This is to certify that the

thesis entitled

THE PORTRAYAL OF CONSTANTINE IN KONIG ROTHER
IN LIGHT OF AUDIENCE EXPECTATION

presented by

Daniel J. Low

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

M.A. degree in German

Major professor

Date November 10, 1989

THE PORTRAYAL OF CONSTANTINE IN KÖNIG ROTHER IN LIGHT OF AUDIENCE EXPECTATION

By

Daniel J. Low

A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Linguistics and Germanic, Slavic, Asian and African Languages

1989

ABSTRACT

THE PORTRAYAL OF CONSTANTINE IN KÖNIG ROTHER
IN LIGHT OF AUDIENCE EXPECTATION

By

Daniel J. Low

The depiction of the Greek king Constantine in the twelfth century minstrel epic König Rother is decidedly negative. Considering the Tengelinger audience for whom the epic was written, it is probable that the figure of Constantine has been tailored to conform to their views of Byzantine rulers.

This analysis assumes that the medieval audience understood itself as a homogenous unit and that its world view would be reflected in literary texts written for it. The expectations of the Tengelinger audience regarding Byzantine rulers can be determined through an analysis of literature from the period and events affecting political life in Upper Bavaria.

These texts and events suggest that Rother's audience would have been negatively influenced by relationships between Byzantium and the Western world. The portrayal of Constantine as incompetent and morally inferior corresponds to the views of Byzantine rulers that we can postulate for the Tengelinger court.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

INTRODUCTION

The German minstrel epic König Rother was written around 1160, most likely for the Bavarian noble family, the Tengelingers, who held land in upper Bavaria near the Austrian border. It is one of the few medieval German works where the Byzantine capital of Constantinople provides the setting for the majority of the plot. This study will focus on the figure of the Greek king Constantine in the minstrel epic König Rother and how a particular Bavarian audience's expectations regarding the Byzantine are brought to light through the depiction of Constantine as leader. In the epic, the audience is presented with a comparison of two types of leadership: the Western style, represented by Rother, with its fair and generous character and a concern for a strong and positive relationship between lord and vassals, and the Eastern style, represented by Constantine, with its despotic character and a weak lord/vassal relationship. Rother's personal involvement in the action allows for the comparison of the leadership qualities of the two rulers. Other figures who help to clarify Constantine's depiction in Rother are Constantine's daughter, who uses her knowledge of Constantine's vanity and her desirability as a fitting wife for a western ruler to manipulate him, and

Constantine's wife who has the role of commentator and critic of Constantine's actions.

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the degree to which the figure of Constantine fulfilled the expectations of the Tengelinger audience concerning the Greeks. This investigation will define both the reception community for which the epic was written and the historical context in which it was received by its audience. In his essay "Zum Hochmittelalterlichen Literaturbegriff" Kaiser defines reception community in this way:

> Eine Kommunikationsgemeinschaft, so ließ sich in erster Annäherung an die Sache feststellen, ist der für mittelalterliche Literatur notwendige Rahmen, in dem das literarische Werk in besonderer "Wir-Intensität" erfahren wird, ist der Rahmen, dessen Verständnisbedingungen ein Werk zur Entfaltung seines authentischen Sinnpotentials benötigt. Das heißt: der kommunikative Sinn des Werkes erschließt sich über die Kenntnis der Verständigungsbedingungen des jeweiligen kommunikativen Rahmens. (418)

The method of interpretation suggested by Kaiser involves viewing the epic as a reflection of the norms by which an audience defines itself as a social unit; a reflection of the audience's expectations, which offer the audience both points of identification within the plot and a guide to social behavior. The medieval audience (reception community), which Kaiser delineates, and the author's

relationship to that audience differ in three aspects from the modern audience and the author's relationship to it (403-406). First, the medieval audience was bound together by a belief in a particular world order in which its members understood themselves as part of a particular societal unit whose norms had to be present in a literary work, if the text was to have meaning. Second, since the production of written texts was limited to fairly small regions in the twelfth century, the author's audience remained small and homogenous. Because of this situation, the author was able to familiarize himself with his audience's understanding of the world and itself. And finally, since almost all members of the audience were illiterate, the epic would have been transmitted orally. Oral transmission of a tale insured that the epic would be accessible to the audience as a whole. Kaiser suggests:

> Wenn es denn richtig ist, daß Kommunikationsgemeinschaften des Mittelalters entscheidend durch soziale Gemeinsamkeiten gebildet und strukturiert sind, und wenn es weiter richtig ist, daß literarische Texte auf Wirkung in diesen Kommunikationsgemeinschaften angelegt und angewiesen sind, dann sollte der Philologie nicht mehr dispensiert werden von der Aufgabe, mit Hilfe der zünftigen historischen Forschung den kommunikativen Wirkungsbereich zu rekonstruieren, den der Text anvisiert. Ohne seinen zugehörigen gesellschalftlichen Resonanzraum bleibt der Text

> stumm, oder er wird beliebig interpretierbar (416).

Therefore, by reconstructing the social-historical context of the audience envisioned by the author of Rother with the help of non-literary sources, one can interpret the figure of Constantine and his role in the epic based on contemporary audience reception.

Using the approach to literary interpretation just described, the critic must determine the nature of the particular audience who would have heard Rother and what its expectations would have been concerning the Greeks. The epic itself provides clues as to the primary audience, its interests, and its expectations regarding the Greeks. These areas include an interest in the empire, its leaders and their dealings with foreign powers; an interest in dynastic conflicts involving territorial families; and finally, an interest in the patron's family name and the prominence of fictitious members of the patron's family in the epic. This type of audience identification with the narration is necessary to establish why the particular depiction of Constantine would be acceptable to audiences at the Tengelinger courts.

In order to clarify which historical accounts could have influenced an audience's expectations toward the Greeks in the years before 1160, the following historical sources will be used: 1) the works of Liudprand of Cremona, written around 970, 2) the chronicles of Otto of Freising, completed in their final form around the middle of the twelfth

century, 3) the "privilegium minus", written in 1156, 4) the De Profectione of Otto of Deuil, written in 1148, and 5) the chronicles of a Greek historian, Nicetas Choniates, written sometime between 1204-1214. Imperial and ducal documents will also form part of the historical evidence used to support the arguments presented in this study. These non-literary sources will illustrate the different types of contacts between the Western and Greek worlds and how the Greeks were perceived as a result of these contacts. Knowledge of the perceptions of the historical writers will help in evaluating whether Rother's audience would have found Constantine a believable representative of Greek rulers or whether Constantine simply fit an ahistorical literary cliché of the negative foreign ruler.

A literary critic's interpretation of Constantine must determine whether the king has characteristics which go beyond those that simply portray him as Rother's opposite. Characters and the norms they embody were not chosen at random, but rather to reflect a medieval audience's beliefs about itself, the world around it, and its own expectations concerning that world (Kaiser 407-408). A medieval text not only reflects historical reality, but it also concerns itself with the teaching, transmission and legitimization of social norms (Borst qtd. in Jauß 329). Historical events concerning encounters between representatives of the German-Roman empire and the Byzantines, together with a knowledge of the audience and its expectations concerning the Byzantine empire, form the social-historical context within

which König Rother was written down and narrated. The study will show that within this social-historical context the negative depiction of Constantine, his daughter's desirability as a marriage partner, and the queen's critique of Constantine's rule coincided with the audience expectations concerning a typical Byzantine emperor, such as Manuel I (1143-80), the role of a Byzantine emperor's wife, when she happens to be German as in the case of Manuel's wife Irene (Bertha of Sulzbach), and the desirability of a Byzantine princess, such as Theodora Comnena (died 1183).

I. THE STORY, THE AUDIENCE, AND AUDIENCE EXPECTATION

A. König Rother: A Synopsis

A short synopsis of the main action of König Rother follows and concentrates on the role that Constantine and his court at Constantinople play in the epic.

The Roman king Rother resides at Bari and rules over 70 kings, their lands, and many vassals. He is as yet unmarried and his vassals urge him to take a wife in order to provide an heir to the throne, thereby securing their rights to their land and ensuring a smooth transition of power. Lupolt, the son of Berchter, Rother's most trusted advisor, suggests the Greek king Constantine's daughter because of her great beauty and noble birth. He and his brother Erwin, along with a retinue of 12 knights, are sent from Bari to Constantinople to win the daughter of Constantine, the king of the Greeks. Lupolt knows that others who have previously done the same have been killed.

The messengers are received courteously by Constantine but when they ask for the hand of Constantine's daughter in the name of Rother, Constantine decides to imprison them. Constantine's refusal to grant Rother's request is criticized by the queen, who foresees nothing but trouble as a result.

A year and a day pass. Rother, fearing the loss of his men, heeds the advice of Berchter and calls together his vassals to find a way to gain knowledge of their fate. Instead of using force to gain information about his

messengers, the council advises him to use trickery. Rother disguises himself as a banished knight named Dieterich and sets sail for Constantinople with a small company of knights. Among his retinue are Berchter and a group of giants under the leadership of Asprian. Before leaving Bari, Rother names Amalger of Tengelingen regent until his return.

When Dieterich and the other warriors arrive at the court of Constantine they are greeted courteously by the queen. Dieterich asks Constantine for sanctuary from Rother. Fearing the ferocious giants in Dieterich's retinue, the king takes counsel with his relatives and asks them what he should do about Dieterich's arrival and his request for sanctuary. Constantine's counselors advise him to welcome this errant knight because he could prove to be an ally against Rother in case he came looking for his lost messengers. Constantine agrees and informs Dieterich that he may stay. Dieterich's relationship with Constantine, however, is tense. The giant Asprian continually puts Constantine into uncomfortable situations. Constantine finally buys Dieterich's allegiance in order to secure a promise of good behavior and service from him and his fearsome retinue.

Arnold, a knight who fled his lands because of war, and his men are in dire straights. A merchant directs them to seek help from Dieterich, from whom they receive a large amount of gold and weapons. Arnold visits the court of Constantine after receiving Dieterich's gifts. Upon hearing

of Dieterich's great generosity, all the barons and counts leave the court in order to pledge their service to Dieterich. Dieterich generously provides them with gold and silk.

Constantine's daughter, intrigued by the stories of Dieterich's great wealth and generosity, attempts to meet the visitor. She eventually succeeds in arranging a rendezvous with Dieterich in her bedroom and Dieterich informs her that he is Rother. With her help, Dieterich is able to gain the release of his messengers from prison on a three-day pass. Dieterich and his men are shocked at the mistreatment the messengers have suffered. He brings them to the domicile where he and his men are quartered and feeds and clothes them, conveying to them that Rother has come for them, before they are returned to their cells.

Dieterich gains the messenger's ultimate freedom and a wife by assisting in the defense of Constantinople against the attack of Ymelot, king of the heathens. Dieterich captures Ymelot and brings him to Constantine on the battlefield. Dieterich tells Constantine that he will return to the city in order to inform the queen and her daughter that all is well. However, he cunningly informs the queen and her daughter that all is lost and they must flee with him. At the parting scene, Rother orders that Constantine's daughter and no one else be taken aboard the ship. As soon as the daughter has been taken aboard, Rother informs the queen that Constantine is alive and well. Rother then boards the ship and he and Constantine's

daughter wave goodby to a weeping queen, who has given her blessing to them.

Rother returns to find his realm in disorder. Amalger is dead and his son, Wolfrat, has been trying to defend Rother's interests as best he can. However, six rebellious margraves want to put Hadamar on the throne. Rother leaves his pregnant wife in Lupolt's care and rides off with his tired and weary knights, Wolfrat of Tengelingen and his army among them, to bring his land to order.

In the meantime, Constantine, irritated by the fact that he was outwitted by the wily Rother, sends a minstrel disguised as a merchant to recover his daughter. A victorious Rother returns to Bari only to discover that his bride is missing. Berchter advises him to go to Greece with a force of men to win back his wife. Lupolt, Wolfrat and Berchter agree to return to their domains to gather men for the mission to Constantinople. From the massive assembly of knights, Rother chooses an army of 30,000 and with them sets sail for Constantinople.

After Rother lands on Greek shores, he, Lupolt and Berchter disguise themselves as pilgrims. Before they depart for Constantinople, Wolfrat gives Rother a horn with which to signal if they get into trouble. On their way to Constantinople, they learn that Ymelot had escaped, returned to Byzantium with a large army, and defeated Constantine. To save his life, Constantine agreed to allow his daughter to marry Ymelot's son, Basilistius. Rother and his men steal into the hall where Constantine's daughter laments her

fate. Rother crawls under the tables in order to give his bride a gold ring with his initials in it. The ring signals Constantine's daughter that Rother has come to win her back. Rother is discovered, taken captive, and sentenced to be hanged. As a noble, Rother is allowed to name the place of his execution. He chooses the spot where he has left his army. Arnold, hearing of Rother's fate, launches an attack against Ymelot and frees Rother. Then Rother gives Lupolt the horn, and it is Lupold who signals Rother's army to advance. Ymelot's army is decimated in the battle that ensues. Rother returns to Bari with his wife, who bears him a son named Pippin. Pippin will eventually marry Bertha and father Charles the Great. After Rother's son Pippin comes of age, he and his wife retire to the life of the monastery and the nunnery on the advice of the faithful Berchter.

B. Place in Literary History

The epic König Rother has been categorized as a minstrel epic. The other epics which make up the minstrel's canon, Herzog Ernst, Salman und Morolf, Orendel, and St. Oswald, were written in the twelfth to the thirteenth centuries. The coarseness of language, the use of ribald humor, and the topic of the wooing expedition, make it easy to discredit minstrel epics as crude and artistically lacking. The epics deal with varying subject matter and the tone is different in each work as well. The epics König Rother and Herzog Ernst are more secular and concentrate on adventure. The other three epics are more religious and deal with topics concerning the crusades. It is for these

reasons that minstrel epics have been more or less left out of serious discussion in literary circles.

C. Recent Scholarship

Although recent studies are still willing to group minstrel epics together because of common motifs, the level of language used, and curiosity about the East, these studies also accentuate the individual character of König Rother and the other minstrel epics. Studies done by Christian Gellinek and Gudula Dinser deal specifically with Rother on a structural level. Gellinek's Studie zur literarischen Deutung reconstructs the time, place, and narrative structure of Rother to show that Rother was composed as a unified work and not as a compilation of several versions written by a series of interpolators. Gellinek is also concerned with the poet in his capacity as narrator, the poet's knowledge of historical events which were contemporary to the writing of Rother, and the identity of the poet in light of his work. In discussing the historical events contemporary to the writing of Rother, Gellinek explores the references to Constantinople in the text. For example, the marriage of Henry II and his Byzantine wife Theodora Comnena in 1148 was associated with the wooing expedition contained in Rother (synopsis 1-11). Although Gellinek makes such connections, he does not apply them to an analysis of Rother in any meaningful way. Dinser's study, Kohärenz und Struktur: Textlinguistische und erzähltechnische Untersuchungen von "König Rother", a linguistic evaluation of the Rother text, suggests that not

only was the author of Rother concerned with producing a tale that entertained his audience, but that he also had a didactic intent. The author's intent was to present the audience with an emblematic figure of the ruler and a description of the qualities that made him a good leader (129). One of the most important qualities of Rother in the epic was his ability to maintain a good relationship to his vassals.

Rother's place in literary history has been explored on the basis of its depiction of the leader figure and how the depiction of the ruler changes in the literature of the twelfth century. Maria Dobozy's study, Full Circle: Kingship in the German Epic, concentrates on the change in the representation of the leader figure in the minstrel epics, the Alexanderlied, and the Rolandslied. She posits that the king figure as found in the Alexanderlied is a composite of "heroic traits" and "royal functions" (6). She feels that the two roles were eventually split and portrayed by separate characters. This split occurs gradually and is portrayed at different stages in the minstrel epics. Though heroic traits and royal functions are never rejoined in a single character, the characters who possess these roles will be portrayed as a functioning unit "in which the two-king and hero--fulfill the duties of governance together" (6). The last step is typical of the later Arthurian epics.

Historical reality as represented in the work itself, as well as the audience's awareness of historical events, is another area of consideration in the research of the last

thirty years. Zeitgeschichte und Dichtung im »König Rother« is a study by Klaus Siegmund which deals with the historical aspects of Rother. It is an example of how not to apply historical data to literary works. Siegmund attempts to connect the figure of Rother directly with the historical figure of the German Emperor, Henry VI. He bases his connection on common personality traits supposedly exhibited by both Henry VI and Rother and also on the fact that Rother and Henry are both rulers of the Roman Empire. Rother's two journeys to Byzantium are also cited by Siegmund as alluding to the crusades of Frederick Barbarossa (1189/90) and to Henry VI's own crusade (1198).

The idea that the figure of Rother was based on the historical personality of Henry IV and that Rother was written in 1196 has been discarded by scholars for several reasons. The relationship between a historical figure and a literary figure is difficult to establish. What could be said of Henry VI's personality could also be said of Frederick I; Frederick Barbarossa also took part in two crusades (1147-48 and 1189-90). The accepted dates for the Rother manuscripts (1160), which are based on a linguistic analyses, do not allow for the late date of composition suggested by Siegmund. He suggests that a member of the Andechs family, who were friendly to the Staufer Henry VI, was a patron of Rother. Siegmund attempts to justify a later date by assuming that the author consciously assumed an archaic form for his epic in order to allay negative reactions of the Welf family to his tale, who were enemies

of the Andechs family (142). However such a claim is almost impossible to support and borders on defense based on speculative arguments. Siegmund's study shows that one cannot simply choose several historical events and then force connections between those events and the medieval text. It is likely that the author of a medieval text will incorporate vague allusions to certain historical events in order to lend his epic plausibility without seeking to duplicate an event.

Two recent studies by Ferdinand Urbanek and Uwe Meves seek to discover, using different methods, who the patron of Rother was and the audience for which the epic was intended. They use references from the text and historical evidence to support their findings. Urbanek has done a study on the patron of Rother entitled Kaiser, Grafen und Mäzene im »König Rother«. He determines that references to the Tengelinger family in Rother point to a powerful Bavarian family which held power during the twelfth century. This family was divided into three branches: Plaien, Peilstein, and Burghausen. Urbanek feels that Conrad I of the Peilstein would have been rich and powerful enough to be considered the patron of Rother. Urbanek points out several references in Rother which suggest that it was written with this particular patron and his family in mind. An earlier study by Meves entitled Studien zu König Rother, Herzog Ernst und Grauer Rock (Orendel) also suggests that the same families could have been the patrons of Rother. Meves also suggests that the wooing expedition and the figures of

Rother and Constantine refer to actual historical events and personalities. He suggests that their appearance in Rother is a sign that the audience of the epic was interested in these events and would have recognized them.

D. The Heidelberg Manuscript

The tale of Rother is contained in five manuscripts. The Heidelberg (H) manuscript, Cod. Pal. germ. 390, contains the most complete version of Rother; the four other manuscripts (B,E,M,A) are fragments. The following summary of pertinent information concerning the Heidelberg manuscript is based on discussions found in the critical editions of Rother which were prepared by Frings/Kuhnt and Jan de Vries.

The Heidelberg Manuscript (H) was first found and described by Adelung in 1796 as part of his research on old German poems (Frings/Kuhnt (1922) 14-48).[1] Adelung found the manuscript in the Vatican among other old German poems taken from the library at Heidelberg. The epic was listed in the Vatican catalog with the heading Nr. 390 Cuiusdam regis Constantini et Dieterici historia.

The manuscript was damaged by fire. Most of the pages turned black and pages 31 and 212 were completely destroyed. Parts of the first page and the reverse side of that page (I^r, 1-18; I^v, 40-76) as well as the last page (73^v, 5171-5181), were damaged and unreadable in 1922 when Frings/Kuhnt and De Vries published their critical editions. The 73

[1] Adelung cited in Frings/Kuhnt (1922) 14.

pages of parchment are approximately 17 cm high and 11 cm wide and at their discovery were enclosed in a pigskin cover. On the backside of the cover is the title Poema in laudem variorum principum. Under that, written in a later hand, is the title Koenig ROTHER 12. Jahrh. Before and after pages 1^r and 73^v are three protective pages. The upper right-hand corner of the recto side of each page contains a number in ink from 1-73. The manuscript contains 9 layers of 4 double pages. The text is framed between horizontal lines, spaced at 5 1/2 mm intervals, and vertical lines.[2] Pages 1^r to 7^r and 8^v have 24 lines; the other pages have only 23 lines per page. One page is missing which can be deduced from a comparison with the A manuscript. Judging from the manuscript's size, lack of initials, and pagination, one must assume that the Heidelberg manuscript was meant to be used, underscoring the close connections among patron, text, and audience.

It has been generally accepted in the scholarship concerning the origin of the manuscript that it was written around 1160 by a cleric from the Rhineland (Meves 99, Urbanek 18-21). How a manuscript containing a tale venerating a Bavarian family came to be copied down in the Rhineland has been a topic of discussion in several studies. The scenario as to how the epic reached Bavaria, which seems most plausible, has been suggested by Jan de Vries (35). The oral tale of Rother came into existence in the Rhine

[2] A copy of a page from the H manuscript is included in the appendix.

area of Germany in a shorter version than the one contained in the manuscript. The motifs were taken from a northern source such as the Vilcinasaga. The tale travelled down the Rhine carried by storytellers. Characters and motifs were added with each performance depending on the audience and the particular area where the tale was being performed. Eventually the tale came to the southeastern region of Bavaria; to the courts of the Tengelinger family. A Bavarian cleric, whose patron was a member of the Tengelinger family, was asked to write a version of the tale, which would be entertaining and which would also celebrate the family's long history and position of strength and power in Bavaria. The Tengelingers possessed land in lower Austria, Bavaria, and later, by way of a marriage in 1130, in the Rhineland. The extant version of Rother contained in the Heidelberg manuscript is possibly a copy of the original Bavarian manuscript brought to the Rhineland by a member of the Tengelinger family after they had become established here in order to help keep family traditions alive.

E. Audience and Audience Expectation

The text of manuscript H forms the basis for the critical edition of Rother edited by Frings/Kuhnt which is used as the source for the Middle High German quotes found later in this study. Using the text of the H manuscript as an approximate starting point, we will attempt to locate the particular audience to which Rother was directed in time and place. We will also theorize as to the makeup of the

audience to which Rother was directed and as to audience expectations regarding the acceptable behavior for a ruler, the liege lord - vassal relationship, the wooing expedition and marriage, and Byzantium.

1. The Audience

In Rother, it is the vassals, those who are dependent on Rother for their welfare, who take an active role in sustaining the power of their king. All of the vassals ask Rother to take a wife to secure their rights to their lands, Erwin and Lupolt are responsible for making Rother's request for a bride, Amalger and Wolfrat protect Rother's lands in his absence, Lupolt protects his wife as Rother sets his affairs straight after his return from Constantinople, Arnold is responsible for rescuing him before he is hanged by Ymelot. The importance of these vassals suggests that the search for an audience should begin with an examination of the figures who represent Rother's vassals.

The Tengelingers are faithful vassals of Rother and are given a prominent role in Rother. The family name is mentioned ten times in the text (741, 2952, 3428, 3470, 3560, 3664, 4207, 4338, 4862, and 5024). Their bloodline is extolled for producing many heroes:

> Der was uon thendelinge.
> Des ¦ koningis amelgeres sune.
> Izne quam van ¦ eineme sinsin kunne.
> Also manich ture wi¦gant (2953-56).

> He (Wolfrat) was the lord of Tengeling/ King Amalger's son./Never from one line has come/ Such a host of heroes fair.[3]

Individual family members also play a strategic role in the plot. Amalger of Tengelingen rules in Rother's absence. Wolfrat, who is Amalger's son, takes over after his father dies and defends Rother's kingdom against the usurper Hadamar. He is made a knight as reward for his faithfulness to Rother. Wolfrat is able to command 20,000 men (3560) in order to help Rother reclaim his wife and he also provides his men with handsome clothing (3558-78). The outfitting of so many men is a sign that Wolfrat and his family were rich. Wolfrat gives Rother his horn in order to call his army if he gets into trouble on his second trip to Greece (3664-86). Wolfrat's fighting skills are praised and a description of his personal qualities are given: "Riche ¦ an ouer mude/Mit wisdumis sine" (A rich yet not a haughty man,/And of a very prudent mind; [4340-41]). The narrator goes on to say that: "Der liz ¦ ouch sime kunne./ Daz to imer uorsten namen ¦ hat./ Die wile daz dies werelt stat". (And so to his family he left behind/ The right to bear a princely name/ As long as this world does remain; [4342-44]). Wolfrat and Rother's other faithful vassals are well-rewarded by Rother after his coronation in Aachen. Wolfrat receives Austria, Bohemia, and Poland. Ten other counts receive the Pleißner Land and the Sorbian Mark.

---

[3] The English translations are taken from Lichtenstein.

2. Audience Expectations

The figure of the king in German literature during the twelfth century is in transition according to Dobozy. Early epics like the Alexanderlied portray a hero-king, that is, a figure who exhibits the traits of both hero and ruler. According to Dobozy, "Heroic action is individual action, risking one's own life and pitting one's own strength and wit against the opponent" (13). Royal actions are those actions which help the ruler further the interests of the common weal. Later epics, such as the Arthurian epics, portray a king who is no longer capable of heroic action. Brogsitter describes Arthur's rule in this way:

> ... aus dem stolzen Kriegsherrn ist das würdige Oberhaupt der Ritterschaft geworden, der sich mehr durch tadelfreies ritterliches Benehmen und die einem Grandseigneur anstehende Großzügigkeit als durch den längst nicht mehr nötigen Beweis eigener kämpferischer Tapferkeit auszeichnet. Sein Hof ist der Sammelpunkt aller edlen Ritter, und zu seiner Tafelrunde gezählt zu werden, bleibt das höchste Ziel. Von Chretien an handeln die Arstusliteratur nicht mehr so sehr von Artus selbst als vielmehr von den Heldentaten seiner einzelnen Ritter, für die der stolze Hof Arthurs und seiner Königin Guenievre nur mehr den Hintergrund abgibt. (43-44)

Dobozy interprets Rother as a leader who performs both heroic and royal actions to varying degrees and therefore

she uses this character as an example of the transition from one type of leadership to another (4). Rother's efforts to free his vassals qualify as heroic actions. However, Rother's heroic actions are balanced by a concern for his vassals and for the affairs of state. In this dual role, Rother is much like the figure of Alexander in the Alexanderlied, meaning that the tale belongs to the middle of the twelfth century.

The issue of the lord - vassal relationship is important to König Rother because it is a subject with which an audience in the 1160's could identify, since the audiences would have been familiar with a strict separation of social classes. They understood themselves in terms of either being a lord, a vassal, or an unfree servant. A good relationship to the lord meant prosperity and rewards. A bad relationship would involve loss of lands and social rank. Hence, the relationship of both Constantine and Rother to their vassals and the form which their respective relationships take are presented.

Bumke's study on the term "ritter" confirms the importance of the separation of the liege lord from the vassals in the early literature of the twelfth century. In his Studien zum Ritterbegriff im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert (9), Joachim Bumke points out that the literature in which the term ritter was used came to define a certain social class and reflected the social reality of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Bumke shows how in the early twelfth century the term ritter referred to soldiers in service of a

lord and then developed into a term denoting a particular class whose membership was open to anyone, from farmer to king. Men became knights in a ceremony where they were presented a sword and where they promised to maintain Christian virtues and to perform duties to gain the attention of a woman of high regard. Bumke points out that the term ritter, when used in its earlier sense to denote service, could not be applied to a king (89). Bumke notes that as long as Rother is king, he is not to be called ritter; however, disguised as Dieterich and in service to Constantine, Rother was designated as ritter by both Herlint and Constantine (90-91). The importance of the vassals in Rother and the clear separation of the ruler from his vassals are both indications that the epic was directed at an audience of the 1150's or 60's who were the vassals of a powerful overlord.

The wooing expedition plays a central role in the epic. Reasons for audience interest in marriage are more than likely political. In his Studien zur Minne und Ehe in Wolframs Parzival und Hartmanns Artusepik on the role of marriage and its reflection in literature in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Wiegand documents the primacy of political motives in marriage contracts. Marriage was only considered between partners of the same class, and all marriages presented in the literature of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were between members of the aristocracy (14-15). In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, marriage had several functions: alliance formation between families

and kingdoms, a means of peacefully overcoming an enemy, and a means of bringing two warring factions together (16-22). All of these aspects are presented in König Rother.

The generic wooing expedition is individualized in Rother so that a Byzantine princess is sought as the best choice for Rother's wife and that this marriage will produce Charles the Great. Constantine's daughter is both beautiful and, more importantly for the time period under discussion, a female member of the imperial Byzantine family. At this time imperial politics between the west and east were involved in resolving claims of the west to imperial supremacy. Her marriage is difficult to arrange, which is a typical motif in medieval literature, though, the difficulty in this case might indicate the audience's expectation that a marriage alliance involving the Byzantines was also difficult to arrange. The marriage of Rother and Constantine's daughter also suggests that an audience considered marriage an expedient means of settling conflicts and avoiding future confrontations with the Greeks. The inclusion of Charles the Great indicates that the audience thought highly of the rule of the Carolingians and would expect their inclusion in order to show that the exemplary rule of Rother had been carried on.

II.

was
inv
rel
no
ab
va
po
A
e
l
t
c
e

II. HISTORICAL CONTEXT AS SEEN THROUGH NON-LITERARY SOURCES

The historical context in which the epic König Rother was written is an important consideration when one wishes to investigate audience reception of the epic. Of particular relevance to this study of Constantine in Rother are those non-literary sources that refer to the qualities and abilities of Byzantine rulers, the relationship between the vassal and his lord, the role of marriage in establishing political alliances, and the German perception of Byzantium. A summary of historical figures and particular historical events which occurred during the period from approximately 1140 to 1160 and the reaction of the historians who recorded those events will give the reader an impression of the types of associations an audience might have made with regard to events and figures depicted in the epic König Rother. The summary also provides an indication of the audience expectation with regard to the Greeks and their rulers during the period under discussion.

After positing possible audience expectations regarding the Greeks on the basis of non-literary sources, the next step will be to determine the epic's patron by using clues provided by the text which were discussed in part I of this study. Imperial and ducal documents and the study done by Urbanek indicate that the patron of Rother was a member of the Tengelinger family. By establishing connections between the patron of Rother and the historical events occurring from 1140 to 1160, it will be possible to say that the

patron of Rother would have had expectations similar to those expressed by the chroniclers. Furthermore, one could surmise that the patron's expectations would also be those of the larger audience to be found at the Tengelinger's court, if one keeps Kaiser's comments on oral transmission in mind, which were referred to in the Introduction.

A. Principal Historical Figures

The following political figures and familial relationships are relevant to this study.

I. Staufer (Family dynasty in control of the German-Roman empire)

Conrad III King of Germany (1137-1152)

Frederick I King of Germany (1152-1154)

Emperor (1154-1190)

II. Welf (Family dynasty in control of duchies of Bavaria and Saxony)

Henry the Proud ∞ Gertrud

Henry the Lion (1139-1195)

III. Babenberger (Family dynasty in control of the margravate, later duchy of Austria)

Leopold III (father of Henry II), Margrave of Austria (1095-1136)

∞ Agnes 2nd wife (daughter of the German emperor Henry IV and widow of Duke Frederick I, the German emperor Frederick I's father)

Leopold IV Margrave of Austria (1095-1141) and Duke of Bavaria (1130-1141)

Henry II (half-brother of Conrad III, uncle of Frederick I, nephew of Manuel I)
"Pfalzgraf" on the Rhine 1140
Margrave of Austria (1141-56)
Duke of Austria (1156-77)
Duke of Bavaria (1143-1156)
ϖ Gertrud, 1st wife (widow of Henry the Proud and daughter of the German emperor Lothar III)
ϖ Theodora Comnena 2nd wife (niece of the Byzantine emperor Manuel I)

IV. Byzantine Emperors

Nikephorus Phocas (963-969)

Jonathan II Comnenos (1118-1143)

Manuel I Comnenos (1143-1180) ϖ Bertha of Sulzbach (later called Irene)

B. Historical Events and Sources

The Liudprandi Legatio ad Imperatorem Constantinopolitanum Nicephorum Phocam was written by Liudprand of Cremona in the 970's. It is a report of his failed wooing mission to the court of Nicephorus Phocas on behalf of Otto I (936-973) who was seeking to form a marriage alliance with this particular Byzantine emperor. The Legatio was written by an Italian in the tenth century and copies of this report were available in Germany at that time. According to Bauer and Rau, the oldest text north of the alps, which is now lost, would have been found in Metz (240). Archbishop Dieterich of Metz (965-977), a cousin of

Otto the Great, was reported to have been in Italy and was interested in obtaining manuscripts (Becker 42). One of those could have been the Liudprand codex, containing the Legatio. From the tenth to the twelfth century, copies of the Legatio could be found in monasteries surrounding Metz, Trier, and the Austrian monasteries of Zwettl and Klosterneuburg (Becker 42-46). Lhotsky points out that Liudprand's works were used by Magnus of Reichersberg, a twelfth century historian (228-229). Otto of Freising was also familiar with Liudprand's work on the history of the Longobards, which he mentions in his Gesta (477), and he knew of Liudprand's other works.

Historical information concerning the political marriage of Manuel I Comnenos to Bertha of Sulzbach, which took place in the year 1146, is recorded in Otto of Freising's Gesta Frederici seu rectius Cronica which was completed in its entirety in the year 1160.[4] The chronicle deals with the waning years of the German king, Conrad III and the early years of the German emperor, Frederick I. Nicetas Choniates, a Greek historian, will also provide information on this marriage. The passages dealing with Manuel's marriage to Bertha are contained in Nicetas's chronicle on the lives of Jonathan and Manuel Comnenos which he wrote from 1204-1214, the years of his exile from Constantinople (Grabler 11). The combination of the two

[4] Otto of Freising completed two of the four books which make up the Gesta by the end of the summer of 1158. Rahewin completed the remaining two books.

sources gives a fairly complete view of this particular marriage.

A discussion of specific events which took place on the second crusade (1147-48) and were reported on by various chroniclers is the next topic of discussion. Events, such as such as the murder of an injured German noble at Antioch, the flood in the plain of Choerobacchi, the difficulty in finding food, and the journey of the German crusaders through the mountains to Iconium, will be related and will provide a better understanding of how the Greeks were perceived in the eyes of the crusaders who passed through Byzantium to reach the Holy Land. Tales told by the returning crusaders would influence the way in which Greeks were perceived in the German empire. Sources of information concerning the second crusade are the De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem written by Louis VII's chaplain, Odo of Deuil, in the summer of 1148; Nicetas Choniates's history of Jonathan and Manuel; and Otto's Gesta.

The next historical event concerns the marriage of Henry II, a Babenberger and half-brother of the emperor Conrad III, and Theodora Comnena, niece of Manuel I, in 1148. This marriage was used as leverage by Henry II in his struggle against the Welf, Henry the Lion, who was seeking to regain the duchy of Bavaria. It had been ruled by the Welfs until 1139 at which time it was given to the Babenberger family of Austria. The solution to this dynastic dispute was the "Privilegium Minus" written and witnessed in 1156. Other details about this event are

reported in Otto of Freising's Gesta. The "Privilegium Minus" marks the return of Bavaria to Henry the Lion and the creation of the duchy of Austria. It also reflects the conditions of Henry II's marriage to Theodora, the Greek princess.

The fifth and final event is described in Otto's Gesta and concerns Frederick I and his dealings with the Greek ambassadors of Manuel I in 1156. They had come in order to renew an alliance with the German empire and to suggest a marriage between Frederick and a Byzantine princess. They were not well received because of the methods the Greeks used to gain control of Apulia and Compania after the destruction of Spoleto (1155) which had angered Frederick I.

1. Liudprand's Report

In June of 968 Bishop Liudprand of Cremona was sent to Constantinople to secure a political alliance with Byzantium by arranging the marriage of Otto II. This was not Liudprand's first trip to Constantinople. In 949 he had been sent by King Hugo of Italy to the court of Constantinus Porphyrogenitus. There he learned Greek and was introduced to the institutions and history of the Byzantines. However, his mission to the court of Nicephorus Phocas on behalf of Otto the Great was a failure. Liudprand and his men were imprisoned and mistreated by their Greek captors. After his release in January of 970, Liudprand had to present Otto with an account of his failure. Several episodes taken from this account should illustrate both Liudprand's negative feelings toward the Greek emperor, Nicephorus, and his

intention of fostering a negative perception of the Greeks in the consciousness of his imperial audience.

Liudprand's initial audience with Nicephorus was on 7 June 968 (Legatio 527). In his report, he gave his reader both a physical description of the Byzantine emperor and an assessment of the his character. According to Liudprand, Nicephorus had an eccentric appearance: he was pygmy-like, had the small eyes of a mole, he had hair which gave him the appearance of a pig, and he had the coloring of an Ethiopian. Liudprand comments that Nicephorus was "not the kind you would want to meet in the middle of the night" (527). And although Nicephorus wore a costly robe, it appeared to be old and faded, had seen long use and had a definite bad odor. Nicephorus' speech was shameless, his nature was comparable to that of a fox, and he was as filled with lies and false oaths as Ulysses himself. One can see that Liudprand goes to great lengths to make the idea of dealing with Nicephorus seem impossible. This apparently short, rotund man of disreputable character only makes Liudprand appreciate his emperor all the more, a man for whom he has only praise.

In the second example (Legatio 526), Liudprand tells how he and his men were incarcerated in a building which was open to all the elements and were mistreated by their jailers. In their place of incarceration Liudprand reports that he and the other members of his group had only the marble floor to sleep on and rocks for pillows. They were often ill and felt themselves close to dying. Liudprand

complains of never having any good wine, only salt water. Liudprand remained in this house until his release in 970.

Nicephorus shows his lack of respect both for Liudprand and for the West in general in the third example (Legatio 535). Here Liudprand explains that when he was asked to be a guest at Nicephorus's table, he was seated a great distance from the emperor, rather than be placed in a position of honor. During the same meal, as Liudprand was answering Nicephorus's questions concerning Otto's actions against the Greeks at Bari, Nicephorus interrupted him and called him a liar (535). Nicephorus went on to say that Otto's knights knew nothing of riding, their armaments were useless, their stomachs were their gods, and their courage and bravery were nothing but the results of drunkenness (535). Pompously Nicephorus asked the rhetorical question, how would Otto be able to withstand an attack by Nicephorus, an emperor with so many warriors, if Otto could not take a small city such as Bari from the Byzantines (535). Liudprand is depicting Nicephorus as a ruler, who shows no respect for proper etiquette concerning diplomats. Liudprand is also pointing out Nicephorus's low opinion of the power of the German emperor Otto and the ability of his knights. By depicting Nicephorus in this light, Liudprand intends to draw criticism away from himself, and put the blame for the failure of his mission squarely on the shoulders of the Greek emperor. Such vivid descriptions of the appearance and actions of a Greek emperor would give anyone who had heard about Liudprand's mission to Byzantium

a negative impression of a Byzantine ruler and his court. These impressions would persist in the German empire for centuries.

2. The Marriage of Bertha of Sulzbach and Manuel I (1146)

In 1146 a political marriage was arranged between Bertha, the sister of Conrad III's wife, Gertrude, and Manuel I, the son of the Greek emperor Jonathan Comnenos. It was an attempt to renew the alliance between Byzantium and the German Empire and thereby discourage incursions into both empires by Roger II of Sicily. The ambassador sent to arrange the wedding was the bishop Embricho of Würzburg. It was celebrated during Epiphany of 1146 (7-12 January). This marriage is found in the chronicles of both Nicetas Choniates and Otto of Freising.

Nicetas Choniates, a Greek historian, writes that the marriage was a successful one (Grabler 155). He describes Bertha as being a woman of inner beauty, one who preferred not wearing make-up. She was also uncompromising and stubborn. Although these two factors kept the passionate and wild Manuel at a distance, he treated his wife honorably by giving her a decorative throne, beautiful clothes, servants, everything an empress could desire.

Bertha remained in contact with the events in Germany. In a report contained in Otto of Freising's Gesta, he describes an incident which took place at the Imperial Diet held in Würzburg on 28 September 1157. It involved Greek ambassadors who had come to present a request on behalf of Bertha of Sulzbach, wife of emperor Manuel I, that Frederick

of Swabia be made a knight. However, the pompous way in which the ambassadors greeted and spoke to him angered the emperor Frederick I. He was prepared to reply to their request in a way which would have gone against the rules of propriety, however Otto does not relate what it was Frederick had in mind. The ambassadors promised to change their mode of speech and were allowed to make their request which was granted (Gesta 405).

Irene (Bertha) died early in 1160 and Nicetas compares Manuel's loss to that of someone losing a part of themselves. He had her laid to rest with pomp and circumstance in the Pantokrator church built by his father, Jonathan.

3. The Second Crusade

If the second crusade is mentioned in chronicles of the West at all, it was usually described as a disaster. Both the German and the French armies were defeated by the Turks. However, the Turks had not been the only problem. There was also the interference of the Byzantine emperor, Manuel I. Manuel was uncertain about the intentions of the crusaders. Nicetas writes that Manuel thought that an unarmed group of pilgrims accompanied by a large work force was to pass through his realm. The work force was to clear and level a path for the pilgrims. However, this was not the case. The group that followed the pilgrims was armed and ready for battle and plunder (Grabler 96). Another factor which contributed to Manuel's uneasiness was the attack by Roger II of Sicily against the Byzantine empire, which occurred at

the same time. Manuel was not sure if he could withstand an attack of an alliance of crusaders and Roger which could have been a possibility when one considers the friendship between the French and the Normans. Manuel's mistrust lead to many of the misfortunes suffered by the crusaders and pilgrim masses.

The German crusaders' early encounters with the Greeks came during the march from the Greek border to Adrianople. Stragglers from the German crusade army were killed by the Greek army of Prosuch (Berry 46n16), which was sent to make sure that the Germans kept to the path assigned to them and that they did not forage for food or plunder the countryside (Grabler 97). Odo of Deuil writes that the French crusaders had more to fear from the rotting bodies of the Germans, which were strewn along the path to Adrianople, than from the armed Greeks who also followed them (Berry 47).

Nicetas reports that a relative of Conrad III fell ill and was left in the guest house of a monastery in Adrianople while the crusaders continued their march to Constantinople (Grabler 98). Several Greeks, bent on plunder and booty, attacked the guest house and set it ablaze, killing Conrad's relative and all others who were inside the guest house. Conrad found out about the situation and sent Frederick of Swabia (later emperor Frederick I) to take revenge. Frederick had the monastery itself burned to the ground and those responsible for the arson put to death.

On 7 September 1147 the crusaders camped in the plain of Choerobacchi. As Otto of Freising reports, the waters of

the small river, the Melas, which ran through that particular plain overflowed during the heavy rains on the evening of that same day (Gesta 221). The crusader army suffered the loss of both men and possessions. Nicetas claims that Conrad asked himself if the elements and seasons obeyed the will of the Greeks. This question is not as trivial as it seems because of the heavy losses suffered by the crusaders both from the weather and the Greeks (Grabler 90-100). The remnants of the German crusaders continued on to Constantinople. Odo writes that Manuel had called for a conference with Conrad. Conrad, however, did not wish to enter the city and Manuel refused to leave it, so the two men did not meet at that point (Berry 49). Thus the tensions between the Greeks and the Germans were allowed to build up.

Odo reports that the Germans crossed the Bosporus without waiting for the French army, because Conrad was in a rush to reach the Holy Land. At Nicaea the German crusaders split into two groups.[5] Conrad went toward Antioch via Iconium and his brother, Otto of Freising, continued along the shore route toward the same city. Nicetas writes that emperor Manuel was responsible for inciting the Turks against the Germans (Grabler 102). Odo supports this assumption with the report he heard from the German messengers sent to Louis VII at their French army's

---

[5] Odo placed the area where the crusader army split in Nicomedia, however, Berry feels that Nicaea would be the more logical place geographically (50n28).

encampment beside a certain Nicene lake. Conrad's messengers informed the French king, Louis VII, and his men of the German's terrible defeat at the hands of the Turks (Berry 91-97). The German messengers explained that they faulted themselves for trusting in their own powers instead of God, who they felt was punishing them for their pride and lack of patience. However, the cursed "idol of Constantinople,"[6] the emperor Manuel, did not escape blame. The messengers felt that he was responsible for the disaster because he had given them a treacherous guide. The guide had left the crusader army after the Germans ran out of food and provisions for the horses. The day after they discovered his disappearance they found themselves surrounded by Turks. They accused the guide of leading the Turks to them. They had been in no position to defend themselves from the attacks of the Turks and were forced to retreat, suffering heavy losses. The emperor himself had been wounded. Odo continues the messengers' story by relating that the Germans eventually arrived at Nicaea where the hungry crusaders found food in the hands of the Greeks, who demanded "cuirass and swords instead of gold in order to strip the army bare" (Berry 97). Later Conrad caught up

---

[6] The Latin text reads, "Deinde Constantinopolitanum idolum execrabantur, qui cum dedisset eis vieae conductorem et traditorem, quantum in ipso fuit Christianorum fidem stravit, paganismum stabilivit, animos illorum timidos animavit, fervorem nostrorum frigidavit (Berry 90; bk.5). Berry feels that Odo might have chosen this name for Manuel because of his appearance and the extreme ceremony associated with the emperor (76).

with the French and made plans with Louis VII to continue to the Holy Land.

According to Berry, Odo of Deuil was prejudiced against the Greeks and their emperor (xxiin56). He blamed Manuel for many of the woes which befell the French and German armies. Even the Greek historian, Nicetas, points out that Manuel mistrusted the crusaders and was responsible for the evils that befell the crusaders in Asia Minor. Although the German crusaders may not have been aware of Manuel's suspicions, they certainly must have been aware of the presence of a Greek army sent to keep them from deviating from the path which they were to follow through Byzantium. The lack of food and the natural disaster which befell the Germans would have influenced their perceptions of the Greeks as well. The apparent treachery of the guide provided by Manuel contributed to hostility toward the Greek emperor. Whether or not such criticism is justified is academic as far as this study is concerned. The important thing to note is that the actions of the Greek emperor were enough to arouse the distrust of Odo of Deuil, a participant and an eye-witness to events of the second crusade.

4. Marriage of Henry II and Theodora (Privilegium Minus)

The Babenbergers had not always ruled both the margravate of Austria and the duchy of Bavaria. The Duchy of Bavaria had been granted Leopold IV in 1136 by Conrad III in an effort to control the Henry the Proud, whose family, the Welfs, ruled both Saxony and Bavaria, and were a constant threat to the power of Conrad III. Henry II

"Jasomirgott" became duke of Bavaria in 1143 and remained so until 1156. At that time, the margravate of Austria was made into a duchy by Frederick I and the duchy of Bavaria was returned to Henry the Lion in order to establish peace between the two families. The return of the duchy of Bavaria was also an attempt to insure the success of Frederick I's policies for which the support of both Henries was necessary. The document "privilegium minus" gives testament to the return of Bavaria and Austria being made into a duchy. Among the witnesses are Gebhard of Burghausen, whose fief was under the control of the Welfs, as well as a "comes de Peilstein", who would have been Conrad I of Peilstein at that time (1156)(Appelt, Die Urkunden Friedrichs I., 260).

According to the "privilegium minus", both Theodora and Henry II were given the duchy of Austria to rule. This was an unusual event. Heilig advances the theory that the double enfeoffment of Austria was part of the marriage contract drawn up before the marriage of Henry II and Theodora (165-66). Arrangements for the marriage of Theodora and Henry II were probably made during Conrad's visit to Manuel (Heilig 162). Conrad, Otto of Freising, Frederick of Swabia, Henry II of Austria, and others met with Manuel, Conrad's "brother and friend", near Thessalonica (Gesta, 265). The marriage contract would have assured Theodora of inheriting Austria in the event of Henry's death. The "privilegium minus" included this proviso and established that should Henry II die without

having named an heir, then his wife would be in the position to name an heir.

5. Frederick I and his encounter with the Greeks in 1156

Otto of Freising reports that in 1156, during the Imperial Diet held in Würzburg, a certain Wibald of Corvey, returned from Constantinople. He had been sent there as Frederick's ambassador after Frederick's encounter with Jonathan Ducas and Paläologus, Greek ambassadors in 1155. These ambassadors accompanied Wibald from Constantinople, but remained in the city of Salzburg because Frederick had refused them an audience. His unwillingness to meet with them stemmed from a report that the Greeks had stolen letters, affixed with Frederick's seal, after his meeting with the two Greeks in 1155. Using those letters and bribes, they had convinced the people of Apulia and Compania that Frederick had relinquished control of these areas to them (Gesta 383-85).

In a letter to Otto of Freising (Gesta 89), Frederick relates that the Greek ambassadors had offered Frederick a large amount of money and rich presents, if he and his army would attack William II of Sicily who had taken Apulia from the Greeks (Gesta 361). Frederick refused, citing the unwillingness of his princes to start a campaign against Apulia and the exhaustion of his troops. Frederick goes on to say that the Greeks had departed for Apulia trusting in their numbers and large amount of money to help them to succeed. They drove William's troops out of the Apulian

city of Bari and thought they had these areas under their control.

Frederick would not have been so upset about this incident except for the fact that the Greeks used his name to gain control of Apulia and Compania. Although he hated William II, he did not want to have border areas of his empire taken over by foreigners (Gesta 385).

William II eventually mustered his troops and in a surprise attack retook Bari, taking several Greeks captive while killing many others. He also confiscated a large amount of Greek funds. Because of the fact that William II had regained control of Apulia and Compania, Frederick did not try the Greek ambassadors as traitors or send them back to Constantinople. Instead he granted them an audience at the Imperial Diet to be held in Nuremburg in July.

At this Diet the Greek ambassadors informed Frederick that Manuel had suffered a heavy defeat at the hands of the Boris, king of Hungary. They had come to ask for a marriage alliance and to ask that Frederick lead an army against the Hungarians by September of that year. Unfortunately for Manuel, Frederick had already married Beatrice earlier that year at the Diet held in Würzburg. He also declined to send an army against Boris because he felt he could not assemble one that quickly (Gesta 389).

C. Patronage

The predominance of Amalger and Wolfrat of Tengelinger in the epic and the praise that this particular family receives, indicates that the patron of König Rother was

probably a member this family (Urbanek 66-94, Meves 99). According to Urbanek and Meves, the Tengelingers would have had the funds to commission someone to write down this story. More significantly, it can be demonstrated that the family's social and political interests coincided with the predominant themes found in König Rother. As discussed earlier, a text is only important to an audience in so far as the audience can recognize itself in that text.

1. Patron's Family History

The following sketch is based on Urbanek's Kaiser, Grafen und Mäzene im "König Rother" (35-48, 66-94). The family Tengelinger came to prominence in Bavaria during the reign of Frederick I of Tengelinger (approx. 1048-1071). His lineage represented the continuation of the Sieghardinger line, whose founder, Sieghard I (+906), was a blood relative of the Carolingians (35). Frederick I's line survived into the period of the writing of the epic in three branches: the Burghausens, the Peilsteins, and the Plaiens. In the period during which the epic was written these families were represented respectively by:

I. Burghausen (lands were a Welf fief, loyal to Welfs)

Gebhard I (+1163)

Gebhard II (+1168),

II. Peilstein and Hall (possessed allodial lands, loyal to Babenbergers)

Conrad I (+1168) ∞ Euphemia (Babenberg)

∞ Adela of Orlamünde

Conrad II (+1195)

III. Plaien

Liutold I (+1164) ∞ Uta (Peilstein)

Liutpold (+1193) ∞ Ida (Burghausen)

Their power was represented by the possession of land (86). In the East in the margravate of lower Austria lay Burg Peilstein and properties near Krems and St. Pölten. In what was then Bavaria lay Burg Karlstein near Reichenhall with lands in the Chiem, Salzburg, and Pon Districts. In Rhine-Franconian Hessen lay areas near Wetzlar and Gießen with the center of the possessions being in the area around Kleeburg. The Tengelingers were also governors of the monasteries of Michelbeuren, Reichersberg, St. Zeno, and the Archdiocese of Salzburg.

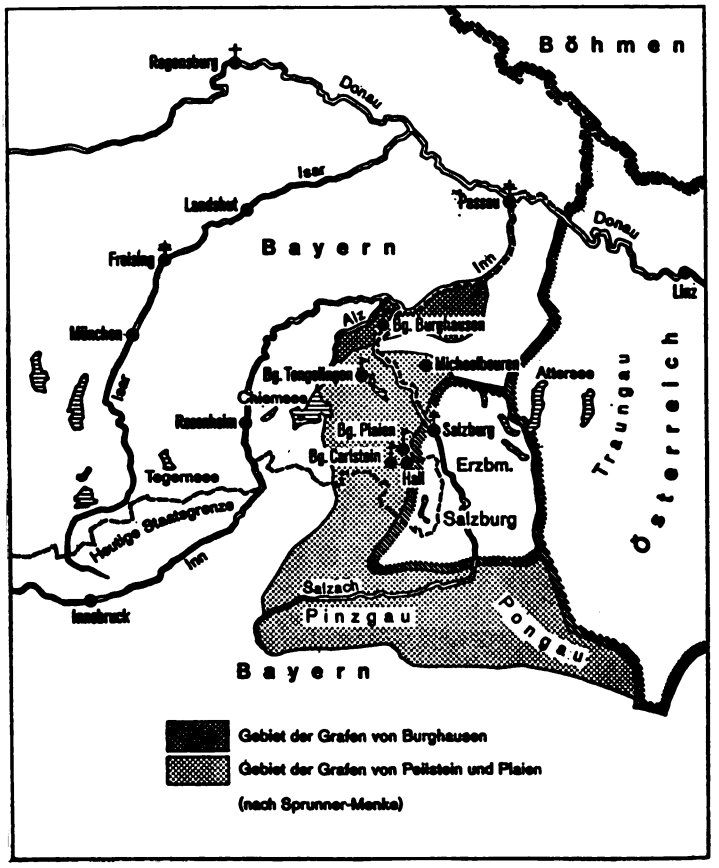


Fig. 1. Map of Tengelinger Holdings (Urbanek 38)

Given the social stature of the various counts mentioned, the amount of land, as well as the governorship over the various monasteries, it would be fair to assume that theTengelingers would have had the funds to pay for a written version of Rother.

2. The Patron: Conrad I of Peilstein

Among the counts named, there are several reasons to recognize Count Conrad I of Peilstein (+1168) as the patron of König Rother. The name Rother became popular in the area governed by the Tengelingers. The popularity of the name Rother lasted from about 1180 to the end of the twelfth century. The name's popularity is documented in the "Urkunden", "Traditionen", and "Nekrologen" of the monastery Michelbeuren and the church of St. Peter over which the Tengelingers had a governorship since the time of Frederick I of Tengelingen (+1071). Another source of evidence of the patronage of Conrad I would have been his position in Austria and Bavaria as one of the most powerful counts as far as land and position were concerned. Through marriage and inheritance he gained possession of lands in Austria near the Viennese Forest, which were ruled from Burg Peilstein (There were governorships over the monasteries of Krems and St. Pölten); lands in the Salzburg, Chiem, and Pon districts, which were ruled from Burg Karlstein at Reichenhall; and the lands gained through his wife, Adela of Orlamünde, in Rhine-Franconian Hessen. He was governor of the monasteries of Michaelbeuren, Reichersberg, St. Zeno, and the Archdiocese of Salzburg. The areas of Bavaria,

Austria, and Germany controlled by Conrad were also areas where copies of Liudprand's works were extant during the twelfth century. Copies of Liudprand's Antapodosis, which, along with the Legatio, had negative descriptions of Constantinople and the Byzantine court, could be found in Bavaria (Freising and other monasteries), lower Austria (Neuburg, Zwettl, Vienna) and in the Lorraine (lost version of the Legatio in Trier; other monasteries include Otterberg, Laubach, Metz)(See Becker 54 and Bauer 240-242). This means Conrad and the courtly audience could have been aware of these works, since he had political dealings with several of the monasteries. Conrad was also present at the courts of the Babenbergers at Regensburg (the main court of the Dukes of Bavaria) and Vienna (the main court of the margrave and eventual dukes of Austria). He was sure to have been interested in Byzantium, since a Byzantine princess had been residing at those courts since 1148. Conrad of Peilstein had also taken part in the second crusade which was lead by the German king, Conrad III. One could also assume that the dynastic dispute over the duchy of Bavaria between Henry the Lion (Welf) and Henry II "Jasomirgott" (Babenberger) would have been of interest to Conrad of Peilstein, because of his first marriage to Euphemia, a Babenberger, and because of the lands he possessed both in lower Austria and in Bavaria. His second marriage to Adela of Orlamünde (ca.1135) was also unusual, considering the distance to her possessions in the Rhineland. Conrad's possessions in the Rhineland put him in

a position to come into contact with cultural centers of the Rhineland, where the Heidelberg manuscript was produced. A last piece of evidence supporting Conrad I of Peilstein/Hall as the patron of Rother deals with the family's main residence at Karlstein. At the time of Charles the Great it had already been established as a fortress (Urbanek 91). The inclusion of Charles the Great as Rother's great grandson in the epic, the ties of the Tengelingers to Charles the Great, and the long history associated with the seat of Conrad's power at Karlstein transform the tale of Rother into a celebration of family history and veneration of family traditions of wise honorable rule.

III. ANALYSIS OF CONSTANTINE'S ROLE IN KÖNIG ROTHER

I would now like to turn to the aspects of leadership as represented by the Greek king Constantine and how this depiction reflects our audience's expectations regarding a Byzantine emperor. The negative aspects of Constantine's rule and his personality are suggested through his personal relationship with his daughter, through the commentary of the queen and courtiers, and through his encounters with Rother. An analysis of the scenes taken from the epic which focus on these various perspectives provides the basis for comparison with Tengelinger's expectations regarding the Byzantines and historical information regarding the West's encounters with Byzantium.

A. Perspective: Family

Constantine's wife and daughter play important roles. The daughter figure is portrayed in a positive light in the epic. She is desirable as a wife for a western ruler because of her beauty and status. The large number of suitors who have died seeking her hand gives another sign of her desirability. She is also Constantine's prized possession. Constantine's refusal to allow her to marry emphasizes this standing. Knowledge of her status encourages her to appeal to Constantine's emotional side when she endeavors to acquire the things she wants and when she seeks to help Rother. She also represents Constantine's salvation in dealing with foreign powers. Her value in this regard is demonstrated by Constantine's use of her desirability to save his life and his realm from the heathen

Ymelot. He does this by forcing her to marry the son of Ymelot, Basilistius. Another indication of her value comes at the end of the epic when Rother allows Constantine to live after Constantine agrees to turn his daughter over to him. Constantine's wife is also positively portrayed. The emotional contact such as we find between father and daughter is not to be found between husband and wife. She has the political savvy that her husband lacks. She also provides critical commentary on the outcome of her husbands various ploys. A closer examination of Constantine from the perspective of the daughter and the queen will provide us with a catalog of his weaknesses.

1. Constantine's Daughter

The princess's active role in the epic begins after the arrival of Rother, who is disguised as Dieterich (synopsis 49-59). The daughter has heard that Rother's generosity and great wealth are impressive. She begins to use her influence on her father to meet with the knight of whom she has heard so much. The first meeting with Rother is attempted through a festival in honor of Constantine. On the advice of her handmaiden, Herlint, she goes to her father's bed chamber:

Vnde sprach woldir er nu vater min.
Dise pinkelten hir heime sin.
Da duchte mich ein ere geltan.
Vnd sameneten v were man.
Daz die ¦ recken sagin.
ob ir ieht reiche waren.

Ich ne weiz war zo der uvrste sal.
Her ne hette ette ¦ wane schal.
mitvroweden in deme hove sin. (1538-1544)

And said: "If you, my father dear,/ This Easter should be staying here,/ It would seem to me a fitting thing/ To invite to the court your following,/ So that the heroes may proclaim/ How richly you deserve your fame./ I don't know what good a prince may be/ If at his court occasionally/ There isn't rejoicing on every side."

This appeal to Constantine's vanity is successful and he replies:

Woldich tochter ¦ daz du levis.
We du nach den heren strevis.
Vnde retis ie daz beste.
Ich wille haven geste.¦
daz man immer sagete mere.
Waz hie schales ¦¦ were.
zo disen hochgecitin.
min gewalt get so wide.
Virsizzet iz daz geman.
der moz den liph ¦ virloren han.[7] (1545-1556)

---

[7] Swer ¦ sich ieht sazte dar widir.
Deme geotmaniz bi ¦ der widen.
Daz her gerne dar gienge.
Dan man ¦in hienge.(1565-1567)

Blessings on you, daughter mine!/ How towards honor you incline!/ As always your counsel is the best./ Now I shall ask so many a guest/ That one will always want to hear/ About the revelry and the cheer/ At Constantine's festivity./ So great is the power invested in me/ That if somebody stays away,/ With his life he will be made to pay.

None of Constantine's vassals could afford not to come to court. The consequence would have been the gallows. Such a despotic use of power was typical of Byzantine emperors. An audience familiar with the works of Liudprand or aware of the disastrous second crusade would be able to associate the historical figures with this depiction of the despotic Byzantine ruler.

Although this first attempt by the princess to see Rother fails, this particular scene represents the type of relationship that exists between Constantine and his daughter. She only needs to appeal to his vanity, in order to gain those things which she wants and, as is made clear by Constantine's reply. That is exactly the kind of thing Constantine wants to hear about himself. It will be seen later that Constantine acts upon nothing, unless it fits his conception of himself as a powerful ruler.

2. The Queen

The queen is first introduced at the arrival of Rother's messengers (synopsis 12-16). She comments:

we gerne ich daz wiste.

wannen ¦ sie kumen weren.

ir gewant is seltseene.
swer ¦ sie hat vs gesant.
her in unser lant.
der ist ¦ ein statehafter man.
of hich mer rechte ver ¦ sinnen can.
mich dunket got herre.
Daz ¦ wir dese boden heren.
sie ne sint der antworte ¦¦ nicht gwone
Die du thos manigen boten ¦ uore. (253-64)

Dearly should I like to hear/ From whence these gentlemen do fare./ Curious raiment they do wear!/ Whosoever did command/ That they should journey to our land/ Must be a lord of considerable might -/ If I am able to judge aright./ Sire, it would seem wise to me/ To treat these envoys honorably./ Such an answer will not do/ As you've made to so many hitherto.

Her comments reveal that she is aware that there is something unusual about these messengers, and she informs Constantine that he should change his mind about his daughter's eligibility for marriage. The author lets his audience know from the start that the queen is more politically astute than her husband. The inept Constantine ignores her advice.

The arrival of Dieterich/Rother on his mission to ascertain what happened to his messengers sets the scene for more comments from the queen (synopsis 27-40). Constantine

informs Dieterich that he is glad that Dieterich was not asking for the hand of his daughter as had Rother's messengers, boasting:

den hanich ie doch ¦ bedwungin.
sine botin sin hiere bebunden. ¦
in mime kerkenere.
her ne ge siet sie ¦nimmer mere. (983-987)

I've got the better of him all the same!/ The men who came here in his name/ Are lying chained to my dungeon floor./ Never will he see them more!

The giant Asprian takes offense at Constantine's gloating and threatens to make trouble at the court because of this insult to Rother. Constantine, not understanding Asprian's anger, but very nervous, relieves the situation by lying. He tells Asprian and the rest of Dieterich's men:

herre ir zvrnit ane ¦ not.
wande huch hi neman misse bot. ¦
Die rede die ich han getan.
Die sulder nicht ¦ zo nide han.
Mich machent getrukint ¦ mine man.
Daz ich hute alse en tore gan. ¦
Von du ne kan ich nicheime goten knechte. ¦
Ge anwarten zo rechte. (1008-15)

Your anger causes me some surprise;/ You've not been insulted in any wise./ That little speech which I just gave/ Should not upset you, hero

brave./ My men have got me so drunk today/ That like a fool I babble away./ That's why I shouldn't even try/ To give a good lad a proper reply.

Constantine has not accepted Dieterich as a vassal yet. Dieterich and his men leave the court, return to their ships and unload them. The giant Widolt, who has been bound because of his ferociousness, is encouraged to run toward Constantinople and cause all the Greeks to run away in fear. The queen points out on hearing about this:

Hi uoren sie ¦ den meister din.
In einer ketenen zvvaren. ¦
Owi we tvmp wer do waren.
Daz vver ¦ unse tochter uirsageten Rothere.
Der ¦ dise uirtreiph vber mere.
Iz ne gewelt ¦¦ nicht grozer wisheit.
Got der moze geven ¦ leit
dineme ungemote.
Owi herre gote. ¦
Nu mochtistu dise van oder slan.
ob wer ¦ minen rat hedden getan.
Ich wene aber ¦ sowes sie dich beten.
Daz du iz vor vorchtin ¦ tetes.
Mer dan dur gote.
(...)
Mich dunkit ¦ daz sie dine meistere sin.
Due torstis baz ¦ in daz ovge din.
Gegrifin mit thiner hant. ¦
Den du zornetis wider dessen wigant. ¦

Immer mit eineme hare.
Hude ne is din ¦ gebare
nicht kunnicliche getan.
Du zvckis dich trunckenheit an. (1052-83)

That they're leading to you your master now,/ Fastened to a chain, in troth!/ Alas! how stupid were we both/ To have kept our daughter from the man/ Who banished these fellows from his land./ Such conduct wasn't very wise./ May God Almighty now chastise/ Your peevish disposition!/ Ah, if my admonition/ You had, good sir, paid heed to then,/ You now could capture or slay these men. but I bet that whatever they ask of you,/ Out of fear you will agree to do/ and not at all because you are kind./ (...) /They are too strong for you, O King/ Methinks you had rather dare to bring/ Your hand up sharp into your eye/ Than with his followers to vie/ Over even a tiny pin./ Your conduct all this day has been/ Unworthy of a gentleman/ Your drunkenness is but a sham!

The queen emphasizes the fact that Constantine has not handled the situation correctly. She chides him for not taking her advice and lets him know that none of this would have happened if only he would have permitted the marriage between Rother and his daughter. She makes it clear that he has put himself and his kingdom into a precarious

predicament. She also comments on his character, pointing out that such behavior is not that of a king's.

Later, Constantine has another confrontation with the giants. Asprian is responsible for killing Constantine's pet lion, because it has eaten Asprian's bread, and neither Constantine nor his men are able to prevent the killing. The queen finds the situation comical and says:

> Nu gedenke herre constantin.
> Daz sich ¦dise nicht nemochten er weren.
> We woldestu ¦ den dich vor rothere generen.
> Gedenkit ¦ her an sine man.
> So moz din lant an owee ¦ gan.
> Wane givestu mir noch die haftin. ¦
> Die dar ligint an uncrachten.
> Daz ich sie ¦ moce vz nimen.
> Sie havent ein vil swar liven. ¦¦ (1181-89)

> Consider, Constantine, in your mind!/ If these men couldn't put up a fight,/ How could you oppose King Rother's might?/ If he should inquire about his men,/ Your land will suffer grievously then. Now why don't you give the men to me/ Who are languishing here so miserably,/ That I may bring them into the air./ How very wretchedly they fare!

The messengers' situation, on which the queen is commenting, is reminiscent of Liudprand's report of his own imprisonment. The narrator's report of Constantine's

comments is an example of a stubborn Greek emperor who made life miserable for the prisoners:

Ir bete were al werloren ¦
se mostin dolen sinen zorn.
Iz were ir leit ¦ oder lieb.
Sie nequamin von kriechen nicht ¦
so lange so er lebete gen. (1192-96)

It was no use for her to ask:/ They still would have to feel his wrath,/ Whether or not it gave her pain./ On the soil of Greece they must remain/ As long as he still had his life.

The queen is irritated by his stubbornness and is ready to go against him, saying:

Nu sin sie viesuellit ¦
harte misse w°rit.
Owi des ir uil schonin libes. ¦
Der mir armen wibe.
Einin svlichen helfere. ¦
Wider den kuninc gebe.
Also die dar ligit ¦ gebundin.
So mostin sie lande. (1198-1214)

Of health they have been cheated;/ Cruelly they've been treated./ Alas for their fair manhood!/ If only I poor woman could/ Obtain the help of such a man/ To work against the Emperor's plan/ As that

brave fellow fettered there/ Back to their
homeland they would fare.

In these scenes we see again that the queen has a clear picture of the situation. She is aware of Rother's power and also the consequences if he should happen to come searching for his men. The presence of Dieterich and the giants at Constantine's court is evidence of that fact. Another interesting point is that the queen is ready to defy Constantine for the sake of Rother's messengers.

Later, the queen again pauses to comment on Constantine's behavior. The giant Asprian is the cause of the problem. This time he has started an uproar at court during preparations for the Easter feast by killing the steward of Frederick, one of Constantine's dukes. Constantine sends for Dieterich. Dieterich offers to have Asprian killed if he has dishonored any of Constantine's nobles. All of the courtiers fear Asprian's return and simply ask Dieterich to control his men in the future. As Constantine begins to complain about the incident, the queen informs him:

Nu swich sprach die kunin-¦gin.
Vnde laze wir daz geschvzze.
Din ¦ rede ist unnvzze.
Hette der so na gesin. ¦
Daz du ene rechte hettis gesen.
Dir ne ¦ gehulfe des nichein boge.
Du ne mostis ¦ sin gevlogin.
zo aller vurdrist after wege ¦
(...)

Vondu moz ¦ ich wole clagen.
Nu dulde honede vnde ¦ schaden.
Hir in dime lande.
Von diethe-¦richis manne. (1787-1804)

"Be silent now," the good queen bade,/ "And let us not pursue this matter./ You know it's only idle chatter./ If he had stood so near to you/ That you could have seen all you wanted to,/ No good at all would a bow have been:/ You would have run away from him/ Ahead of the others, I declare! (...)/ Reason enough have I to complain!/ Suffer now the disgrace and shame/ Here in your realm as best you can/ At the hands of the noble Dieterich's man."

The queen's comments allow the audience to know what she thinks of her husband's bravery. She is hard in her critique, telling him to tolerate the slight against him. Constantine suffers humiliation in his own realm and he has no one but himself to blame for it.

After Ymelot's army is defeated by Rother's men, Constantine fears for his life because of the role he played in almost getting Rother killed (synopsis 89-106). He rues the day he sent the minstrel to kidnap Rother's wife. The queen does not give him much sympathy in her reply:

Wes vorstis ¦ du constantin
Der helfint die konine. ¦
Uon woster babilonie.
Daz du rotheren hais. ¦¦

Waz of du in noch geuais.
Dinis ouer truwen ¦ scanden.
Ich ne mochtis dir ze nie gesagin.¦ (4539-45)
O Constantine, why be afraid?/ Those princes can surely be counted on/ From the land of Egyptian Babylon/ To help you hang the mighty king./ Perhaps you still can capture him./ 'Tis pride has been your downfall!/ You wouldn't listen to me at all.

The queen is being ironic in pointing out that Constantine has bad taste in allies. Several themes which have been present throughout her comments in Rother are contained in this passage: his stubbornness in not permitting his daughter to remain with Rother, which would have given him a powerful ally against the heathens; his stupidity in making an alliance with a heathen king; and his unwillingness to listen to good counsel. These comments also make clear how weak and ineffective a ruler Constantine really is.

At the conclusion of the epic, Constantine must face Rother. He places his wife and daughter in front of him, hoping to draw attention away from himself. He is afraid of what Rother and his men might do to him because of his role in Rother's capture. Upon seeing Constantine's approach Widolt begins to make a terrible noise by gnashing his teeth on his club, which causes sparks to fly high into the air. Widolt's actions confirm that Constantine is in grave danger. Only Rother's mercy stands between him and the

wrath of the giants. The queen begins to play upon Constantine's fears by saying:

> Du solt uor rothere stan.
> (...)
> Wene durch des koningis ere.¦
> Dune bescowedis nimmer mere.
> Weder ¦lucte noch lant.
> Dich sloge der selue ¦ ualant.
> Inbreche her uon der lannin. ¦
> Din leuent were irgangin. (4667-80)

> Closer to Rother you should stand!/ (...) If it weren't for the king's good name,/ Never would you see again/ Either your people or your land:/ You would be slain by that devil's hand./ If from his chains he break away,/ You will not see another day!

Once again the queen gives the audience an indication that she thinks Rother is the better and more powerful leader.

The portrait of Constantine which is drawn from his relationship to his queen is not positive. Although she likes the man[8], she is also quick to point out time and again that his abilities as king leave much to be desired. As far as his personal faults are concerned, he is stubborn, a boaster, and a liar. This also matches the description that Liudprand gives Otto of Nicephorus Phocas. At his

---

[8] 2847 The queen cries when she thinks that she has lost Constantine.

court, Constantine's weakness is seen in the absence of personal power needed to control the situation when the giants start getting out of hand or when a problem arises between his own vassals and Dieterich/Rother's men. One can actually see Rother taking over the allegiance of Constantine's queen through her opinions. Constantine makes others into scapegoats instead of admitting to his own stupidity and shortcomings. Politically, he is short-sighted and is unable to use the marriage of his daughter to make beneficial alliances. Like Nicephorus, Constantine does not use diplomacy in dealing with messengers of an apparently powerful Western ruler. Instead of treating Rother's men with honor and courtesy as would be expected, he has them imprisoned and treats them as common criminals. Another important aspect in analyzing the queen's comments on Constantine's handling of political situations is to see the queen as representative of the audience's expectations. When one considers that Manuel's first wife was Bertha of Sulzbach, a practical and sensible woman according to Nicetas, who was known to the members of the Tengelinger family, this proposition does not appear quite as improbable as one would assume. Such an interpretation would explain the positive description of the queen as well as her sympathy for Rother's cause.

B. Perspective: Court

The audience's impression of the state of Constantine's court can be found in Berchter's comments to Rother after Asprian's misadventure with the lion. He tells his master,

Rother that everyone at court seems to be afraid because of what has happened. There is muttering among Constantine's vassals because they are afraid that they will share the same fate as Constantine's lion at the hands of the giants. Berchter feels that it would be better for them to retire to their lodgings. He also comments on the poor exiled knights that he sees at Constantine's court and tells Rother:

> Io mochtin sie heime. ¦
> Wole wesen riche.
> Sie lieben iamerliche.
> Daz ¦ ir barmit mich sere.
> Nu hilfen dur dine ¦ here
> Du bist richir dan constantin.
> warumme ¦ solditu an siner spise sin.
> Iz ne were vns nicht ¦ mvgelich.: (1238-44)
>
> Surely in their own domain/ They all were lords of high esteem./ Here the life they live is mean./ The pity I feel for them is great./ Help them for your honor's sake!/ You are richer than Constantine./ Why at his table should you dine?/ It doesn't become us at all you know.

Berchter's comments influence the listener by implying that Constantine is a less powerful lord than Rother, because he is unable to provide for the men at his court. Bumke tells us that a king's ability to provide for his vassals is a mark of his power and that his ability to outfit his vassals with needed armaments and fine clothes is a criterion for

how many knights a lord can support. Constantine is not free with his money and this is supported by the comments one of his men makes about their life at court after having seen the finery worn by Rother and his men:

> Wer leven bosliche.
> daz wir dienin eime zagin.
> Der ime vil seldene ¦ grocen schadin.
> Durch usir siheinis willen ¦ tot.
> Wande eine erbarmet zo harde daz got ¦. (1115-19)

> While we live here so wretchedly!/ That's because we serve a stingy lord/ Who thinks he never can afford/ To make us any kind of pleasure -/ So enamored is he of his treasure!

Berchter notices that Constantine does not provide money or clothing to properly attire the wretched at his court who are of noble birth. He convinces Dieterich that he should be generous and help these men. Rother's magnanimity eventually gains him 6000 men. Constantine could have used this tactic himself and it would have brought him both prestige at his own court and possibly a group of courtiers willing to defend his honor.

However, Constantine's subjects prefer Rother and his generous giving to Constantine's stinginess. This aspect is presented in the episode in which the character of Arnold is introduced into the epic. Arnold, a knight driven from his lands because of war, is told by a merchant to seek out

Dieterich who would provide for him. Dieterich furnishes Arnold with money and clothes. Even Asprian promises to supply Arnold with gear to outfit 30 warriors every year (1446). When Arnold presents himself at Constantine's court, the barons and counts, being impressed by the finery of Arnold and his men, ask him where they received their fine clothes. Upon hearing that it was Dieterich who provided them with such splendid things, the whole court, except for the high princes, went to Dieterich's lodgings and received many wonderful things. This scene is a dramatic presentation of the situation at Constantine's court, in that he is simply unwilling to provide for the nobles at his court. Because of this he is unable to garner the sort of respect and devotion in his relationship with his men that Dieterich can with his men or even with Constantine's vassals.

C. **Perspective: Rother/Dieterich**

The third perspective is based on the comparison made between Rother and Constantine. The author's comparison of Constantine and Rother presents Constantine as being the weaker ruler. One way the author makes this clear is by telling the audience the number of vassals at each king's command. As Dobozy points out, "The larger the number of vassals at the king's disposal and the higher their rank, the greater his own power" (71). As Rother is introduced, the audience learns that: "Ime dientin andere heren./zvene vnde sibincih kuninge/die waren ime al vnder tan" (6-9). (Before him other lords knelt down, Princes seventy-and-two,

Honorable men and true: To him was subject all their land.) When Constantine calls his vassals to the Easter feast, the audience is told that: "Hin zo deme poderamus houe. Seszen herzogen. Unde drizzit grauin" (1579-81). (Then sixteen dukes set out form home/ With thirty counts coming close behind.) There is a large difference in power. Rother is served by kings. Constantine can only show dukes and counts in his following.

The author builds on this comparison of power by showing us Dieterich/Rother's ability to gather men to himself through his generosity and fairness, as opposed to Constantine's use of death threats. As has already been pointed out, a lord must be rich in order to outfit his knights properly. Rother has apparently unlimited wealth and shows it off each time he or his men are present at Constantine's court. His magnanimity draws the curiosity of his future wife and also the vassels of Constantine's court. When the knight Arnold asks for help, the merchant does not send him to Constantine. He sends him to Dieterich/Rother. Rother's relationship to Arnold also shows the kind of faithfulness that Rother's generosity commands. Arnold is the one who pits his men against all of Ymelot's army in order to save Rother from hanging. Through Constantine's own courtiers we learn that he is not able and more than likely not willing to part with his money in order to outfit or attract vassals the way Rother does. When Constantine's court hears of the wealth that Rother is giving away, they leave Constantine's court, go to Rother's lodgings, and

return with much finery. Constantine also runs into difficulties when Ymelot attacks the first time and must ask Rother to help him defend his kingdom against Ymelot's army (synopsis 60-72). One could almost say that Rother had become de facto ruler of Constantinople through his generosity.

Another area of comparison lies in the intelligence of both rulers. Rother's list helps him get his men out of prison and a wife. Constantine's list simply draws criticism from his wife. (ex. locking up Rother's messengers, Constantine's drunkenness, choice of allies, e.g. Ymelot). The same type of Greek intelligence was shown on the part of Manuel's ambassadors after the defeat of Spoleto in 1155. Instead of accepting Frederick's answer, they lied to the inhabitants of Apulia and Compania concerning the letters bearing Frederick's seal and paid the citizens, if the authority of Frederick was not enough. Their actions drew Frederick's ire and criticism and almost lost them the chance to present their request on behalf of the empress Bertha of Sulzbach.

The final comparison comes as Constantine must face the victorious Rother after Ymelot has been defeated. As his wife points out, he is dependent on Rother to remain alive. Without Rother's support and good will, the giants would have killed him. Constantine presents himself to Rother and admits that he was foolish for stealing his daughter back and now wishes he had not done it. Rother forgives him and he rejoices because his daughter has married Rother.

Conclusion

The interpretation of the figure of Constantine in the twelfth century epic, König Rother, confirms that the depiction of the Greek king conforms to the expectations of the Tengelinger audience for which it was written. The Tengelinger family was identified as being members of the German aristocracy located in Bavaria. They had interests in leadership, lord/vassal relationship, political marriages, and Byzantium.

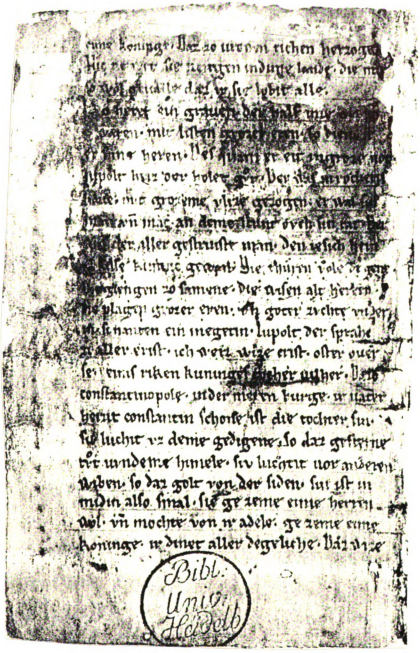
Historical events which would have influenced an audience's expectations regarding the Byzantines were the wooing expedition of Liudprand of Cremona, the marriages of Bertha of Sulzbach to Manuel I and Henry II of Austria to Theodora Comnena, the second crusade, and Frederick I's relationship to Byzantium. These events showed that marriages involving Greeks were important and desirable in forming political alliances with the Byzantine empire. However, the feeling toward the Greeks and their emperor was generally negative. It can be shown that a Greek ruler such as Nicephorus Phocas was characterized as being boastful, untrustworthy, a liar, and lacking in social graces. Another example was Manuel I who was mistrustful of the West and its rulers and was held responsible by Western and Eastern chroniclers for the defeat of the Germans during the second crusade. The connection between these historical events and their effect on the audience of Rother was established by finding the patron for Rother. The patron, according to Urbanek, was Conrad I of Peilstein/Hall, head

of a powerful branch of the Tengelinger family located around the area of Salzburg, Austria, which was part of Bavaria in the twelfth century. It can be shown that Conrad was aware of the marriages, took part in the second crusade, and had dealings with both Frederick I and Henry II of Austria and that these connections would have had influence on Conrad's expectations. One could then assume that the audience at the court of Conrad I would have also been aware of these same events.

The figure of Constantine was weak and incompetent in his political dealings with the West, was weak both militarily and morally, and had several negative character traits. It is my conclusion that Constantine is not simply Rother's opposite, but rather a figure whose characterization was based on the Tengelinger court's expectations of a Greek ruler.

APPENDIX

Fig. 2. Example from the Heidelberg Manuscript



LIST OF REFERENCES

LIST OF REFERENCES

Primary Literature

Appelt, Heinrich, et al., eds. Die Urkunden Freidrichs I. 1152-1158. Die Urkunden der Deutschen Könige und Kaiser. 10. pt. 1. Hannover: Hahnsche, 1975.

Bauer, Albert and Reinhold Rau using the translation of Paul Hirsch, Max Büdinger and Willhelm Wattenbach. Quellen zur Geshichte der Sächsischen Kaiserzeit: Widukinds Sachsengeschichte, Ansalberts Fortsetzung der Chronik Reginos, Liudprands Werke. Darmstadt: Buchgesellschaft, 1971.

Berry, Virginia, trans. Odo of Deuil: De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem. Diss. Univ. of Chicago, 1941. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1948.

De Vries, Jan, ed. Rother. Germanische Bibliothek 13. Heidelberg: Carl Winter's Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1922.

Fichtenau, H. and E. Zöllner, eds. Die Siegelurkunden der Babenberger bis 1215. Vienna: Holzhausen, 1950.

Frings, Theodor, and Joachim Kuhnt, eds. König Rother. Rheinische Beiträge und Hülfsbücher zur germanischen Philologie und Volkskunde 3. Bonn, 1922.

---, eds. König Rother. 1922. Altdeutsche Texte für den akademischen Unterricht 2. 3rd ed. Halle: Niemeyer, 1968.

Grabler, Franz, ed. and Intro. Die Krone der Komnenen: Die Regierungszeit der Kaiser Joannes und Manuel Komnenos (1118-1180) aus dem Geschichtswerk des Nicketas Choniates. Byzantinische Geschichtsschreiber 7. Graz: Styria, 1958.

Lichtenstein, Robert, trans. King Rother. Univ. of North Carolina Studies in the Germanic Languages and Literatures 36. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina, 1962.

Schmidt, Adolf, trans. and Walther Lammers, ed. Chronik oder Die Geschichte der zwei Staaten. By Otto, Bishop of Freising. Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters 16. Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1960.

Schmidt, Adolf, trans. + and Franz-Josef Schmale, ed. Die Taten Friedrichs oder richtiger Cronica. By Bishop Otto of Freising and Rahewin. Ausgewählte Quellen zur Deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters 17. Berlin: Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1965.

Secondary Literature

Becker, Josef. Textgeschichte Liudprands von Cremona. Quellen und Untersuchungen zur lateinischen Philologie des Mittelalters. 3,2. München: Beck, 1908.

Brogsitter, Karl Otto. Artusepik. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1971.

Bumke, Joachim. Studien zum Ritterbegriff im 12. und 13. Jahrhundert. Beihefte zum Euphorion 1. Heidelberg: Winter, 1964.

Jauß, Hans Robert. "Alterität und Modernität der mittlelalterlichen Literatur." In: Haupt 312-73.

Dinser, Gudula. Kohärenz und Struktur: Textlinguistische und erzähltechnische Untersuchungen von "König Rother". Forum Litterarum 3. Köln: Böhlau, 1975.

Dobozy, Maria, Full Circle: Kingship in the German Epic. Göppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik 399. Göppingen: Kümmerle, 1985.

Gellinek, Christian. "König Rother." Studie zur literarischen Deutung. München: Francke, 1968.

Haupt, Barbara, ed. Zum Mitteralterlichen Literaturbegriff. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1985.

Heilig, Konrad Josef. "Ostrom und das deutsche Reich um die Mitte des 12. Jahrhunderts." In: Kaisertum und Herzogsgewalt im Zeitalter Freidrichs I. Schriften des Reichsinstituts für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde (Monumenta Germaniae historica) 9. Leipzig: Hiersemann, 1944.

Kaiser, Gert. "Zum Hochmittelalterlichen Literaturbegriff." In: Haupt 374-424.

Lhotsky, Alphons. Quellenkunde zur Mittelalterlichen Geschichte Österreichs. Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung. Ergänzungsband 19. Graz: Böhlaus, 1963.

Meves, Uwe. Studien zu König Rother, Herzog Ernst und Grauer Rock (Orendel). European University Papers, series I 181. Frankfurt/M.: Lang, 1976.

Schröder, Walter Joh. Spielmannsepik. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1962.

Siegmund, Klaus. Zeitgeschichte und Dichtung im »König Rother«: Versuch einer Neudatierung. Philolog. Studien und Quellen. Berlin: Schmidt, 1959.

Urbanek, Ferdinand. Kaiser, Grafen und Mäzene im "König Rother." Philologische Studien und Quellen 71. Berlin: Schmidt, 1976.

Wiegand, Herbert Ernst. Studien zur Minne und Ehe in Wolframs Parzival und Hartmanns Artusepik. Quellen und Forschungen zur Sprach- und Kulturgeschichte der germanischen Völker 49 (173). Berlin: de Gruyter, 1972.