priest, and at the end even an abbot, and is identified as God's beloved (vv. 2280–82; cf. Classen, 2024).

The Austrian poet and *ministerialis* Rudolf von Ems provides us with another significant example of how important money had become at more or less the same time. He introduced a global merchant in his romance *Der Guote Gêrhart* (ca. 1220), who makes his money through buying and selling goods in markets both far away from his home city of Cologne, Germany, especially in the eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, and then in the various cities on the Rhine. However, when he arrives at a Moroccan harbor, the local Muslim castellan, with whom he has quickly established friendship, makes him a significant offer of barter, exchanging all his merchandise for a whole group of noble prisoners from Norway and England whom he holds as his captives and who would have to pay a high amount of ransom for their freedom. Gêrhart eventually agrees to this deal, but apart from gaining profound gratitude from the prisoners, he never receives the

expected money for their release (Rudolf von Ems, 2016; for the most seminal study, see Zöller, 1993; see also the excellent edition and translation from 2022, which comes along with extensive commentary and a solid bibliography). Nevertheless, the reward for his goodness is immeasurable, both in the mind of the ordinary people and particularly of God. On the one hand, this merchant proves to be most successful in his trade, but on the other, he does not allow money to rule his life because he is so exceedingly ethical and morally principled. At the same time, he can do much good, especially with and for the Christian captives in the Moroccan prison because he is so wealthy. Despite his hesitations, he eventually barters his entire shipload with the prisoners, and thus money, at least in his hands, can achieve marvels that make him stand out as a glorious and idealized protagonist (Classen, 2021; Serfas, 2023, as to the relevance of inns for pilgrims, see now Gómez-Montero and Weber, ed., 2024).

Didactic writers such as Boppe or Hugo von Trimberg (later thirteenth century) and then the poet Oswald von Wolkenstein (1376/77–1445) increasingly talked about the specific costs of travel, of staying in inns, of food, and entertainment, that is, of paying in cash and of their concrete income (Classen, 2000; Classen, 2010). Similarly, in one of his fables, the Bernese Dominican preacher author Ulrich Bonerius (*Gemstone*, ca. 1350), addressed the legal conflicts resulting from money which two individuals entrusted to their female innkeeper. One of them returns soon after having left the inn and pretends that his companion has passed away, which thus would entitle him to take the entire amount back with him (Bonerius, 2020, no. 72, v. 17–18). In reality, however, he is trying to cheat his 'friend' and to steal all the money from him. The woman naively hands over all their cash, and later faces a serious legal problem when the other man appears, alive and well, and tries the same unethical trick on her. The agreement had been that she would be required to turn over the money only to the two when they would appear together. Her lawyer can thus argue that the second man who has sued her would have to bring his 'friend' to court to enforce the repayment, which is, however, not possible. In short, as this verse narrative reveals, money rules human relationships; money is deposited and then retrieved; and when money disappears or is stolen, the legal system has to intervene. The female innkeeper is lucky to receive the lawyer's assistance, but she

really proves to be irresponsible and ignorant, not capable of handling the entrusted money properly.

In late medieval popular music and lyrics, money increasingly gained in significance because everything in life had a price tag already then, which particularly people on the lower social rank noticed as well, as did many of the major song writers (Classen, 2001). We increasingly hear of the problem of poverty, of excessive eating and drinking which is then not paid for by the customers, and hence of the difficulty for many artists, for instance, to receive a regular income.

This phenomenon of the constantly growing importance of money is impressively indicated in one of the jest narratives in Georg Wickram's *Rollwagenbüchlein* (1555, no. 53), where the singer Gruenenwaldt (or: Grienenwald) cannot pay his debt to his innkeeper. The latter brutally but realistically points out that he himself has to pay for all the products that he purchases at the market for his own customers. If he were to buy on credit, the price would double. Since the singer cannot pay his bill, the innkeeper is about to take his valuable coat in order to pawn it (cf. also no. 54). Being deeply embarrassed, Gruenenwaldt does not want to leave his coat behind when he has to travel with his patron, one of the wealthy Fugger brothers, back to Munich. In his distress, he quickly composes a song about his misfortune and presents it to his lord, who then realizes his singer's financial need and provides him with the necessary money to pay his bills and to keep some extra cash (Wickram, 1968, pp. 96–99).

In other words, the tension between the rich and the poor became noticeable in the public discourse, especially because the wealthy accumulated so much, leaving the simple peasants or craftsmen far behind them in financial terms. At the same time, as critics such as Wickram pointed out regularly, too many people tended to indulge in excessive food and drink consumption which they simply could not afford. We could comb through Wickram's collection further to find specific examples of money as a significant theme because many characters described there suffer from poverty, hunger, and homelessness. Due to lack of money, individuals here tend to resort to thievery,

deception, and robbery, and sometimes they get away with it, and sometimes they are apprehended, charged, imprisoned, and punished, if not executed. At the same time, Wickram knows of many cases of merchants who try to make money through their sales at the market (e.g., no. 33). And there are stories about individuals who are taken to the court of justice for some infraction or crime and then hire a lawyer to defend them before the judges. Again, payments have to be made for this legal service, just as in the modern world (see, e.g., no. 36), or when people stay at an inn overnight and order a dinner (e.g., no. 71, no. 81). Moreover, sometimes people engage in wagers and then have to pay cash when they fail to live up to their pledges (see, e.g., no. 43).

Not surprisingly, we also learn of ignorant priests who demand money for their services or are coaxed to do something they are afraid of (see, e.g., no. 51), or of bishops who abuse their authority to earn extra income (see, e.g., no. 76). Furthermore, there are comments about the 'evil' Jews who use their money to pay for an assassination effort targeting a priest who had spoken out badly against them (no. 83). In short, money here emerges as one of the key elements determining people's lives at all social levels (see, e.g., no. 86), and Wickram offers humorous lessons commonly predicated on the common experience by individuals such as lansquenets, students, poor priests, or peasants of not having enough money. However, despite some general interest in Wickram as an author (cf. Kleinschmidt, 1993), scholarship has not yet examined his work through the lens of money; yet the narratives serve exceedingly well as reflections of everyday life conditions, hence of the role of money in everyday life (for an excellent analysis of everyday culture in the late Middle Ages, see now Esch 2014, though he does not address money in specific terms and does not incorporate literary examples; cf. also Classen, forthcoming).

Previous research has already addressed the topic of money in contemporary works, such as Sebastian Brant's *Narrenschiff* (1494), the late medieval version of *Reynke de Vos* (1498), *Fortunatus* (1509), *Till Eulenspiegel* (1510/1511), in the writings of Martin Luther (1483–1546), in the works of the Nuremberg cobbler and author of Shrovetide plays, among other texts, Hans Sachs (1494–1576), and in the anonymous *Historia von D. Johann*

Fausten (1587) (cf. Van Cleve, 1991). The anonymous *Fortunatus* matters the most in this context because the protagonist at first undergoes a series of misfortunes that would have almost taken him to the gallows as an innocent victim. But then, by accident, when he is about to starve to death in a wild and vast forest, he encounters a fairy who offers him a free choice between wisdom, health, long life, and money. He chooses the latter and can from that time on spend as much money as he wants. Fortunatus uses his new-found wealth to roam the world, but he quickly becomes fully aware of the grave dangers resulting from envious people; hence, he constantly tries to keep his magical purse a secret. Ultimately, he settles in his home country, Cyprus, establishes himself socially, marries the daughter of an impoverished count, and has two sons with her. Before his death, he embarks on a second world tour which this time takes him to Egypt, the Middle East, and even India. On his way back, he is the Egyptian sultan's guest and is allowed to inspect his treasury. The most valuable object there is not money but a magical hat that makes it possible for the person wearing it to wish him/herself instantly to any place in the world. Fortunatus is skilled enough to steal that hat, using it to his advantage, and never giving it back again (for the economic thematic in *Fortunatus*, see Kiening, 2021, pp. 161–72).

But in the second part of the novel, after he has passed away, his two sons Ampedo and Andolosia do not follow their father's advice; they use the two magical objects inappropriately or separately from each other, and so they run, after the latter has enjoyed a brief but glorious life at court, into deadly dangers. Finally, Ampedo dies of grief over his brother's disappearance, whereas Andolosia is tortured to death because some courtiers are envious of his financial resources. Thus, money is not the panacea or the tool to achieve real happiness, as the anonymous poet signaled. Only wisdom would have been the right choice (the best study in that regard up to date still proves to be by Kästner, 1990). Yet, behind the entire novel, we clearly understand the extent to which money has taken over society at large and rules all its relations. Violence, betrayal, theft, murder attempts, and other threats dominate the narrative, and all this because of the pervasive power of money.

Previous Scholarship

Money and Literature in the Pre-Modern World

Recent research has alerted us to the much stronger presence of money in poets' minds than we might have assumed previously. The contributors to Grubmüller and Stock, ed., 2005, for instance, examine the appearance of money in various historical, numismatic, and theological-didactic contexts. The impact of money on theological and economic concepts during the late Middle Ages is the topic of a volume edited by Petra Schulte (2021). Here we are informed about comments by the famous theologian Nicholas of Cusa (Petra Schulte and also Markus A. Denzel), about Nicholas's father working as a merchant (Marco Brösch), Nicholas's attitude toward money (Claudia Märti), Nicholas's use of money as a metaphor in his writing (Isabelle Mandrella), and about the ontology of money in the late Middle Ages (Christian Rode), among other topics. And Busch and Fajen compiled a voluminous anthology of relevant texts plus their modern German translation from the entire Middle Ages in which money matters critically (2011). However, by contrast, the testimony of sixteenth-century authors of jest narratives (such as by Johannes Pauli, Georg Wickram, Hans Wilhelm Kirchhof, and Valentin Frey) has not yet been consulted with an eye toward that economic issue (for a critical overview of the entire genre, see Classen, 2009, with an extensive review of the relevant research literature at large; see also Röcke, 1991). There is no question at all that by the sixteenth century, money in its very concrete character as the essential medium for trade of goods and services had assumed a central role and basically influenced all sectors of society. What remains to be done, however, is to identify how money was perceived by the public, how it was discussed in non-economic terms, and how it was dealt with in the ordinary context of people's everyday lives. This task can best be tackled through a sociological and literary-historical analysis, but considering the available research for the early modern age, we actually face an astonishing desideratum (cf. Chartier, ed., 1986/1989, who does not even include the lemma 'money' in his wide-ranging volume; the absence of this topic, 'money,' mars many other relevant studies or edited anthologies of critical essays).

Money in Hans Wilhelm Kirchhof's *Wendunmuth*

Maybe even more explicitly and more dramatically than in the works of his predecessors, Pauli and Wickram (both from Alsace), the Hessian Hans Wilhelm Kirchhof offers jest narratives in which the topic of money plays a central role. He was born in Kassel in ca. 1525 and later worked as a lansquenet until 1554 when he moved with his wife to Marburg where he briefly began with serious academic studies and where he received his first inspiration to write satirical jest narratives. In 1555, he resettled in Kassel to assist his ailing father in his bureaucratic job. The Hessian landgrave utilized Kirchhof for several diplomatic missions, until he appointed him as castellan in Spangenberg, located between Kassel and Bebra. Kirchhof's *Wendunmuth* (Change Your Sorrowful Mind) first appeared in 1563 and then was expanded until 1603, when it comprised a total of 2083 narratives. Kirchhof died on September 30, 1605. This work, only one of many from this author's pen, experienced tremendous popularity and was almost a bestseller in the early modern book market. It exerted significant influence on writers during the following centuries. We know of five editions of *Wendunmuth* from the sixteenth century (1563, 1565, 1573, 1581, and 1589), all of them printed in Frankfurt a. M., followed by two more editions from 1602 and 1603, also in that city (Gotzkowski, 1991, pp. 513-16).

Although scholarship has hardly paid any attention to Kirchhof (for an exception, see Classen, 2009, pp. 64–146), his *Wendunmuth* contains numerous, at times even dramatic examples of a critical reflection on money, a topic that I have addressed before (Classen, 2009, pp. 90–93), but only with a focus on the roles of innkeepers and their guests, hence the payment for services and goods delivered at inns. Considering the great popularity of Kirchhof's work and the drastic nature of his comments, we face here a great opportunity to identify most closely the major points of discussion regarding money during the late sixteenth century.

Since Kirchhof, just as his predecessors and contemporaries, focused globally on human shortcomings and vices, and since money traditionally plays a major role in that regard, commonly exposing people's character weaknesses, we could draw from a majority of his *Schwänke* for our discussion. However, already the close inspection of a small

sample demonstrates that we can easily select a number of tales where the issue is expressed more poignantly. In story no. 177, for instance, we are confronted with a case of greed, the negative desire to accumulate as much money as possible for oneself. The narrator tells us of a young man and his wife who do not have children but are well off and could easily enjoy their lives together without any future concerns. However, he is driven by the desire to invest his money in some business to gain more profit. He becomes a wine merchant but quickly fails because he does not understand anything in this trade, is cheated by all sides, and especially because he enjoys drinking too much: "zuviel dem sauffen oblag und bancketirte" (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 213; given up too much to heavy drinking and enjoying his excessive meals). Soon after, he decides to trade in oxen, then he turns to horses, and he constantly experiences losses since he knows nothing about the specific animals and cannot differentiate among the good and the bad ones.

Naturally, his various business partners cheat on him callously whenever an opportunity arises, without him understanding what is going on in his life: "darumb zuosetzen sein bester gewinn ward" (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 214; paying out of his pocket was his best gain [tongue in cheek]). Finally, he strikes luck and discovers a hidden treasure, but he is afraid of leaving it behind, or bringing it home bit by bit without people learning anything about it. At that moment, six men appear who are willing to help him in that labor in return for a monetary payment. But they are smarter than him and simply go their own ways with the gold. When he then returns home, all the money has disappeared, and only then does it dawn upon the young man, here characterized as 'greedy' again, that he should have contended himself with what God had granted him from the start instead of looking foolishly for ways of making quick money through some business he had no knowledge of (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 215). Granted, the purpose of this tale consists of moral teachings, but those are predicated on basic human desire to acquire as much money as possible, which often, however, creates more trouble and worries than it is worth, leading, in fact, to more monetary losses than financial gains.

In "Von einem geitzigen trugner" (no. 179; Of a Greedy Deceiver), two men, certainly allegorical figures as indicated by their names, Schnell (Fast) and Trugner (Deceiver) find a treasure and decide upon the latter's advice to hide it at a secret location. But Trugner uses that opportunity to retrieve it secretly soon thereafter, and when the former needs more money, they go to the tree where they had buried the bag with money. Of course, the money is gone, and Trugner charges Schnell of having stolen it. He even goes so far as to take him to court to pretend that he is innocent. Moreover, he involves his father in his legal scheme—he has to play the role of a spirit speaking from the tree, falsely identifying Schnell as the thief. But the judge then has the tree burned down, which makes the father reveal his presence there. Trugner's evil machinations thus come to light, and both he and his father are driven out of town.

In a number of tales, we hear of a poor and pious couple who is graced with great fortune through divine intervention, and then of a rich and greedy couple. Each of them happens to receive three free wishes from Saint Paul and Saint Peter, and whereas the first knows well how to utilize those in a devout and praiseworthy fashion, the second utterly fails because of their greed and foolishness (no. 180). The religious nature of this tale ("Heiligenlegende," cf. Wolpers, 1964; Herbers, ed., 2005) is obvious, but it is specifically predicated on the proper approach to money which too easily misleads people into greed, hatred, and even violence.

In story no. 182, Kirchhof reports, almost like a modern-day reporter, of an extremely miserly man in Kassel who throughout his life never indulged even in a decent meal for himself and utilized everything he had to make more money: "das es gelt truge" (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 222; that it yielded financial profit). But then he suddenly falls ill and dies a few days later. Although he appeared to have been a poor man, it is later discovered that he kept a huge treasure under the floor of his house but never enjoyed it for himself. The narrator emphasizes, addressing the lucky finder, the need here on earth to be "frölich zuo seyn" with what the other had deprived himself of: "so jener mit harter arbeit, hunger und durst, seinem leib entzogen hatte" (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 223; to be happy whereas the one who had accumulated his wealth through hard work, hunger

and thirst, deprived his body). This leads the author, expanding on his argument, to conclude in story no. 185 that miserly and rich people are no longer free and have to serve their own money as the true master over them: "Viel gelt hat den man, denn es ist sein gott, herr und gebieter" (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 224; When there is plenty of money, it owns the man because it is his god, lord, and master).

A most dramatic situation appears in story no. 187 where a rich man tries to avoid having other people beg him for a loan; so, he takes all his money and hides it in a hole he has dug in his field. To find the spot again at a later time, he places a big stone on top of it as a marker. Soon, one of his brothers-in-law, who has many children and no money, asks in vain for financial help from him, and in his subsequent desperation due to his economic distress, he decides to commit suicide. Of course, the narrator hastens to emphasize that this idea could only have been inspired by the devil since suicide was one of the worst sins a Christian could commit (Murray, 1998/2000/2011; Watt, 2018). But the poor man needs a rock to hang himself when he jumps off, so he rolls that big rock under the desired tree to step on it and thus discovers the money and returns home, from then on living a happy life with his family. The rich man, however, when he goes out to inspect his treasure, his "abgott" (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 227; false god), is so distraught over the massive loss that he then hangs himself in the name of the devil.

Kirchhof also targeted innkeepers and charged them globally of being greedy and cheating their customers. Not only would they aim for their money when they charge them for their meals, but for their entire purse (no. 189). They would, as the narrator claims, falsify the bill (markings with chalk), and they would also pour water into their wine to increase their profit. Of course, the narrator then hastens to discriminate between evil and honorable innkeepers, but the story deals with the former. The narrative relates of a group of drinkers in a town located in the Odenwald (a large forest region east of Frankfurt a. M. near Aschaffenburg) who are well aware of the innkeeper's cheating. To make fun of him and to expose his evil operation, they ask him to bring wine and water separately to their table. Each one of them would thus be able to mix both as to their personal preference. The innkeeper pretends to be enraged and insists that his

wine is of good Rhine grapes. In response, the guests agree but differentiate facetiously: "er ist mit dem Rhein gewaschen und dardurch geschwummen" (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 229; it is washed in the Rhine water and has swum through it). This irritates the innkeeper even further, and a fight is about to erupt. But one of the guests who had predicted this already, uses the opportunity when the innkeeper has left the room momentarily to throw some small fish into the wine jug. When the innkeeper, upon his return, pours wine into their glasses, he is shocked to see the fish and admits himself voluntarily "daß ich wasser mit under gemischet hab; wo wolten sonst die fischlein hierein kommen seyn" (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 229; that I have mixed some water into it; otherwise, where would the little fish have come from?).

Both here and in many other cases (also in the stories by Pauli and Wickram), small-scale crime exerts a considerable influence on ordinary life because everyone who is involved in buying and selling, serving in many different capacities (innkeepers, lawyers, priests, and many others) depends on payment, hence on money, and already then, many try 'to make a fast buck.' Human nature does not seem to change much, unfortunately, as Kirchhof and his contemporaries regularly confirmed, especially when people had to interact closely with each other. This is powerfully and satirically illustrated by the tale no. 191 where a Nuremberg merchant is forced to put in storage with an innkeeper his iron wagon axles due to bad weather – the word "wageisen" is not included in any of the relevant dictionaries, but the metal pieces ("eisen") might belong to wagons, unless they are 'plows' ("wegeisen"). They are worth twenty ducats each, so fairly expensive (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 231). However, in the merchant's absence, the innkeeper sells those secretly, and when he is later asked about them, he claims rather foolishly that huge mice had eaten them. The merchant realizes immediately the lame excuse for the theft, but he keeps quiet and pretends to accept the foolish explanation. However, when he leaves, he stops at one of the pastures and secretly takes one of the innkeeper's horses as a compensation for his loss. Later, when he stays at the same place again, the innkeeper laments the theft of his horse and has to learn from the merchant that there might have appeared ferocious cats strong enough to devour a whole horse. When the innkeeper doubts that story, he is told in response: "ists möglich, daß in eim land meuß

seyn, die eisen fressen, warumb solts unmüglich seyn, daß nicht auch ein land wer, da die katzen pferd wegtragen könten?" (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 232; if it is possible that there are mice in a country that can eat iron, why would it then be impossible that there might be cats that can carry off horses).

Only then does the innkeeper realize the true meaning of the merchant's words, and being afraid that people might hear about his theft, which would ruin his reputation and hence his entire business, he begs him to keep quiet, to accept payment for his irons, and to keep the horse. He had secretly sold the irons because he had been in a tough financial situation, but now he realizes that he could suffer badly if the truth would be revealed publicly. We thus recognize how much economic relationships had begun to determine ordinary life during the sixteenth century, which has continued until today, of course. Good business relationships, as between an innkeeper and a guest, here the merchant, relied already then on mutual trust and respect, but the innkeeper thought that he could lie and cheat his way out of this dangerous situation. However, the rogue in him was defeated by the merchant who resorted to the same strategy and rhetorical ploy and thus gained the better end in the conflict between these two men. Undoubtedly, in the background, it is money that matters, and nothing else, and the innkeeper is understandably only too aware of the danger for him if he were to lose public respect and trust. In other words, we recognize clearly the close interlacing of money with morality and ethics, but Kirchhof does not operate as a preacher or minister irrespective of the obviously relevant moral and ethical principles here at play.

Both this author and his near contemporary Wickram were fully aware of the central importance of the inn where much of public life took place and where hence also many conflicts erupted, often concerning money, as we observe numerous times in *Wendunmuth* (as to the inn as a public institution, see Wiedl, 1996). However, money has always had a corrupting influence, as we also notice in a variety of stories presented by Kirchhof. In "Ein dieb hat gelt verborgen" (no. 295), for instance, a farmhand working as a shepherd has been caught as a thief, having taken several lambs from another herd. He is supposed to be hanged as a punishment, but in the last minute he begs to have

a secret word with the "trosßt" (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 338; bailiff). Once everyone is out of earshot, he quietly tells him of a treasure trove of eighty gold ducats he had hidden in a willow tree. He would show him those and turn them over to him as a gift in return for his life. The narrator comments that the bailiff liked the proposition, and, corrupt as he was, arranged it so that the thief was let go free and spared his life because, as the bailiff pretends, the young man had in his earlier days been ordained as a priest and should be tried only by the pope in Rome. The bailiff then pretends to consult with the mayor who immediately believes that made-up story and only says, speaking in his deft Westphalian dialect: "latet gan, latet gan, umme goddes willen!" (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 339; let him go, let him go, for the will of God!). In other words, money opens many locked doors and frees many people from the rope at the gallows.

Considering the great significance of money both here and in many other cases, it does not come as a surprise that Kirchhof also presents a case where a con artist convinces wealthy burghers in Basel to give him a large loan of money, for which he leaves behind in a locked chest a safety deposit. Of course, as soon as he has received the credit, he disappears for good, and when the creditors check the deposit, they realize that they were duped since the bag in the chest allegedly holding gold contains nothing but cheap lead pieces (no. 312). In the following story, the same thief operates almost the same way, cheating a female dealer in second-hand clothes out of a valuable silk coat by offering, as a guarantee for payment, his golden necklace. She has a goldsmith verify its quality, but afterwards the swindler quickly exchanges the true necklace with a cheap replica and can get away from her in time.

Kirchhof knows of numerous other accounts involving similar strategies by various tricksters and presents those as a warning to his audience to be on their guard and not to let themselves be deceived in such money deals or trades. As the author finally notes in the rhymed epimythium: "Allein auff müssigang sich kehren, / On müh und arbeit sich ernehren, / Mancherley list und weg erfindt, / Damit d'leut zuo betriegen sind" (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 354; 1–4; Many come up with strategies and tricks to deceive people so that they can enjoy an easy life without efforts and labor). Those thieves, however, would really

betray their own honor and ethically undermine their own existence. It is, however, money which drives people to do such evil deeds, and since money had become a ubiquitous and decisive element determining all social and economic relationships, it was easy to use it also in a negative sense, that is, theft, deception, swindling, and falsifying. At the same time, however, the author also made fun of those ignoramuses and simpletons who let those cunning vagrants and rogues practice their business, being easy victims for them. It takes, after all, at least two for such a 'crime' to happen, the perpetrator and the targeted person, the victim

Nevertheless, as we learn in "Wer die ertzräuber seyen" (no. 321; Who Are the Arch Robbers), Kirchhof calls those who only pursue a life of crime and chase after money in any way possible, "mammons diener" (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 361; slaves of mammon, i.e., money). Contrasting those with wolves, he casts those individuals as the most vile and evil characters. The animals would only do what nature demands from them, whereas those rogues would make every possible effort to

> nemmen irem nechsten nicht allein schlecht, was er an barschafft und gelt hat, ab, sondern sie saugen, pressen, dringen und zwingen im auß seinem leib bluot und marck, daß er schier nichts im hauß an kleinern etc. im feld, garten, ecker und wiesen vor disen unersettlichen geitzhelsen behalten mag, daß sie es nicht alles zuo sich reissen. Sie künden auch nicht die ursach der not, wie der wolff, fürwenden, denn nichts dann der teuffelische nimmer volle geitz, ob sie schon vorhin in allem winckel gnuog haben, sie darzuo treibt. (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 361)

> [they do not only rob from their neighbors what they might have in cash or money, but they suck, press, push, force their bodily blood and mark so that they have virtually nothing in their houses in terms of clothing, and cannot keep the products from their fields, gardens, yards, and meadows from those insatiable greedy bastards who want to grab everything for themselves. Those do not explain their actions as driven by emergency, as the wolf does; instead, it is nothing but

their devilish and total greed, whether they have enough beforehand or not, which drives them to do so.]

We are almost reminded of modern-day Marxist criticism of capitalistic endeavors, although the sixteenth century was not yet aware of this ideology and its far-reaching consequences for all of society suddenly subject to the anonymous power of money in utter disregard of values, ethics, religion, and morality (Delanty, 2019b). Whereas wolves would never eat each other, the human money-grabbers would never show any respect for other people and would easily devour them, so to speak, alive (Kirchhof, 1980, pp. 361-362). The human wolves would not ever be content with what they could grab, as would be, by contrast, the case with wolves. Instead, they would always strive to deprive all the others completely from their resources and aim at destroying them, not demonstrating any pity or human values. Worst, so Kirchhof, those financiers, bankers, or usurers – he has many names for them – invest their money in businesses and garner unsolicited gains, that is, in modern terms, they increase the profit margin manifold and thus prove to be highly sophisticated capitalists long *avant la lettre* who practice, as the author calls it, "räuberkunst" (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 363; the art of robbery). In concrete terms, this means, as the author comments, "daß sie ir außgeliehen gelt allweg über doppel wider bekommen" (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 363; that they always get back the double amount of money they have lent out). Worst of all, those capitalists particularly abuse widows and poor people who desperately need credit to sustain their lives.

Most interestingly, in explicit contrast to usual antisemitic opinions foused on Jews as money lenders, Kirchhof identifies those loan sharks, as we would call them today, as "tausentmal erger, denn die Juden, denen gottes gesatz zuoleßt, von dem frembden zuo wuochern, welches den Namen-Christen ietzund all eins ist" (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 363; a thousand times worse than the Jews who are allowed by God's law to lend out money to non-Christians, whereas those who are Christians in name only do not care about that at all). Money is one of the greatest evils in this world, as expressed by the vice of greed, which can affect all people irrespective of their religion (as to the notion of Jews as usurers, see, for instance, Frey, 2006; Frey, 2010; Mell, 2017 and 2018;

Classen, 2022; for an excellent online article adding most valuable information about the continuity of this myth until the twenty-first century, see https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geldjude; last accessed on Aug. 20, 2024). Kirchhof's conclusion proves to be almost uncannily prophetic considering the current (post-) capitalistic conditions and the vast accumulation of monetary wealth by few individuals (see, for instance, Delanty, 2019a). For him, however, the naïve and stereotypical charge of Jews being responsible for the new role of money in society only blinds us to the real conditions, i.e., the rise of raw and brutal capitalism pursued, basically, by Christian bankers and others (Mell, 2017; DuPlessis, 1997/2019; Classen, 2022).

On the one hand, the author entirely rejects the stereotype of Jewish usury, and on the other, he puts his finger directly into the wound of a new capitalist driven society as it had already evolved in the sixteenth century. Money has become, as he concludes in his rhymed epimythium, the only standard in the world according to which people acquire goods and honor and ignore the rest, especially religious, ethical, and moral ideals and values (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 363).

Money also plays a significant role in private matters, as the story "Eine junckfrauw hat iren buolen auff sanct Martins abend geladen" (no. 353; A Young Woman Has Invited Her Lover to See Her in the Evening of Saint Martin's Day) illustrates. On the one hand, we hear of the sixteenth-year old daughter of a wealthy Lübeck merchant who is planning to have an erotic affair with her lover without anyone knowing about it, waiting for him in a separate apartment behind her parents' house on St. Martin's Day (Nov. 11). On the other, there is a young and impoverished man who arrives in Lübeck on that very day and does not find any accommodation due his utter lack of money. In his desperation, suffering from hunger and cold, he tries to hide in a dark alley when he suddenly discovers the light coming from that secluded apartment. He finds the gate open and enters the room, where he satisfies his hunger and thirst. At that moment, the maid arrives and is shocked by his presence, whereas she had expected her lover to be there. The stranger openly explains his entire situation, but then also adds that he had sworn to St. Martin to perform a song in his honor if he were to help him out that night. Since

that had happened, he is now prepared to start singing, but this would expose the maid and her love affair to her family. In her desperation, she gives him a valuable cloth for pants, but he is not yet willing to submit to her request to keep quiet. He insists that he would be obligated to sing his song to praise his benefactor unless he would have money to pay for a room in an inn where his performance would be welcome. She understands the hint, that is, his blackmail, and takes six gold ducats from her purse to pay him off, which finally works to get rid of him. As the narrator remarks: "Ein schwere bürde kam von irem hertzen, so ward er noch viel frölicher" (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 394; While she was relieved of a heavy burden/worry, he left even much happier). The young man then seeks out the best inn and spends a delightful evening because he has enough money to do so for that one time before leaving Lübeck again, virtually as poor as before.

Money, property, poverty, sexual pleasures, social responsibilities, ethical ideals, religious devotion, and other aspects commonly come together in Kirchhof's narratives, in which we are consistently confronted with much more mundane impressions, so it seems, than in courtly novels, at least, where economic aspects do not matter critically. A final example can illustrate this well, especially because here the focus rests on a social group that is normally entirely ignored in the public discourse. Already in the previous story, we have heard of the problem with poverty. In "Warumb die bettler so vil kinder haben" (no. 386; Why the Beggars Have so Many Children), the focus rests on a family of beggars and homeless. They wander from village to village and beg for some money. The couple has four children and seems to be quite carefree. When the wife has drunk a bit of alcohol, someone asks her how it would be possible for her and her family to enjoy life so much despite their destituteness. Her reply represents a remarkable comment relevant for the literary treatment of the utterly poor people during the sixteenth century (for poverty in the Middle Ages until the early sixteenth century, see Mollat, 1978; Gentry, 2015). She emphasizes that their utter poverty does not simply mean that they ought to feel depressed or worried. On the contrary, they arefree of all concerns about properties and material responsibilities and can thus enjoy their lives in a much more relaxed manner than most other people. For her, this entails that they are happier and free to enjoy sexuality, leading to the birth of many children, a

notion which the Hippie movement from the 1960s would probably have fully subscribed to: "wann wir satt und, wie ietzt gemeldt, unbeängstigt von sorgen und nachdencken frey seyn, ist unser beste arbeit, darauß hernach die kinder folgen" (Kirchhof, 1980, p. 421; since we are not hungry and, as remarked before, free of worries and thinking about our matters, so [sex] is our best work, from which then result the children).

However, there is also a critical caveat implied by the narrator because she adds that the people in the community, i.e., those who are proprietors and wealthy individuals, are expected to take care of illegitimate children and provide them with an education. In other words, these poor people do not need to think about their future because they live in a Christian society that is required to support the homeless and to help them survive for religious reasons. According to the drunken woman, the public safety net would be enough for them to get by and simply enjoy the moment without any concerns regarding the future.

Kirchhof, however, adds in his epimythium, though agreeing with the woman's opinion at large, that such an attitude could not be supported for long because these rogues would abuse the system and deprive those who are really in need of help in their sickness and old age of the critically important alms provided by the rest of society. Hence, as he sees it, the authorities should expel those indigent people who could and should work but are not willing to do so because they prefer their carefree life. In other words, he objects to social laziness and the abuse of religiously required charity. What the actual situation alluded to in this story really might be, can, of course, not be fully determined. To be sure, throughout time, in all societies, there have been wealthy and poor people, and money has been the one major factor dividing individuals into those two categories. We do not know why that family is so poor, not even owning a roof over their heads. But Kirchhof simply offers us a literary opportunity to hear a conversation between that homeless woman and her interlocutor, certainly valuable from a sociological perspective.

Conclusion

Undoubtedly, early modern society was no longer determined by traditional feudalism but by economic factors involving money already in a capitalistic fashion. The stories compiled by Kirchhof and other authors of jest narrative do not fully mirror social or economic reality or provide concise economic analysis, but they often were based on actual accounts of real events or people because we are invited to laugh about them in recognition of their realistic context . The critical point, however, proves to be their entertainment and teaching purpose. The authors drew from many different sources and reflected directly on the social and economic conditions in sixteenth-century society. In fact, money turns out to be one of the major factors in the many human relationships presented in the vast number of tales.

Of course, Kirchhof did not aim to present a systematic analysis of the new money market system of his time. But he provided countless examples of how money affected and impacted people's lives, which led to an entire discourse on money, as Van Cleve (1991) had already observed while looking at major literary works from that time. With *Wendunmuth*, we encounter one of the most popular entertaining narratives from the second half of the sixteenth century, and its popularity most likely depended to a large extent on the realistic settings within the tales.

As we observed, money determined love relationships and the relationships between neighbors, friends, and different economic institutions. Even when a narrative does not specify money in the concrete sense, such as handing out loans, asking for credit, or demanding the payment of one's salary, the setting commonly mirrors financial concerns.

Altogether, in light of this collection of jest narratives, and many other early modern anthologies of entertaining and didactic prose narratives, we can be certain that money as a topic had fully arrived in sixteenth-century literature and was not going away again; this continues to be true today. Many times, Kirchhof, similar to many of his contemporaries, reflected on human situations determined by money and utilized

those to discuss further human virtues and vices. As much as he intended to entertain and to moralize through his jest narratives, we can utilize this genre well for further investigations of social, economic, and financial aspects as they began to dominate late sixteenth-century society at large. But the author, again, similar to his contemporaries, hardly ever addresses capitalism with a large C, that is, the role of huge fortunes by banks or trading companies. The focus rests on the financial woes of the ordinary people, not on the situation at court, in the Church, or among the rich urban patricians (merchants, bankers, administrators). Only at times do we come across allusions to great wealth, and then the comments are extremely negative and moralistic.

Surprisingly, Kirchhof did not hesitate to distinguish clearly between the big Christian bankers and the peddling Jewish creditors. In fact, he unequivocally ridiculed the stereotype of Jewish usury and pointed the finger into the correct direction, identifying, at least in generic terms, the impact of egregious 'capitalism' on society at large. In that sense, he was much more farsighted, as were also Wickram or Pauli, regarding financial aspects than modern scholars have commonly assumed. This observation underscores once again why we can profit so much from a critical analysis of the vast corpus of early modern German *Schwänke*.

Peer Review Externally peer-reviewed.
Conflict of Interest The author has no conflict of interest to declare.
Grant Support The author declared that this study has received no financial support.

Author Details Albrecht Classen (Dr)
[1] University Distinguished Prof., University of Arizona, German Studies, Tucson, AZ, USA
0000-0002-3878-319X aclassen@arizona.edu

References

Bonerius, U. (2020; paperback 2023). *The Fables of Ulrich Bonerius (ca. 1350): Masterwork of Late Medieval Didactic Literature*, trans. Albrecht Classen. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Büttner, A. (2022). *Geld – Gnade – Gefolgschaft: Die Monetarisierung der politischen Ordnung im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert*. Forschung zur Kaiser- und Papstgeschichte des Mittelalters. Beihefte zu J. F. Böhmer, Regesta Imperii, 47. Vienna and Cologne: Böhlau.

Busch, N. & Fajen, R. (Eds.) (2011). allmächtig und unfassbar*: Geld in der Literatur des Mittelalters*. Relectiones, 9. Stuttgart: S. Hirzel Verlag.

Chartier, R. (Ed.) (1989; orig. 1986), *Passions of the Renaissance*. Trans. Arthur Goldhammer. A History of Private Life, III. Cambridge, MA, and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Classen, A. (2024). "Absurdity in Medieval Literature? Der Stricker's *Pfaffe Amîs* as a Transgressive Literary Enterprise Long Before Modernity." *Humanities* (MDPI) 13.3, online at: https://www.mdpi.com/2076-0787/13/3/80.

Classen, A. (2009). *Deutsche Schwankliteratur des 16. Jahrhunderts: Studien zu Martin Montanus, Hans Wilhelm Kirchhof und Michael Lindener*. Koblenz-Landauer Studien zu Geistes-, Kultur- und Bildungswissenschaften, 4. Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier.

Classen, A. (forthcoming). "Everyday Life and History of Mentality as Reflected in a Collection of *mæren*. The Evidence of the Codex Karlsruhe 408. Literary Comments on Social, Economic, and Religious Conflicts in the Late Middle Ages." To appear in *Medievalia et Humanistica*.

Classen, A. (2001). "Geld als Thema deutscher Volkslieder des Spätmittelalters und der Frühneuzeit. Mentalitätsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen." *Lied und populäre Kultur / Song and Popular Culture: Jahrbuch für Volksliedforschung* 46: 11–37.

Classen, A. (2021). "Piracy, Imprisonment, Merchants, and Freedom: Rudolf von Ems's *The Good Gêrhart* (ca. 1220): Mediterranean Perspectives in a Middle High German Context; with Some Reflections on the Topic of Imprisonment in Other Medieval Narratives," *Incarceration and Slavery in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age: A Cultural-Historical Investigation of the Dark Side in the Pre-Modern World*, ed. Albrecht Classen. Studies in Medieval Literature. Lanham, Boulder, New York, and London: Lexington Books, 261–83.

Classen, A. (2010). "Money, Power, Poverty, and Social Criticism in the Work of Heinrich der Teichner," *Studi medievali* LI, serie terza, fasc. II: 671–99.

Classen, A. (2000). "The Role of Wealth and Money in Medieval and Late-Medieval German Literature," *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* CI.3: 415–28.

Classen, A. (2022). "Wucher als Thema bei spätmittelalterlichen didaktischen Autoren. Wo aber sind die 'Wucherjuden'?" *Amsterdamer Beiträge zur älteren Germanistik* 82: 176–95.

Delanty, G. (2019a). "The Future of Capitalism: Trends, Scenarios and Prospects for the Future," *Journal of Classical Sociology* 19.1: 10–26; doi:10.1177/1468795X18810569.

Delanty, G. (2019b). *Formations of European Modernity: A Historical and Political Sociology of Europe*. 2nd ed. Cham: Springer International Publishing; Imprint: Palgrave Macmillan.

DuPlessis, R. S. (1997/2019). *Transitions to Capitalism in Early Modern Europe: Economies in the Era of Early Globalization, c. 1450–c. 1820*. Sec. expanded and rev. ed. New Approaches to European History, 10. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Esch, A. (2014). *Die Lebenswelt des europäischen Spätmittelalters: Kleine Schicksale selbst erzählt in Schreiben an den Papst*. Munich: C. H. Beck.

Frey, W. (2010). "'Die Juden kennen kein Mitleid. Sie streben nur nach einem, nach Geld': mittelalterliche Stereotype des Wucherjuden in deutschen Texten von der frühen Neuzeit bis ins 20. Jahrhundert," *Aschkenas* 20.2: 505–20.

Frey, W. (2005). "Der 'Wucherjude' als Karikatur christlicher Praxis." *Produktive Kulturkonflikte*, ed. Felicitas Schmieder. Das Mittelalter 10.2. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 126–35.

Gentry, F. G. (2015). "Poverty," *Handbook of Medieval Culture: Fundamental Aspects and Conditions of the European Middle Ages*, ed. Albrecht Classen. 3 vols. Berlin and Boston: Walter de Gruyter, vol. 2, 1404–18.

Gómez-Montero, Javier and Florian Weber, ed. (2024). *Gastfreundschaft – Pilgerwesen – Hospitalwesen*. Jakobus-Studien, 26. Tübingen: narr/francke/attempto.

Gotzkowski, B. (1991). *"Volksbücher": Prosaromane, Renaissancenovellen, Versdichtungen und Schwankbücher: Bibliographie der deutschen Drucke*. Bibliotheca Bibliographica Aureliana, 125. Baden-Baden: Verlag Valentin Koerner.

Grubmüller, K. & Stock, M. (Eds.) (2005). *Geld im Mittelalter: Wahrnehmung – Bewertung – Symbolik*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.

Herbers, K. (Ed.) (2005). *Mirakelberichte des frühen und hohen Mittelalters*. Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters, 43. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.

Kästner, H. (1990). *Fortunatus – Peregrinator munid: Welterfahrung und Selbsterkenntnis im ersten deutschen Prosaroman der Neuzeit*. Rombach Wissenschaft – Reihe Litterae. Freiburg i.Br.: Verlag Rombach.

Kiening, Ch. (2021). *Fortunatus: Eine dichte Beschreibung*. Zürich: Chronos Verlag.

Kirchhof, H. W. (1980) (originally 1869). *Wendunmuth*, ed. Hermann Oesterley. Vol. 1. Hildesheim and New York: Georg Olms.

Kleinschmidt, E. (1993). "Jörg Wickram," *Deutsche Dichter der frühen Neuzeit (1450–1600): Ihr Leben und Werk*, ed. Stephan Füssel. Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 494–511.

Mell, J. L. (2017). *The Myth of the Medieval Jewish Moneylender*. Palgrave Studies in Cultural and Intellectual History, 1 and 2. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mollat, M. (1978). *Les Pauvres au Moyen Âge*. Ecole sociale. Paris: Hachette, 1978.

Murray, A. (2000, paperback 2011) (orig. 1998). *Suicide in the Middle Ages*. Vol. II: *The Curse on Self-Murder*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Röcke, W. (1991). "Schwanksammlung und Schwankroman," *Von der Handschrift zum Buchdruck: Spätmittelalter, Reformation, Humanismus, 1320–1572*. Deutsche Literatur: Eine Sozialgeschichte, 2. Reinbeck bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 180–95.

Rössner, Ph. R. (2015). "Money, Banking, Economy," *Handbook of Medieval Culture: Fundamental Aspects and Conditions of the European Middle Ages*, ed. Albrecht Classen. 3 vols. Berlin and Boston: Walter de Gruyter, vol. 2, 1137–66.

Rudolf von Ems (2016). *An English Translation of Rudolf von Ems's* Der guote Gêrhart. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Press.

Rudolf von Ems (2022). *Der guote Gêrhart: Mittelhochdeutsch / Neuhochdeutsch*, ed., trans., commentary, and an epilogue by Norbert Kössinger and Katharina Philipowski. Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam jun..

Schulte, P. (Ed.) (2024). *Geld und Arbeit: Nikolaus von Kues und das ökonomische Denken im 15. Jahrhundert*. Zeitenwende, 1. Cologne and Leiden: Böhlau.

Serfas, G. (2023). "'ich muoz daz sprehen sunder schame, daz ich ein koufman bin genant' (GG 5498f.): ein sozioliterarischer Blick auf Rudolf von Ems 'Der guote Gêrhart'," *Amsterdamer Beiträge zur älteren Germanistik* 83.2: 197–233.

Sprenger, B. (1991). *Das Geld der Deutschen: Geldgeschichte Deutschlands von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*. Paderborn, Munich, et al.: Ferdinand Schöningh.

Der Stricker (2024). *Der Pfaffe Amîs – The Priest Amîs*. Translated from Middle High German by Albrecht Classen. *NEW LITERARIA- An International Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities* 5.2, August-September, pp. T01-T33. ISSN: 2582-7375 DOI: https://newliteraria.com/articles/v05i2/v05i2-0T1.pdf; www.newliteraria.com.

Van Cleve, J. (1991). *The Problem of Wealth in the Literature of Luther's Germany*. Studies in German Literature, Linguistics, and Culture. Columbia, S.: Camden House.

Watt, J. (2018). *From Sin to Insanity: Suicide in Early Modern Europe*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Wickram, G. (1968. *Das Rollwagenbuechlin*. Text based on the ed. by Johannes Bolte. Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam jun.

Wickram, G. (forthcoming, 2025). *Das* Rollwagenbüchlein. English translation by Albrecht lassen. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Wiedl, B. (1996). "Wirthausleben in der Frühen Neuzeit: Wirte, Bierzäpfler und Bierbrauer in Seekirchen," *1300 Jahre Seekirchen: Geschichte und Kultur einer Salzburger Marktgemeinde*, ed. Elisabeth and Heinz Dopsch. Marktgemeinde Seekirchen am Wallersee: Eigenverlag 549–72, 952–54.

Wolpers, Th. (1964). *Die englische Heiligenlegende des Mittelalters: eine Formgeschichte des Legendenerzählens von der spätantiken lateinischen Tradition bis zur Mitte des 16. Jahrhunderts*. Buchreihe der Anglia, 10. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer.

Zöller, S. (1993). *Kaiser, Kaufmann und die Macht des Geldes: Gerhard Unmaze von Köln als Finanzier der Reichspolitik und der "Gute Gerhard" des Rudolf von Ems*. Forschungen zur Geschichte der älteren deutschen Literatur, 16. Munich: Wilhelm Fink.