JOHANNES FRIED, HISTORIAN OF THE MIDDLE AGES. A TRIBUTE

John Van Engen

Johannes Fried is a sympathetic colleague, a gentle man, and a humane friend. He is also, and no less, a passionate historian and an engaged conversationalist on all things historical and human. Born in Hamburg during the War (1942), he studied History under Peter Classen at Heidelberg (as well as German philology and political science). Through all his years as a professor, first briefly at Cologne, then for twenty-seven years at Frankfurt, he has lived in Heidelberg with his inseparable companion, intellectual partner, and devoted wife Sigrid. Fried's dissertation, completed in 1970 and published in 1974, explored the emergence of a class of university-trained lawyers ("Juristenstand") as judges and administrators in north Italian cities. This book, based on numerous documents, with the key term in its title echoing a distinct class early modern German society, identified that point in medieval urban society when the new learning of Bologna and the schools first intersected with a new political class in the Italian communes, this evident from the late twelfth century onwards. That intersection of university and society, of learning with life or practice, would remain a central theme in Fried's subsequent work, if explored in all differing variations. Following Classen's too early death, Fried edited a volume of his selected essays as well as his "Doktorvater's" important studies on "Learning and Society", a subject Classen had taken up amidst battles over university governance and curriculum waged during the 1970s.

For his "Habilitationsschrift" Fried turned to a different subject, if also related in certain respects to Classen's expertise, this a subject that turned on documents and privileges as instruments and expressions of an emerging central governance. In the 1960s–70s, and going back to the work of Tellenbach and Rosenstock-Huessy and many others, multiple claims were made about the Investiture Contest as a turning-point in European history. In this book, and amidst this nearly endless discussion, Fried took a different angle of approach to the reputed emergence of papal monarchy, here with sources especially from Iberia. He focused attention and interpretation on intriguing cases of papal privileges which offered protection to lay lords and princes. One of Fried's earliest articles, in "Deutsches Archiv", had already examined, or rather re-examined, the notion of *regalia* as it emerged from the Investiture Struggle in an attempt to find conceptual language for distinct royal rights, claims, and privileges. Still another article had detailed the appearance in canon law of new "procedural manuals", these a manifestation, again both intellectual and practical, of busier church courts and a broader turn toward learned law. This was the conjunction that intrigued him, and he had a nose, as we would say in English, for locating just those documents that illumined this intersection between theory and practice.

Writing a dissertation, also in many respects an "Habilitationsschrift", served – and in many ways does still – as a medieval apprenticeship, even in our modern academic world, if always, in principle at least, with opportunities for personal freedom and originality. What historians do when they become, so to speak, their own person is what's truly revealing: whether they develop new ideas and keep up the writing, to what sources they turn most readily, what style of article and book they prefer to write. Johannes Fried, as anyone reading this tribute will know, kept writing at a truly astounding pace throughout his life: nearly twenty books, another twenty edited volumes, and some 150 essays, not to speak of numerous reviews. Fried published his book on "päpstliche[n] Laienschutz" in 1980. Over the next decade he began to write articles, both important and original, on a series of themes that would remain abiding interests. These took up subjects moreover that general historians and readers could readily enter into, whatever their own special interests: the nature of freedom; human social bonds and the nature of polity (especially in the Carolingian era); powers of human perception in the face of new experience (Mongols); the spread of university learning (also into German lands); and Christian expectations both anxious and curious of an approaching End-time, with its paradoxical effect of spurring human enterprise. Some of these essays reappear now in his volume "An Invitation to the Middle Ages" ("Zu Gast im Mittelalter"). Two of the topics would provide themes for meetings of the "Konstanzer Arbeitskreis" (freedom, and school learning), even as schooled learning (rhetoric and dialectic) became the theme for the conference he organized during his year at the "Historisches Kolleg" in Munich (1990–91).

Beyond these articles during this decade Fried also published two books, and they also engage new themes, one ("Otto III. und Boleslaw Chrobry", 1989) treating the now sensitive topic (post-War) of Ottonian imperial relations to Slavic neighbors to the east, especially the Polish and Hungarian princes, the other his textbook on the Carolingian and Ottonian realms for the "Oldenbourg Grundriss" series. It was with this latter volume that Fried first undertook to write narrative history, an enterprise at which he would come to excel. Writing narrative, and accessible narrative, and doing so in language meant to captivate, intrigue, surprise, and finally persuade – this has become a hallmark of Fried's writing as a historian. In these narratives readers are invited to enter into the passion that drives him as a historian, this desire to make all things human intelligible, even or especially in their strangeness or otherness. The prose aims to make them come alive once again in the telling: for the human energies embedded in those historical moments a thousand years in the past to become real and active, a continuing presence in the telling and the reading. In his book on Otto III and Boleslaw Chrobry Fried also made his own approaches and insights associated with some of the great historians of a previous generation, including Percy Ernst Schramm (who was one of the teachers of Peter Classen) and Ernst H. Kantorowicz (a predecessor at Frankfurt, who wrote his "Frederick the Second 1194–1250" in Heidelberg): thus, to illumine Ottonian history by way of the splendid royal and imperial images in its most precious manuscripts. History went beyond the textual: it was also visual, the visual sources sometimes speaking more tellingly than the textual. Fried has a wonderful eye, it turns

out, and anyone who has been a guest in his house and has studied the sketches and paintings on his walls will know that his visual acumen rests upon inherited family genes as well as his own singular gifts.

At his most distinctive and his most passionate Johannes Fried is properly a historian of the human spirit. He cares deeply about how people think, therefore also what they thought and how they thought in the past; more precisely, how ways of thinking drove history, spurred historical change. Fried is a masterful and imaginative reader of medieval sources with an amazing mastery of medieval sources across several centuries. But his most original research often turns precisely on trying to grasp forms of medieval thinking ("das Denken") and knowing ("das Wissen"). He is interested in schools and learning as such, but his real passion and insights circle around thinking as such, how thinking and learning and knowing intersect with human action to make history. During his term at the "Historisches Kolleg" in Munich his public lecture explored varied ways in which scholarly learning ("Wissenschaft") and economy ("Wirtschaft") came together in merchants and fairs, including eventually book fairs such as that of Frankfurt. Accounting, arithmetic, and keeping books schooled both merchants and schoolmen, and shaped their mindset – as Joel Kaye would subsequently argue for Paris. This particular union and its resultant mindset, Fried argues, in fact distinguished medieval and later European history from Antique culture and society. This drive to know, to satisfy curiosity, to answer questions, must be understood not only as an end in itself, which it could be, but as an orientation toward addressing human and social needs – it then one of the most fruitful energies in the making of medieval European history. An article he had written a decade earlier, honoring Carlrichard Brühl as a teacher, investigated thirteenth-century travel reports concerning Mongols under the striking title "In Search of Reality" ("Auf der Suche nach der Wirklichkeit"). What he found at work in these authors were the methods of the university and the new schools, *inquisitio* and all the other dialectical techniques for determining truth, here applied to uncover what they could about people living beyond the realm and customs of Latin Christians – and yet these tools in some sense not fully sufficing to account for the strange "reality" they here observed.

Fried argues in several publicatons – also in his recent book on "Charlemagne, Power and Faith" ("Karl der Große. Gewalt und Glaube") – that this drive to know and understand was found already in the Carolingian and the Salian periods, whence his conference at the "Historisches Kolleg" on rhetoric and dialectic, the schooled forms of thinking that predated scholastic *inquisitio*. Further, in a wide-ranging article, part of a volume he co-edited on "Wissenskulturen", Fried applied this "forschungsstrategische Konzept" to yet another lay setting, the royal court, also beginning in the Carolingian era and going forward all the way into the thirteenth century and the court of Frederick II. Here he also evaluates all the varied claims about the culture of Frederick's court, as elsewhere he would bring out Frederick's book on falcons and falconry, a lay case of applied learning. His insistent interest turns on that drive to know and to apply, here as importantly mediated outwards from princely courts – first on a grand scale, he argues in various places, with the Carolingian kings. We should note too his essay on "The universality of freedom in

the Middle Ages" ("Über den Universalismus der Freiheit im Mittelalter"), where Fried traced notions of a human freedom that cut across social class and legal condition and could reach to ideas, particularly the ideas of churchmen such as Rather of Verona or Pope Gregory VII. In all these studies Fried attempts to lift out, and to narrate for his readers, the historical reality of medieval human beings energized by way of thinking and learning to address their lived situations, be this in their work, in power and politics, in commerce, the organization of society, or notions and privileges attending the status of human beings.

Over the last generation medieval historians have taken up religious history extensively, but in ways that rise above older and often narrower forms of church history. In his work Fried too takes religious beliefs and energies and thinking seriously as shapers of medieval and ultimately European history – but he does so from his particular perspective as a historian of the human spirit. In a large article ("Endzeiterwartung um die Jahrtausendwende") dense with materials and sources, published in "Deutsches Archiv" in 1989, Fried drew attention to a matter that has become central to his work ever since: medieval Christian notions of an approaching End-time when all humans would have to render an account of their lives before the Lord God. What intrigues Fried here is only in part the unavoidable giving of an account, important as that might be to a person's sense of self and to human action. He keys rather on the anxieties that attended the anticipation of this dawning End, the looking ahead to this inevitable moment when an end to historical time would break in. In this first article Fried's interpretation singled out two key claims: that anxieties and expectations around the year 1000 were real and reasonably widespread (over against historians who had expressed skepticism), and – as importantly – that people on the other side of the year 1000 took heart, turned their minds to tasks at hand, and came away re-energized. The consequences he sees manifest in the richness of eleventh-century history and culture, whether or not one calls it a "svolto", a turning-point, to echo another conference (German-Italian) in which Fried took a prominent role.

This End-time "form of thinking" has come to inform numerous of his writings over the past twenty-five years, including a new book to appear within the year, and has generated strong claims to its import for the making of medieval European history. Along the way he has reworked standing interpretations of Augustine's thinking on time and history, and identified other pivotal moments of End-time expectation from Charlemagne to Isaac Newton. A decade after that first article Fried expanded his argument into a preliminary general book, now succeeded by a more comprehensive one ("Dies irae. Eine Geschichte des Weltuntergangs"), on apocalyptic and End-time thinking, "Ascent out of Decline" ("Aufstieg aus dem Untergang"). Here he works out a broader and more specific argument about the effects of this form of thinking on European history, specifically that this fixation on a coming Doomsday paradoxically drove medieval Europe forward into the modern world, into indeed a "scientific" and "secularized" modern world. More, in his conclusion he provocatively poses the question as to whether this "form of thinking" ("Denkstil") accounted for the "rise of the West", particularly the scientific ("naturwissenschaftlich") West. The issue historically, he argues, was that people needed

to know how to read the signs of the times, signs to be found in stars, comets and eclipses, in famines and earthquakes. If serious-minded Christians were to prepare themselves, figure out when that End was near, they had to understand these natural phenomena just as much as holy texts, both words from God – even though, historically and ironically, the more they grasped the phenomena themselves the more distant God became. The brilliance of this book works at several levels, even if discussion and arguments continue, a sign that its insights have touched something real. Fried has written it in an altogether accessible format while basing it on scholarly research; he has taken a form of belief nearly unintelligible to many moderns and rendered it central to the story of Europe's making; and he here raises questions about the shape of European history and of a distinctive European human experience grounded in distinctive and even "strange" ways of perceiving and thinking.

Johannes Fried is not an intellectual historian in the classic or narrow sense of that term, as anyone will instantly recognize who reads his narrative histories, filled to bursting with human detail, with anecdotes and stories that he first gathered into binders in his office. These too were the stuff of his day-to-day teaching on all conceivable aspects of human life. As a historian, nonetheless, Fried writes in ways that are more self-aware, as well as self-reflective and self-critical, than most. I might illustrate this from an early talk he gave often after finishing his "Habilitation" – serving in part as what Americans would call a "job-talk", what his teacher Peter Classen I once heard call "das Vorsingen", also the first of many articles he would publish in the "Historische Zeitschrift" ("Der karolingische Herrschaftsverband", 1982). Fried took up an old subject, the nature of politics and power in the Carolingian era, in effect raising the theme, tainted by recent history, of the "state" and statecraft. What was required first to approach this matter, he declared, was a "political hermeneutic", a deeper conceptual unpacking of the terms Carolingians used to instantiate power and its expression. Here he worked out his own views, with which he has largely stuck: that the people of that era had in fact no different "form of thinking" with respect to royal power than what they held toward that exercised by powerful individual lords. It was however a reforming Carolingian church, indebted to late antiquity but itself still badly underdeveloped as an institution, that first lent to kingship and to administrative functions the language and set of conceptual terms that enabled churchmen and administrators to turn personal power, such as that over a household small or large, into more abstract and institutional notions of a polity. Eventually Fried also made his own the insistence of many on the overwhelming orality of early medieval society. At issue then was how, apart from texts, power could be represented and made real ("Aktualisierung"). The example he chose to focus on was the elevation of King Henry I, the reputed beginnings of "Germany", a case still raw from its use and abuse in the 1930s, and one to which Fried would repeatedly return in future work.

Fried's boldest and most renowned early effort at deconstructing and then reconstructing history came in 1994 with his volume for the prestigious "Propyläen Geschichte Deutschlands". His volume, the first in the series, treated the politically and historically fraught matter of beginnings, and he titled it "The Path into History" ("Der Weg in die Geschichte"). Perhaps the title was meant to echo arguments

current among modern historians about a disputed alternative path ("Sonderweg") into German statehood eventuating in the catastrophe of the Third Reich. However that may be, what Fried meant to write was a history providing both scholars and general readers with an alternative to all the hidden ideological landmines buried in nineteenth-century nationalist and racist notions of the German people or the German state, also all those attempts by both historians and politicians earlier to locate their agenda in an "authenticating" and original medieval past. For his achievement in this book Fried was honored with one of the highest prizes Germany has to offer a historian, the "Preis des Historischen Kollegs" (1995), personally conferred by the President of the German Republic. At the ceremony Arnold Esch read a wonderful "Laudatio", at once thoughtful and amusing. Fried then presented a carefully crafted talk on "Learning and Phantasy" ("Wissenschaft und Phantasie. Das Beispiel der Geschichte"), an essay which ought to be required reading for students of history. It represents his most programmatic reflections on the task of a historian together with a response to some who had critiqued his efforts to intuit and narrate the lives of early medieval people as going beyond what the sources strictly permitted. In this book, both highly creative and deeply anchored in the sources, he retold the story of the early history of the German-speaking peoples in central Europe. While implicitly confronting tortured issues that still hung over matters touching German "origins", Fried lifted the conversation and narrative above fate or race or nationalism. He planted the coming of a German people firmly and entirely in history, all the contingent accidents of events, of competing intents and purposes, which taken together brought these peoples slowly to identify themselves as "Germans", a designation in fact largely taken over initially from the outside.

Fried was writing, after 1990, at a time when broader shifts in the German historical community were also in play. The great and influential medieval historians who had retained their positions under the NS-Regime had now passed on. Discussions now began to turn more openly on party memberships and degrees of complicity. Fried was among those who most openly raised these issues among medieval historians in talks he delivered at the "Konstanzer Arbeitskreis" and then as incoming president of the "Historikertag" 1998. At this same time too, the Wall came down, reuniting east and west, also historians of wholly varied life experiences and intellectual dispositions. However much the DDR was folded into the BRD, and however little the new boundaries of the German Republic matched any of the older medieval ones, a new sense of "Germany" was inevitably in the air, and thus also in some sense implicitly opened for historical discussion again. Further, the German Republic was now an essential part of the European Community, indeed its largest and wealthiest state, and that in turn has raised a whole new horizon of conceptual expectations. Was "national" history even relevant anymore? Fried began his book by in effect declaring a *tabula rasa*. The historian's task was to imagine German-speaking peoples and their lands and lives and culture in "becoming", as contingent products of history and time, if no less real for also being historical and contingent. So he started by asking: Who were they? How did they live? How did they think? What ends did they pursue? Any myths of national "being" or "people" or "place" were banished. The book ends by asking again "What's German?" The

answer lies in history, all the fullness of the stuff excavated from surviving sources, the life and ways these materials suggest – here brought to life in compelling, and sometimes urgent, narrative. This ability to create narrative out of the tiniest bits, and out of a great multitude of bits, is one of Fried's real markers. Indeed it is more than narrative – whence it raised eyebrows for some. It is an attempt to enter into the lives of these people, to make them speak and feel again. All these same traits would become evident again a decade later in his highly successful "The Middle Ages" ("Das Mittelalter"), just translated into English and widely reviewed, and now a decade later in his account of Charlemagne and his era under the rubric of "Power and Faith", or if we retain his alliteration "Force and Faith". Fried, I might add, has repeatedly proved extremely good at titles, often eye-catching, sometimes provocative, nearly always an expression of the vision that underlies the narrative of the book or article.

In September 2000 Johannes Fried completed his term as "Vorsitzender des Verbandes der Historiker und Historikerinnen Deutschlands" (1996–2000), the equivalent of the American Historical Association, his election a sign of the respect and recognition he now enjoyed among German historians more generally. Around then I remember talking with a distinguished German historian of law – we were both then at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, where Fried also spent a term (1995–96) – and he remarked to me of Fried (in German): "He has ideas." It was high praise. For all the value we scholars invest in "Wissenschaft" as its own noble end, this scholarly learning, without ideas, without intuitive imagination, without new ways of conceiving issues and answers, is not in itself self-sustaining, not in the larger public, not even among ourselves. The themes Fried opened up in the 1980s and would pursue in the 1990s have remained central to his work, made manifest and further deepened in many innovative interpretive essays, especially in the fields of Carolingian and Ottonian history, though also with a recurring interest in Henry the Lion, that would-be king, that alternative reshaping of northern German history. Around 2000 however Fried also began to press his fellow historians to think harder about their own craft, to turn "das Denken" and "das Wissen" back on themselves as well as onto their medieval sources. We may hear two differing expressions of this challenge in the two addresses he delivered on the grand and very public stage of the "Historikertag". In the first he challenged historians to look back with moral scrutiny at the integrity of their own profession, indeed their own teachers, and how they fared in history. This of course pointed particularly to how universities survived under the NS-Regime and the death and destruction it brought upon Europe and finally upon Germany itself. He called for historians to be honest about their own history, even like good researchers to document which medieval historians joined the Party and when and with what consequences – a step at which some of his peers balked.

In his closing address Johannes Fried turned to a subject which had come to dominate his personal reflections on writing history, these issuing in 2004 in his grand synthetic work, "The Veil of Memory" ("Der Schleier der Erinnerung. Grundzüge einer historischen Memorik"), his "outlines for a historical science of memory". Earlier he had written a series of articles and smaller books on "History

and the Brain" and "The Relevance (Aktualität) of the Middle Ages" and in English "The Veil of Memory. Anthropological Problems when Considering the Past". The issues Fried raises here are complex, and have been variously discussed and variously received. To grasp what is at stake, and what is intended, one must sort out in effect several interwoven strands. His stance is predicated on a passionate plea for the relevance of the thousand years that comprise medieval history, in effect the first thousand years of European history, now in the face too of an overwhelming modern presentism. This is what Fried has undertaken as a gifted narrative historian, his efforts to bring it to life, to make its worries and actions alive, "present", if you like, while always respecting its distance and its difference. But this comes with an equally powerful plea addressed to his fellow practitioners of medieval history. The "remembered data" which are the basis for significant portions of our written sources must be re-considered, he argues, in the light of the modern scientific study of cognition, taking account of the neurological functions of the brain as an organ as well as psychological findings on the nature of memory as constitutive of both consciousness and the "subconscious". Once again his title, that of the published form of his address to the "Historikertag", captures his fundamental position as it challenges our historical craft: "Memory and Forgetting. The Present Founds the Unity of the Past" ("Erinnerung und Vergessen. Die Gegenwart stiftet die Einheit der Vergangenheit"). At one level one may understand this, as several have, including some critics, as Fried's personal response to the truth of human subjectivity, to the inevitably personal framing of all our perceptions. As such it is also the sharpest affront to any naïve positivism or simplistic notion of history-writing "wie es eigentlich gewesen ist". Some too may shrug, or may even dismiss Fried's intervention, as yet another scholar who has simply taken a radical "post-modern" turn.

But that is to get it wrong. It gives Fried no credit for his deep immersion in contemporary brain science and the neurology of memory. It is also to overlook one of the deepest truths about Fried and his work: He is a historian through and through, also as it happens a historian of a fairly distant past which has comparatively fewer surviving written sources. In a certain sense Fried's position rests on a paradox. He perceives and wants two things at once. He wants to get at the truth, the data, the "facts", and to reconstruct the story as fully and as accurately and as compellingly as he can for this generation – and he does that exceedingly well, as well as any medieval historian in his generation. At the same time he wants historians to be fully cognizant of modern scientific "facts" about the nature of human knowing and human remembering and human forgetting. Because in many of our medieval written sources the first set of "facts" are dependent upon, or mediated by, the second set of "facts", these two must be considered together – just as, I might suggest, historians have taken for granted since the nineteenth century or before that they must bring, say, philology to bear on the reading and interpretation of their texts. What Fried sought to do in his "Veil of Memory" or his article on "Remembering and Forgetting", also in work published since then, is to bring the historical and the cognitive together in symbiotic ways as mediated by the human and cognitive process of remembering.

Once again Fried's title articulates his insight. Memory of the past is veiled, veiled by mis-remembering, by forgetting, by re-remembering under new circum-

stances, and so on, all of this in turn conditioned by the capacities of human consciousness – and these modern cognitive science can illumine. At the same time the historian is also always busy trying to lift that veil, to see the real person or history underneath, while recognizing too that this can never quite fully or truly be achieved. What Fried has undertaken in much of his work over the last decade, including new books on Canossa and on the Donation of Constantine, is to put his insight and his agenda into practice. That means he is not talking "theory" but he constantly turns back to writing medieval history. The ultimate end is to grasp what we can know, or know better, about the submission of Tassilo or the crowning of Charlemagne or the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals or the forged Donation of Constantine or St. Benedict – and so on through the list. In many ways what Fried is striving for, coming at it from the beginning out of his focus on "das Denken" and "das Wissen" as central to the human condition, and then latterly through research in neurology and cognition, is a twenty-first century response to what Ranke and his generation sought when they strove to give history the status of "Wissenschaft". In both cases the historian, while doing his own proper work, reached for learning and for models taken from paradigms in the natural sciences ("die Naturwissenschaften"), in the twenty-first century from the human sciences centered on the brain and cognition. What Fried fears, or does not want, is a notion of the Humanities or "die Geisteswissenschaften", as proposed by Dilthey or in various other forms, that effectively hives them off as their own private world, even their own private amusement park, while the real work of science goes on elsewhere. The two must be held together.

Fried's focus is not upon that historical form of memory culture which preoccupied a previous generation of German historians interpreting obituaries and necrologies and genealogies. He has in fact called some of their work into question, including that of the then influential Eduard Hlawitschka. His work comes closer at times to that of Patrick Geary and others like him. But in the end it is driven far more by the nature of memory and forgetting itself as a human dynamic, not just as instantiated in certain cultural materials manifest in the making of "Traditionsbücher" or cartularies. What Fried does work with in his writing is the notion of "lieux de mémoire" associated especially with the historian Pierre Nora, those monuments or moments or events around which memory constellates in time and over time, if still ever changing. Taking the notion of "Rome as Empire" for such a "place of memory", Fried wrote a stunningly concise and insightful narrative stretching across the whole Middle Ages, in this case also in part honoring his teacher Peter Classen, though the essay was dedicated to Horst Fuhrmann, perhaps the most influential historian in Fried's early years as a professor, member of the "Zentraldirektion" of the "Monumenta Germaniae Historica", and for whom he also wrote a moving obituary in the "Historische Zeitschrift".

In historical practice the "veils" Fried is attempting to lift are often multiple, evident for instance in his recent book on "Canossa, the Unmasking of a Legend. A Polemical Pamphlet" ("Canossa. Entlarvung einer Legende. Eine Streitschrift"). The title is itself full of wordplay and allusion. In German historical narrative for over a century now, going back to its invocation by Bismarck ("We [the Germans] will not go to Canossa") on the eve of the "Kulturkampf", Canossa has come to

represent a crucial turning-point in church and state. But "Canossa" is no less invoked by church historians as a turning-point in the emergence of a powerful monarchical papacy, and is still in German popular culture a "place of memory" as evidenced by a massively attended exhibition in 2006. The tempestuous conflicts of that era produced a series of polemical writings which, notably (around 1900), were given their own series in the "Monumenta Germaniae Historica" as *Libelli de lite*. Fried here writes his own "polemical pamphlet", first of all to peel away the legendary veils that have come to cover the historical event itself (he not the first to do that). But he goes on to peel away the veils of faulty memory that mask the written sources surviving from the era itself, all the politicized and emotionalized and mistaken and mis-told accounts that now constitute our primary written materials. In the end Fried does not find Canossa to be the world-changing event that all the veiled legends have made it out to be, even if those were world-changing times. But equally, and importantly, through his own reconstruction of the sources now unveiled or unmasked he offers his understanding of what may have happened there, and of what was intended once all the other veils are lifted away, even if his evidence is slight (one key source). His evidence comes from counter-evidence too, the nature of travel in the late eleventh century and what kinds of distances could be covered in how many days, what information was available to participants (or often not). With this study, as with his many studies of for instance King Henry I or Henry the Lion, one must hold two moves paradoxically in balance to get at Fried's intent: the unveiling of false and falsified memory but no less the attempt, even while unmasking the limitations of human cognition and memory, to glimpse nonetheless the face of history underneath those veils.

In bemused conversation with me one day Johannes Fried referred to himself as a "Ketzer". He meant more than his sometimes standing apart, his stubbornly thinking for himself, coming to his own conclusions, or uncovering overlooked connections and stories. On that occasion he was alluding to his family's connections with the "Rudolf Steiner Gesellschaft" and its allied "Christengemeinschaft". Fried entered the profession of medieval history at a time when most in Germany, perhaps even more so in the circle of medieval historians, identified still as Protestant or Catholic, with Jews nearly gone, and a few people now beginning to claim no religious allegiance. Steiner, a creative and independent thinker about human consciousness, himself pursued a form of "Geisteswissenschaft" which he understood as distinct from Dilthey's. It would be mistaken to suggest that Fried's personal history and experience "explains" the direction his own historical thought and practice have gone – even as in historical interpretation context does not, at least my view, "determine" event or belief, though it may predispose. The truth here may be almost an inversion. Those early intuitions and teachings opened him to questions and puzzles concerning the human condition and human understanding that other medieval historians simply never imagined or considered, and to which Fried has given a scholarly lifetime in seeking his own creative answers. That seeking is anchored deep in the medieval materials, what we can know about them through or despite the veil of memory, all of it animated by his constant musing over the nature of the human spirit as revealed in history.

For all of this work Johannes Fried has gained widespread recognition in Germany and beyond as a prodigious and innovative historical writer. Reviewers refer to him as "der renommierte Historiker des Mittelalters" or as the "éminence grise" among German medieval historians, and to his survey of the Middle Ages as a "splendid historical tapestry". He has held key roles in scholarly academies across Germany as well as Hungary and the Czech Republic, has been a central editorial figure for a generation with "Historische Zeitschrift" and "Deutsches Archiv", turned down several offers to other universities, and has garnered several prizes including, beyond those already noted, the "Sigmund Freud Preis" for scholarly writing (2006) and the "Gauß Medal" (2015) for innovative scholarship. In 2008 Johannes Fried also received an honorary doctorate from the Philosophical Faculty of the "Rheinisch-Westfälische Technische Hochschule" in Aachen. In 2009 he retired from the University of Frankfurt.

For Johannes Fried, historian of the Middle Ages, no less a historian of the human spirit, the thousand years of the European Middle Ages represent a rich and in various ways still – if often mis-remembered or not finally fully knowable – a living past. Understanding them is vital to what Europe now is and what it might yet become. More than most university historians, and also with more success, he has written history that can reach broader audiences and he has also joined discussions in public media. At the same time Johannes Fried is fully a scholar's scholar. In his work he always returns to the sources, and he writes from the sources, often reproducing those sources for the modern reader. But Fried, like a true scholar, is not content with any notion of reading sources as if they and their meanings were self-explanatory. Like a classic nineteenth-century scholar he knows about manuscripts and editions and transmission and linguistic meanings, but as a scholar of the late twentieth and twenty-first century he insists that knowing and understanding, maybe particularly historical knowing, spring ultimately from ourselves, how we think, and hinge thus on perception and cognition and memory. He insists upon "othering" those medieval peoples, respecting their difference or even strangeness in ways of thinking and perceiving and believing, precisely while also trying to bring them nearer, to lift the veil, to catch some glimpse of the historical face. So it is in his recent book on Charlemagne, which he calls "a life", echoing Einhard's, even while insisting that apart from one letter to his wife and perhaps the Frankish Annals we have no direct access to this man as a man. Yet he fills the pages with overwhelming detail supplied by ninth-century documents, thus bringing the world of Charlemagne to life and so in some sense too its dominant royal figure. He sets aside notions of Charlemagne as the "Father of Europe" – a unifying ideal beloved in the immediate post-War period – and yet insists that this Frankish King and Roman Emperor's insistence on knowing things, from estate management to astronomy to basic rhetoric and dialectic, lies at the origins of what would ultimately make Europe distinctively "European". Thus we can and cannot know Charlemagne as a man, and yet he is ours, and must be ours if we are to understand ourselves as likewise the offspring of history.

Fried is a historian of many things, and masterly in his craft, but always with a focus on the human spirit, a reality which we cannot ultimately reach historically except in its "veiled" manifestations and yet must ever seek to know and can know

to some extent, glimpses behind and through the veil. For him the study of the past is one with the study of human character and the human condition. And a central feature of the human condition is that it is historical, that people live in time and move through time. History is therefore crucial to our own efforts to grasp who we are and who we were – this fully as true for the Middle Ages as for the modern era, and indeed going back deep into our evolutionary past. As much as any German medieval historian of his generation, or maybe more, Johannes Fried has made real both the distance between us and the people of the Middle Ages, and the vitality of the connection still, of the presence of that veiled past.

SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF JOHANNES FRIED

I. Monographies

Die Entstehung des Juristenstandes im 12. Jahrhundert. Zur sozialen und politischen Bedeutung gelehrter Juristen in Bologna und Modena, Phil. Diss. Heidelberg 1970 (Forschungen zur neueren Privatrechtsgeschichte 21) Köln/Wien 1974.

Der päpstliche Schutz für Laienfürsten. Die politische Geschichte des päpstlichen Schutzprivilegs für Laien (11.–13. Jh.) (Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-historische Klasse 1980, 1) Heidelberg 1980.

Otto III. und Boleslaw Chrobry. Das Widmungsbild des Aachener Evangeliars, der "Akt von Gnesen" und das frühe polnische und ungarische Königtum. Eine Bildanalyse und ihre historischen Folgen (Frankfurter Historische Abhandlungen 30) Stuttgart 1989, ebd. [2]2001. In polnischer Übersetzung: Otton III i Bolesław Chrobry. Miniatura dedykacyjna z Ewangeliarza z Akwizgranu, zjazd gnieźnieński a królestwa polskie i węgierskie. Analiza ikonogra ficzna i wnioski historyczne (Klio w Niemczech 6) übers. von Elżbieta Kaźmierczak/Witold Leder, Warschau 2000.

Die Formierung Europas 840–1046 (OGG 6) München 1991, ebd. [2]1993, ebd. [3]2008.

Der Weg in die Geschichte. Die Ursprünge Deutschlands bis 1024 (Propyläen Geschichte Deutschlands 1) Berlin 1994, ebd. [2]1998, ebd. [3]2015 (unter dem Titel: Die Anfänge der Deutschen. Der Weg in die Geschichte).

Kaiser Friedrich II. als Jäger oder: ein zweites Falkenbuch Kaiser Friedrichs II. (Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen. Philologisch-Historische Klasse 4) Göttingen 1996. Auch erschienen in: Enrico Menestò (Hg.), Esculum e Federico II. L'imperatore e la città. Per una rilettura dei percorsi della memoria. Atti del Convegno di studio svoltosi in occasione della nona edizione del "Premio internazionale Ascoli Piceno", Ascoli Piceno, 14–16 dicembre 1995 (Atti del "Premio internazionale Ascoli Piceno" N. S. 6) Spoleto 1998, S. 31–86.

The Veil of Memory. Anthropological Problems when Considering the Past (German Historical Institute London. Annual Lecture 1997) London 1998.

Aufstieg aus dem Untergang. Apokalyptisches Denken und die Entstehung der modernen Naturwissenschaft im Mittelalter, München 2001. In französischer Übersetzung: Les fruits de l'Apocalypse. Origines de la pensée scientifique moderne au Moyen Âge. Avec une préface de Jean-Claude Schmitt, übers. von Denise Modigliani, Paris 2004.

Die Aktualität des Mittelalters. Gegen die Überheblichkeit unserer Wissensgesellschaft, Stuttgart 2002, ebd. [2]2002, ebd. [3]2003.

Geschichte und Gehirn. Irritationen der Geschichtswissenschaft durch Gedächtniskritik (Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur Mainz. Abhandlungen der geistes- und sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse 2003, 7) Stuttgart 2003.

Der Schleier der Erinnerung. Grundzüge einer historischen Memorik, München 2004, erneut (Beck'sche Reihe 6022) ebd. 2012.

"Donation of Constantine" and "Constitutum Constantini". The Misinterpretation of a Fiction and its Original Meaning. With a Contribution by Wolfram Brandes: "The Satraps of Constantine" (Millennium Studies 3) Berlin/New York 2007.

Zu Gast im Mittelalter, München 2007 (Aufsatzsammlung).

Das Mittelalter. Geschichte und Kultur, München 2008. In englischer Übersetzung: The Middle Ages, übers. von Peter Lewis, Cambridge, MA/London 2015.

Canossa. Entlarvung einer Legende. Eine Streitschrift, Berlin 2012.

Karl der Große. Gewalt und Glaube. Eine Biographie, München 2013, ebd. ^{2}2014, ebd. ^{3}2014, ebd. ^{4}2014.

II. Editorships

Zusammen mit Peter Classen, Studium und Gesellschaft im Mittelalter (Schriften der MGH 29) Stuttgart 1983.

Die Frankfurter Messe. 750 Jahre Messen in Frankfurt. Besucher und Bewunderer. Literarische Zeugnisse aus ihren ersten acht Jahrhunderten, Frankfurt am Main 1990.

Die abendländische Freiheit vom 10. zum 14. Jahrhundert. Der Wirkungszusammenhang von Idee und Wirklichkeit im europäischen Vergleich (VuF 34) Sigmaringen 1991.

Dialektik und Rhetorik im früheren und hohen Mittelalter. Rezeption, Überlieferung und gesellschaftliche Wirkungen vornehmlich im 9. und 12. Jahrhundert (Schriften des Historischen Kollegs. Kolloquien 27) München 1997.

Zusammen mit Thomas Kailer, Wissenskulturen. Beiträge zu einem forschungsstrategischen Konzept (Wissenskulturen und gesellschaftlicher Wandel 1) Berlin 2003.

Zusammen mit Olaf B. Rader, Die Welt des Mittelalters. Erinnerungsorte eines Jahrtausends, München 2011.

III. Articles

Der Regalienbegriff im 11. und 12. Jahrhundert, in: DA 29, 1973, S. 450–528.

Die römische Kurie und die Anfänge der Prozeßliteratur, in: ZRG KA 59, 1973, S. 151–174.

Der karolingische Herrschaftsverband im 9. Jahrhundert zwischen "Kirche" und "Königshaus", in: HZ 235, 1982, S. 1–43.

Über den Universalismus der Freiheit im Mittelalter, in: HZ 240, 1985, S. 313–361; wieder in: ders., Zu Gast im Mittelalter, München 2007, S. 143–173.

Auf der Suche nach der Wirklichkeit. Die Mongolen und die europäische Erfahrungswissenschaft im 13. Jahrhundert, in: HZ 243, 1986, S. 287–332; wieder in: ders., Zu Gast im Mittelalter, München 2007, S. 174–207.

L'attesa della fine dei tempi alla svolta del millennio, in: Ovidio Capitani/Jürgen Miethke (Hgg.), L'attesa della fine dei tempi nel Medioevo (AnnTrento. Quaderno 28) Bologna 1990, S. 37–86; erweiterte deutsche Fassung: Endzeiterwartung um die Jahrtausendwende, in: DA 45, 1989, S. 381–473.

Die Königserhebung Heinrichs I. Erinnerung, Mündlichkeit und Traditionsbildung im 10. Jahrhundert, in: Michael Borgolte (Hg.), Mittelalterforschung nach der Wende 1989 (HZ Beihefte 20) München 1995, S. 267–318; wieder in: ders., Zu Gast im Mittelalter, München 2007, S. 47–81.

Wissenschaft und Phantasie. Das Beispiel der Geschichte, in: HZ 263, 1996, S. 291–316; wieder in: Jahrbuch des Historischen Kollegs 1996, S. 23–47; nochmals in: ders., Zu Gast im Mittelalter, München 2007, S. 239–259.

Erinnerung und Vergessen. Die Gegenwart stiftet die Einheit der Vergangenheit, in: HZ 273, 2001, S. 561–593.

Nekrolog. Horst Fuhrmann (1926–2011), in: HZ 294, 2012, S. 872–879.