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Violence and Emotions in Early Modern Europe

Edited by
Susan Broomhall and Sarah Finn



Violence and Emotions in Early Modern Europe

‘This wide-ranging volume makes an important contribution to the growing scholarship on the history of the emotions and the history of violence.’

Jonathan Davies, University of Warwick, UK

Violence and Emotions in Early Modern Europe examines the purposes for which specific forms of violence and particular emotional states functioned, how they operated in relation to each other, or indeed how one provoked, sustained or diminished the other.

These 12 original essays demonstrate the complexities of violence and emotions and the myriad possibilities of their inter-relationships. They emphasize the great efforts that were made by early modern societies to control modes of violence and emotional regimes to achieve positive as well as negative effects, such as creating order, healing and bringing individuals and communities together around productive identities.

The authors consider legal documents, news reports, memoirs, letters, confraternity statutes and medical consultations to investigate the bodily and textual practices in which violent and emotional acts were created, supported and disseminated to investigate the power, aims, effect and outcomes of relationships between violence and emotions. The chapters look at a range of topics and countries including Renaissance Italy and sixteenth-century Germany, France in the grip of the religious wars, and England’s Civil Wars, as well as a wide range of topics including murder, punishment, community healing, insults, threats, prophecy and medical and devotional practices.

This work will be essential reading for students of the history of emotions or violence.

Susan Broomhall is a Professor of Early Modern History at The University of Western Australia.

Sarah Finn completed her Ph.D. in 2010 at The University of Western Australia. In 2013, she was a Research Associate in the ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions.

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Introduction

Violence and emotions in early modern Europe

Susan Broomhall

In the Chiesa di Santa Maria della Vita in Bologna six figures surround a mutilated body that bears the physical signs of a brutal and untimely death. Upon their faces are palpably etched shock, grief, sorrow and despair, a maelstrom of intense feelings that torment them, and which are dramatically reflected in their distinctive, dynamic postures. These are bodies in crisis, in the grip of sensations so violent as to cause both physical and psychic harm.



Figure 0.1 Niccolò dell'Arca, figures from *Lamentation over the Dead Christ*, terracotta, early 1460s, Chiesa di Santa Maria della Vita, Bologna

Source: DAE-11105269 © DEA/A. DE GREGORI

One Mary rushes forward, perhaps to tend to the son she has just lost, while the other recoils in horror as if captured in the very moment of comprehension of the terrible reality before her. Their reactions display two individual affective responses reflected in distinct movements and expressions to the same violent event, emotions born of their particular attachments of love for this man taken so brutally from them. Niccolò dell'Arca's terracotta *Lamentation over the Dead Christ*, made during the early 1460s, is an unforgettable work.¹ It is a striking and unique representation of the dynamic ways in which violence and emotions could interact so individually for six female and male witnesses.

Dell'Arca's work is emblematic of the themes of this collection. By examining the purposes for which specific forms of violence and particular emotional states functioned, how they operated in relation to each other, or indeed how one provoked, sustained or diminished the other, we explore the dynamic interplay between violence and emotions in the early modern period. In Dell'Arca's work, for example, a violent act wrought upon the physical body of Christ produced emotional responses of such power that those who witnessed it expressed these feelings as evident psychic and physical violence of their own. In this collection, we seek to understand the power, aims, effect and outcomes of such complex relationships between violence and emotions.

Moreover, we investigate here the frameworks informing the practice, expression and experience of emotions. Dell'Arca depicted what was a historic moment, yet one rendered powerfully present for his contemporaries, engaging them through an arresting articulation of emotional states. It was an event with which his audience was intimately familiar. This particular act of brutality and suffering was foundational to the Christian religious and spiritual culture of pre-modern Europe, an act of profound emotional power that provoked both the most extraordinary as well as the most destructive tendencies in contemporary society. Violence, as the authors here demonstrate, could be productive and empowering, uplifting and calming, when situated in particular cultural systems and contexts. Indeed, it was for such ultimately constructive spiritual and emotional purposes that Niccolò dell'Arca's *Lamentation* was surely created.

Dangerous liaisons: understanding the relationship between violence and emotions

In order to consider these concepts of violence and emotions anew, we must first analyze their history together and unpack the powerful narratives established by some of the field's early leading voices. The echo of ideas promulgated by Johan Huizinga and Norbert Elias, for example, can still be heard – perhaps unconsciously – in how we render the pre-modern an age of particular brutality. Robert Muchembled, for example, has recently argued that '[e]verybody was violent at the Middle Ages and in early modern times',² and

that '[t]he brutality of human relations was a universal social language, considered normal and necessary in the West until at least the seventeenth century'.³ So too has Julius R. Ruff characterized the period as one 'more violent than our own',⁴ in which 'for men and women of the era . . . violence was less a problem to be solved than an almost accepted aspect of interpersonal discourse'.⁵ Similarly Jonathan Davies, citing the same two sentences by Muchembled above, has contended that the 'ubiquity of violence in Europe between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries is clear'.⁶ These views propose not only particularity to the nature and meaning of violence at this time, but also suggest a particular propensity for destructive behaviours in the pre-modern period: the 'prevalence of violence in various aspects of interpersonal relations suggests that early modern Europe was indeed a violent place, one that makes our modern society appear relatively safe by comparison'.⁷

A first stage to understanding how violence and emotions interact might logically be to consider each as a separate entity. However, analysis of these concepts as distinct from one another is not a straightforward undertaking. Indeed Huizinga and Elias both established visions of the pre-modern experience of life that argued, or in some cases assumed, relationships between violence and emotions. And just as their narrative of the pre-modern has been influential, so too have these formative scholars had a long-standing impact upon how we conceptualize these two ideas and understand their interactions.

A connection between violence and emotions underpins both these authors' seminal works. The first chapter of Huizinga's work on the culture of the late Middle Ages, 'The violent tenor of life', immediately drew violence into view. As he developed his analysis of the 'high degree of irritability' of the Middle Ages, however, it is clear that violence and emotions were, for him, intimately linked.⁸ 'All this general facility of emotions, of tears and spiritual upheavals, must be borne in mind in order to conceive fully how violent and high-strung was life at that period.'⁹ So intertwined were violent behaviours and these strong emotions that they were barely distinguishable in his conceptualization of the period: 'The men of that time always oscillated between the fear of hell and the most naïve joy, between cruelty and tenderness, between harsh asceticism and insane attachments to the delights of this world, between hatred and goodness, always running to extremes'.¹⁰ Huizinga's claims for the violence of the Middle Ages appear to be as much exhibited in extreme emotional experiences as in physical acts perpetrated on other people or things. Violence and emotions formed a reflexive relationship, in which strongly experienced (and typically negative) emotions led to violence, which forged in turn intense affective responses.

As it was for Huizinga, extreme affectivity was critical to Norbert Elias's understanding of the medieval period and its behaviours. Intense emotional experiences and expressions were, for example, an essential factor in, and expression of, the changing acceptability of violence that underpins the

'civilizing' thesis. Following Max Weber's theory of social disciplining, Elias argued that violence decreased as a strong state emerged in the modern era, one which controlled the production of violence and in which individuals' emotional display was increasingly internalized through the 'civilizing process'. His chapter 'On changes in aggressiveness' described the violence of the medieval world thus: 'Fear reigned everywhere; one had to be on one's guard all the time . . . as people's fate could change abruptly, so their joy could turn into fear and this fear, in its turn, could give way equally abruptly, to submission to some new pleasure.'¹¹ 'Whoever did not love or hate to the utmost in this society, whoever could not stand his ground in the play of passions, could go into a monastery.'¹² There is little allowance for spiritual passions and intense devotional practices that pushed the physical body to its limits in this view. Elias sketched a culture of externalized, unpredictable and changeable emotional experiences, the very instability of which created a culture both susceptible to and determining violent acts. The 'stronger affectivity of behaviour'¹³ went unchecked in a society in which 'no punitive social power existed'.¹⁴ Medieval people's lack of control over their emotional expression sustained violence, but in Elias's descriptions, were characterized almost as forms of violence in themselves.

At the same time, Elias clearly conceptualized medieval violence as a form of emotional behaviour, or as he called it, 'affective outbursts'.¹⁵ For both Elias and Huizinga, part of the kind of violence of the medieval past lay precisely in these apparently uninhibited, intense and highly visible emotional expressions. Both appeared to understand the violence and the affective behaviours of medieval people as one and the same phenomena. As Elias wrote:

the intensity of their piety, the violence of their fear of hell, their guilt feelings, their penitence, the immense outbursts of joy and gaiety, the sudden flaring and the uncontrollable force of their hatred and belligerence – all these, like the rapid changes of mood, are in reality symptoms of the same social and personality structure.¹⁶

By contrast, the modern world was one in which 'emotional discharge' lacked 'the immediacy and intensity of the medieval phase'.¹⁷ Elias's 'civilizing process' therefore entailed an 'affect-subduing effect'.¹⁸

However, subsequent analyses have called into question the validity of these conceptualizations of the relationship between emotions and violence, as well as the narratives and periodization of the mentalities and experiences that they produced. As early as 1941, Lucien Febvre foreshadowed 'a certain disquiet in the reader' that has also been felt by recent scholars concerning Huizinga's vision of a particular kind of disorder, of violence and emotional extremity, present in the Middle Ages.¹⁹ For the industrialized and urbanized nineteenth century, for example, a series of historians has suggested that gender expectations, social spaces, domestic arrangements and legal codes saw violence alter,

rather than decrease, in its forms, perpetrators, victims and documentation, especially within the new media forms emerging in that period.²⁰ Historians have recognized that the particular cultural tools by which societies measure violence in turn shape the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ of the documentation of violence, highlighting how new legal reforms, prosecutorial regimes and police mechanisms have been pivotal in defining and charting violence in that period.²¹

Regarding the twentieth century, Joanna Bourke has radically revised Elias’s proposition that the ‘temporal and spatial enclaves within civilized society . . . allowed freer play’ to belligerence, and that they are ‘more impersonal and lead less and less to an affective discharge having the immediacy and intensity of the medieval phase’.²² Her body of work has been significant in its shifting focus between forms of violence and of affects in the modern world. Bourke’s research across varied forms of interpersonal violence emphasizes the intimate relation of such acts to distinct emotional responses by the sexes.²³ Indeed, her analyses of masculinity and of killing suggest more of Elias’s ‘medieval’ pleasure of violence among ordinary men with its ‘cruelty and joy in the destruction and torment of others’ than the trauma and brutalization that we readily expect to associate with such acts in our own time, thus dismantling the ‘civilizing process’ from a very different interrogation of modern evidence.²⁴ Yet, even in recent works that focus upon violence, there is a continued, pervasive periodization of the pre-modern as a time in which violence was more integral to social functioning and human relations than in modern times.

Violence and emotions have long been connected in historical work on the pre-modern, although the precise relationship between the two has rarely been the subject of explicit analysis. More recent studies, however, have demonstrated how critical are the definitions of our key concepts – violence and emotions – to any sustained consideration of the correlations and operations between them; for these terms cannot be assumed to have shared meanings among disciplinary traditions, nor indeed between past and present populations.

Defining violence

Defining just what counts as violence, therefore, is key to new interpretations and understandings of how it operates. For those scholars interested in measuring the decline or increase in violence over time, having stable measures of kinds of violence with shared understandings and reporting procedures is critical. As Pieter Spierenburg has observed, for diachronic or synchronic comparisons, a minimum number of analytical concepts is vital.²⁵ Robert Muchembled has thus traced homicide across time within western culture to understand changing ideas and experiences of violence.²⁶ However, this form cannot satisfy all questions that scholars want to ask about violence, such as

how it is expressed by both men and women, and it seems doubtful that homicide has been recognized and recorded consistently across times and places.²⁷ More recently, therefore, Spierenburg has proposed acts that constitute ‘intentional encroachment upon a person’s physical integrity’ be deemed violence.²⁸ Yet the emphasis on the bodily (and rejection of verbal, psychological and accidental forms²⁹) would still leave many early modern experiences of violence unexplored. Spierenburg, for example, excludes medical interventions from his definition of violence – even those ‘experienced as traumatic’ – since their intent is to preserve the body’s physical integrity.³⁰ This, however, assumes a shared understanding of the purposes of medical therapy which, as Robert Weston’s essay in this collection reminds us, was not always the case. Some interventions were highly contested, between patients and practitioners, and between patients and their wider care-givers, making medical intervention a complex and important site of consideration for bodily and psychic violence.

The ‘cultural turn’ of the field, not only for historians but also sociologists and anthropologists, has seen attention placed upon how violence is shaped in its specific meanings and particular practices by the communities in which it operates.³¹ Conceptualizations of violence are considered to be culturally constructed. This approach has been adopted in influential works on early modern France by Natalie Zemon Davis and William Beik.³² Likewise, Denis Crouzet’s interpretations of the violence of sixteenth-century France understands some of its violent acts as intellectual and religious behaviours that were sacral acts interpretable and rational in the contexts and mentalities of their time.³³

Spatial contexts have also been an interest of recent research on violence. Violence enacted in certain spaces, locales and geographies was perceived differently, reflecting social norms, gender and class ideologies, as noted above in the recent analyses of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain. John Carter Wood has argued that ‘every violent act occurs within a particular spatial context which has at least some effect on it’,³⁴ either revealing or concealing it, shaping it or its interpretation. This work informs our interest in this collection on the nature of things such as texts, material culture, bodies, and the spaces and places that produce and determine emotion. Consistent with its recent consideration in relation to violence, spatial dimensions are also bringing new aspects to the study of historical emotions. Arguing that all space is both material and social, Andreas Reckwitz has proposed a notion of ‘affective spaces’, for ‘every complex of social practices – as far as it is spatialising and necessarily contains perceptive-affective relations – implies a form of affective space’.³⁵ These concepts are key to the analysis made in this collection by Elisabeth Crouzet-Pavan in understanding the affective responses to violent punishment in Venetian city spaces.

One criticism regarding measures of violence, such as homicide, has been that typically they prioritize a particular form of violence and perpetrator, to

the detriment of a broader appreciation of violent modes of conduct, by a wider group of individuals, inflicted upon other victims. Nancy Sheper-Hughes and Philippe I. Bourgois therefore have insisted on a definition of violence in their work that considers more than simply physical forms. They have argued that assaults on personhood, dignity and value as an individual must also be included; for the ‘social and cultural dimensions of violence are what give violence its power and meaning’.³⁶ A series of early modern scholars has demonstrated how vital honour and reputation were to both men and women, as well as the capacity of these facets of self to instigate and sustain violence.³⁷ Both Yves Castan and Malcolm Greenshields have thus similarly observed, in studies of the early modern Languedoc and the Haute Auvergne respectively, the critical power of violent words and the legal lengths that victims were prepared to pursue to restore such damage to their social identity.³⁸ Indeed, Greenshields has proposed the concept of ‘psychic territory’, to understand a complex mix of honour behaviour and rituals, political and criminal violence, and social alignments. He has argued that honour, reputation, property, dignity and worth are not easily separated, sometimes extending the conceptual limits of the domain of the self beyond the bodily, and at others, interiorizing seemingly external social aspects.³⁹ David Nash likewise has taken up such ideas about non-physical forms of violence in his consideration of blasphemy as a ‘species’ of violence.⁴⁰ He has argued that ‘much early modern evidence demonstrates individuals who were shocked or actively considered themselves to be in peril as a result of blasphemous speech or actions’.⁴¹ Nash concludes that blasphemy was an intrinsic part of interpersonal violence and emphasizes the potential utility of a Foucaultian approach that considers ‘the constitution and exercise of power . . . more sophisticated than the model which concentrates solely upon its physicality’.⁴² In her essay for this collection, Lisa Keane Elliott shows the emotional basis and power of nuns’ insults at the Hôtel-Dieu de Paris, studying the effect it had on those who heard it as well as those to whom it was directed. She argues that these were considered unacceptable acts of verbal violence when uttered by women of that vocation and status.

More recent work has begun to focus precisely on such forms of psychic violence wrought through the emotions. New work on the early modern period is suggesting that contemporaries were not only capable of depicting the violence of war in explicitly emotional terms, but that they also felt deep anxieties at the violence they experienced.⁴³ These intense feelings may or may not have then produced further violent acts. The work of Denis Crouzet has been at the vanguard of such an engagement with the psychic world, identifying it as a central factor in violence that ensued in early modern France. For Crouzet, a ‘mental violence’ preceded the actual violence of that century.⁴⁴ He has described a sixteenth-century civilization full of anguish and anxieties, reading the apocalyptic and prophetic in the world around it. This context has also been developed in the analyses of Jean Delumeau as well as William G. Naphy and Penny Roberts, who have also examined a particularly anxious thread and set of collective fears at work in early modern France.⁴⁵ Similarly,

Erin Felicia Labbie and Allie Terry-Fritsch have recently considered the particular, often damaging, psychic experiences of ‘*beholders of violence*’.⁴⁶ In this vein, Galina Tirnanić has argued for the power of non-violent artworks concerning Christian martyrs to ‘activate images of explicit, graphic violence in the minds of beholders’.⁴⁷ These analyses consider both collective and individual affective responses as potentially generative of degrees of psychic damage that can be understood as violence.

Feminist researchers have likewise proposed broader definitions of violence that encompass a fuller range of forms beyond the visibly physical, and of men and women’s experiences as perpetrators and victims. Contemporary notions of gender, especially of masculinity and femininity, assume for many historians a central role in explaining the behaviours of victims and perpetrators.⁴⁸ Sally Engle Merry has conceptualized ‘gender violence’ as ‘violence whose meaning depends on the gendered identities of the parties’.⁴⁹ This incorporates psychological dimensions such as insults, degradations, humiliation, and witchcraft: in short, ‘actions that evoke fear even when there is no physical harm’.⁵⁰ Broomhall’s study explores the contexts in which threats to social reputation and damage to familial relationships and affection could be recognized as unacceptable violence, as it was claimed by sixteenth-century French nuns. Sarah Ferber examines early modern debates at Maubuisson about mortification, weighing physical harm to bodies as demonstrations of personal devotion against emotional damage and danger to one’s salvation if such practices were denied to religious women.

A further perspective to be considered in relation to violence is that of the perceiver or beholder of violence. Julius R. Ruff has emphasized the power of the perception of violence, distinct from its reality, to shape human actions, and evokes the significance of fear in particular to the generation or control of yet further violence.⁵¹ This emotional power, and its capacity to stimulate violent action, is the direct aim of printed political and religious propaganda, which is examined in this collection in studies by Troy Heffernan during the English Civil Wars, and by Giovanni Tarantino in the battle to define distinct religious communities. Labbie and Terry-Fritsch have adopted the term ‘*beholding*’ to denote the active, phenomenological nature of perceiving violence, a form that ‘sees with the body, touches with the eyes, and which synaesthetically transfers affect and cognition through the visual encounter’.⁵² Principally concerned with contemporary responses to early modern artworks depicting violence, Labbie and Terry-Fritsch have argued that beholding violence thus involves a high degree of attentiveness and participation from the individual beholder.⁵³ The experience of perceiving violence is also examined in two further essays in this collection. Crouzet analyzes Nostradamus’s intellectual writings as a response to observing violence, while Lisa Beaven explores the transformation by confraternities of the meaning of brutalized corpses, from murder into a religious purpose. These two distinct responses also show different kinds of emotional responses that could be experienced by witnesses to violence wrought in nature and upon others.

These studies of violence allude to the power of violence as a productive form of social control. Gerd Schwerhoff has conceptualized violence as a mechanism of social action, not simply subject to forms of social controls.⁵⁴ In this view, a more nuanced notion of violence as both a positive and negative force is required, in which violence is only dysfunction ‘when it is not controlled, channeled, contained by rules and laws and civic norms and when it becomes disruptive to social life in society’.⁵⁵ Willem Schinkel has extended the definitional debate yet further from a phenomenological approach, arguing for a ‘liquidation’ of any firmly bounded definitions of violence.⁵⁶ Rather than defining what violence is in a context, he has suggested it should be allowed to emerge organically from the materials and context itself, and particularly, from the viewpoint of different actors engaged with an act. As Schinkel argues, ‘there are many viewpoints that are easily made absolute, seen from which violence takes different shapes’.⁵⁷ Several essays in this collection demonstrate how different perspectives on the same behaviour, from medical intervention to mortification and religious enclosure, could be deemed violent and damaging by some, or praiseworthy by others. Other scholars have also argued that violence is ‘perspectival’, to use John Carter Wood’s phrase.⁵⁸ Willem de Haan has proposed violence to be an ‘essentially contested concept’; a ‘multifaceted, socially constructed and highly ambivalent phenomenon’, which is socially sanctioned, institutionalized and legitimized, as well as culturally transmitted and experienced.⁵⁹ De Haan has argued that the question we ask determines what notion of violence will prevail in that specific context, rendering the kind of over-arching comparative work of the Elias theory and Spierenburg project a challenge.

Examining the early modern world in its own contexts is key to the approach of this volume. As Robert van Krieken, Katharine Watson and Jonathan Davies have argued, we need to understand violence in contemporary terms.⁶⁰ Many of the instances of violence studied in this collection were also debated, doubted and by no means universally recognized by contemporaries. Such examples provide important insights into historic meanings and experiences of violence. In addition, perhaps because of the focus on the context of the relationship of violence to emotions, many of the forms of violence examined here are subtle, spiritual, psychic, imagined and potential, as much as enacted on physical and material sites. Yet they were no less powerful or real, as the case studies of this collection demonstrate.

Interpreting emotions

Assessing acts of violence more precisely, within specific cultural contexts, enables scholars to better understand how violence was created and employed. Equally, emotions are now becoming subject to more nuanced analyses that provide us with ways to consider the impact of their expression and experience.

Indeed, Huizinga and Elias both express a sense that the experience of feelings in the Middle Ages was distinct to that period. Both recognized that societies held coherent, yet different, social structures that, in Elias's words, determined and controlled 'a specific standard of emotional control',⁶¹ having a 'social standard of affects within a framework of which all individual patterns of affect regulation, however varied they may be, are contained'.⁶² Later, Lucien Febvre called for study of collective emotional regimes in an analysis that would consider them in the mentalities of their era.⁶³ The influence of anthropology on the next generation of historians has also been powerful. Scholars such as Clifford Geertz and later Michelle Rosaldo situated emotions as artefacts of specific cultures, in each case studying populations beyond Europe. Such approaches have helped to inform much of the more recent social and cultural historical analyses of pre-modern emotions.⁶⁴

Literary and historical scholars emphasize that emotion words must be understood in their cultural and generic context.⁶⁵ Andrea Rizzi's essay in this collection highlights just how important to emotional reactions was the precise intellectual context of those humanist men who exchanged vicious insults within a closed community of shared rhetorical training. Some expressive states that are depicted in pre-modern documents are today no longer held as emotions at all. Other feelings that appear familiar were expressed in situations, in ways and by individuals that are inconsistent with modern practice. In addition to work on terms and expression of emotions, other scholars consider practices and bodily dimensions of emotional expression. Monique Scheer, for example, adopting a Bourdieuan approach to historicize emotions, has considered emotions as 'habits emerging where bodily capacity and cultural requirements meet'.⁶⁶ She has argued that from 'the perspective of practice theory, emotional arousals that seem to be purely physical are actually deeply socialized'.⁶⁷ This work from scholars of the history of emotions reminds us not to ascribe meaning to emotional descriptors or practices separate from the texts and contexts in which they find their meaning.

Emphasis on the socially constructed nature of emotions has led other scholars to question the possibilities for individual affective action. What place can be afforded to individual autonomy in emotional life or to the emotions as a socially disruptive force? In response to such questions, William M. Reddy has considered the possibility for a 'residuum' of feeling that is not completely socially scripted, but that may be an 'initial reservoir or possibility for change'; that is, for resistance or deviance from socially shaped expressions.⁶⁸ Some scholars have voiced concerns that social rules for feeling should not be seen to render individuals' own free will redundant, particularly if that risks reducing their moral accountability for their actions, including violent acts.⁶⁹ For feminist scholars, moreover, 'emotions-discourse' can be 'its own form of commentary of power relations'.⁷⁰ Catherine A. Lutz has posited, for example, that 'Women's life on the social margins can . . . constitute the idea of the emotional itself by establishing a contrast with those whose mainstream or central place is (mis)taken for rationality'.⁷¹ Current research, including

Elliott's essay here, on violent female emotions interpreted as forms of madness and irrationality, reminds us that the gendered dimensions of emotions as well as violence are crucial to their interpretation.

As can be seen from the above, considering how we understand emotions themselves also provokes analysis about what emotions do, and *how* they do the work they do. Febvre's work conceptualized the social power of emotions through his interest in their contagious effect, passing between and connecting subjects. Barbara H. Rosenwein, drawing from Febvre's idea, developed the concept of 'emotional communities' which has had significant impact in the field.⁷² These cohorts create accepted modes of emotional articulation, and are shaped by contemporary conventions and group dynamics such as gender, race, faith and social status. Benno Gammerl has proposed the term 'emotional styles' as an extension of Rosenwein's concept, articulating potentially co-existing, competitive, or conflictual modes of emotional expression.⁷³ This may help to explain the range of affective engagements of any one individual in particular contexts, times and places. Early modern researchers now draw upon these ideas extensively to consider how particular forms of emotional expression offer or reveal group identity and belonging within, or exclusion from, communities. In this collection Tarantino and Heffernan both highlight how specific emotional language could be employed to appeal to those affiliated to groups defined by particular religious or political persuasion, in order to provoke violence against designated victims.

Historians have shown how the productive, motivational effect of emotions could be positive too, often in the aftermath of violent events. Naphy and Roberts, for example, have highlighted the dynamic role of an emotion such as fear, which could be a positive, unifying force within specific communities.⁷⁴ Charles Zika's essay explores ways in which particular feelings could be promoted in times of community crises, such as grief over a child murder, to enable individuals to cohere and function as a community. Crouzet's study of Nostradamus's work suggests that the text was designed to provide hope and to dissuade contemporaries from further violence.

As such, the essays in this collection consider emotions both at individual and communal levels, as both desired and disruptive behaviours depending on how they were interpreted within distinct management frameworks and in specific contexts. Authors analyze their power to forge communities as well as divide them. They study emotional practices as both instigators to violent deeds and responses to destructive actions, in each role capable of achieving positive and negative goals depending on the perspective of the sources and subjects under examination.

The dynamic interplay of violence and emotions

This collection considers both violence and emotions as cultural expressions of individual selves, as practices and powers that have elements of individual and social construction and expression. It seeks to explore often complex

inter-relations of emotional and violent experiences and phenomena in the early modern period, understood in the context of contemporary social and cultural frameworks. Authors here analyze how aspects of one generate, sustain, understand or inhibit forms of the other, as each draws meaning from the other. They do so through investigations of bodily and textual practices, some ritualized, others considered exceptional or highly individual, in which violent and/or emotional acts were created, supported and disseminated.

The sources that we analyze inevitably define how violence and emotions are interpreted in the precise social and cultural contexts of each essay. Scholars have drawn attention to the particular ways and means by which such behaviours could be expressed, or not, in contemporary texts and by whom. Ruff has demonstrated how different kinds of sources could record, depict, celebrate and commemorate violence.⁷⁵ Moreover, using insights drawn from fields as diverse as modern trauma and repression research to the experience of the body in pain, they encourage us also to examine silences, omissions, repetitions and oblique discussion of events and experiences not as indifference to violent acts, but as sentiments too difficult to articulate.⁷⁶ Feminist researchers, for example, remind us that some forms of violence, ‘wedded to patriarchy in crises, [have] made emotion unspeakable through the shame that attaches to rape and the retraumatizing character of memory itself’.⁷⁷ In this collection, authors consider legal documents ranging from edicts to notarial acts, diverse printed texts such as pamphlets, news reports and prophecies, and personal and communal records such as memoirs, letters, confraternity statutes and medical consultations.

These essays explore the operation of violent emotions and intensely emotional violence within a number of contemporary cultural frameworks. Chief among these were religious systems of the major confessions, which provided templates for acceptable forms of violence and for emotional management that informed behaviours – actions *and* their responses – in a wide range of situations studied here. As Dell’Arca’s striking sculptural work reflects, at the heart of pre-modern culture was a religious framework that strongly shaped understandings of violence and gave a management system to the emotions it produced. Scholarly scientific frameworks provided a counterpoint to religiously informed practices in some contexts, but so too did the law, municipal order, as well as a wide range of local social groupings as diverse as political groups, religious minorities and monastic cohorts, and families, friends and neighbours.

In the first part of this collection, essays focus on the role of emotions and violence to create order in contexts of perceived disorder. Through acts and expressions, often ritualized, enacted on bodies and in texts, Crouzet-Pavan, Zika and Beaven demonstrate how communities could be created, controlled and sustained in a variety of ways. Studying fifteenth-century Venice, Elisabeth Crouzet-Pavan analyzes the pivotal role of spaces within the city in determining how violence is understood and the kinds of emotional responses that populations should have to it. Charles Zika explores how a dismembered body,

subject to an almost inexplicable act of violence, could be remembered and re-membered back into a German community through modelled affective behaviour. Lisa Beaven demonstrates how rituals regulated emotions associated with the collection of the murdered, disease-ravaged and weather-beaten degraded corpses scattered in the Roman Campagna.

The second part examines the meanings of violence and emotions in relation to bodies and souls. Lisa Keane Elliott explores emotional responses to unexpected use of violence by a subordinate community, nuns at the Hôtel-Dieu in Paris, who resorted to verbal and physical violence to articulate their desire for control in the way they healed injured and diseased bodies. Susan Broomhall investigates how, for a few elite religious women in sixteenth-century France, it was possible to achieve recognition of their status as victims of violence through legal and institutional pathways within the Church, while others recorded experiences of coercion in unexpected sources. Sarah Ferber analyzes debates about what constituted the greater harm in regards to mortification when physical violence could be a demonstration of personal devotion and psychic and spiritual violence might ensue if these practices were denied to religious women. These ideas were called into question by distinct communities of religious thought and practice in the seventeenth-century French convent at Maubuisson. Robert Weston studies a different kind of purposeful damage to the body, the acceptability of which, as well as the concomitant risk of emotional trauma, was widely debated within medical communities and among the social networks, friends and families of patients in early modern France.

The final part brings attention to the role of texts in creating and supporting particular forms of violence and certain emotional experiences in its readers. Andrea Rizzi examines the practice of epistolary insults among fifteenth-century Italian intellectuals. He argues that the interpretation of these words as social and verbal violence depended largely on the extent to which they remained within a circle of like-minded intellectuals, or were transferred and re-contextualized in the more public arena of the Italian streets. Denis Crouzet provides a close reading of the very particular way in which Nostradamus encouraged his readers to understand the violent events of their era, guiding them along a specific emotional journey towards salvation. Troy Heffernan studies the emotional power of printed pamphlets that were circulated in the English Civil Wars, employing explicit emotional rhetorics to shape the choices and behaviours of their intended male readership to accept as legitimate specific forms of violence within their own society, and to encourage them to participate in it themselves. Finally, Giovanni Tarantino investigates the emotional force of print, from the images of William Hogarth to the intellectual works of religious history written by John Lockman, to encourage readers to identify with confessional communities of thought and feeling, and to respond with hostility and fear to those excluded who were depicted as violent and dangerous.

Collectively, these essays demonstrate the complexities of violence and emotions and the myriad possibilities of their inter-relationships. Both contained the potentiality of order and disorder. In many cases, violent acts were enacted with the aim of creating order, healing physical and social bodies, demonstrating justice, and to bring individuals and communities together around productive identities, as much as it was (or indeed, at the same time as it was) intended to divide, exclude, marginalize or destroy. Both were explicitly modelled by diverse social groups to achieve social aims and effects. As these essays show, in early modern Europe, great efforts were made to control, model, and demonstrate modes of violence and emotional regimes that would make individuals effective participants of communities (even, for some, through identities and actions as outsiders). Thus, acts of violence and emotions, displayed in rituals, bodies and texts, aimed to create fear or to bring hope, for example, in order to produce or subvert identities and social meanings.

As such, violence produced numerous human sentiments, and emotions likewise could generate or assuage physical, social and psychic violence. The experience of violence could be, unsurprisingly, intensely emotional – whether frightening or joyous. Yet the experience of some emotional states could also be understood as forms of violence. And violence and emotions operated in complex relationships with each other. Their intertwined nature does not make them easily separable and the outcomes of their connections was often unstable and unexpected. It would thus be a mistake to imagine that either was a power that was easily managed or contained. Both forces shared a capacity to disrupt through their practice, giving power and presence to unexpected cohorts in the process.

Notes

- 1 See James H. Beck, ‘Niccolò dell’Arca: A Reexamination’, *The Art Bulletin* 47, 3, 1965, 335–44. Beck argues for the work’s dating to the early 1460s and notes its exceptional depiction of dynamic emotions within earlier Quattrocento sculpture: ‘Never before and never again has such spiritual suffering taken such stirring physical reality’ (p. 339).
- 2 Robert Muchembled, *A History of Violence: From the End of the Middle Ages to the Present*, trans. Jean Birrell, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2012, p. 21.
- 3 Muchembled, *A History of Violence*, p. 8.
- 4 Julius R. Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe 1500–1800*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, p. 117.
- 5 Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, p. 10.
- 6 Jonathan Davies, ‘Introduction’, in Jonathan Davies (ed.), *Aspects of Violence in Early Modern Europe*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2013, p. 13.
- 7 Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, p. 155. See, similarly, other recent works such as Eric A. Johnson and Eric H. Monkkonen (eds), *The Civilisation of Crime: Violence in Town and Country since the Middle Ages*, Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1996.
- 8 Johan Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages* (1924), trans. F. Hopman, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976, p. 14.

- 9 Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, p. 13.
- 10 Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, p. 25.
- 11 Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: The Development of Manners* (German first edition 1939), trans. Edmund Jephcott, New York: Urizen Books, 1978, p. 195.
- 12 Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, p. 201.
- 13 Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, p. 195.
- 14 Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, p. 194.
- 15 Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, p. 194.
- 16 Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, p. 200.
- 17 Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, p. 202.
- 18 Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, p. 200.
- 19 Lucien Febvre, ‘Sensibility and History: How to Reconstitute the Emotional Life of the Past’, in Peter Burke (ed.), *A New Kind of History: From the Writings of Febvre*, trans. K. Folca, New York: Harper and Row, 1973, p. 16. For a sociological perspective on Elias, see R.J. Robinson, ‘“The Civilizing Process”: Some Remarks on Elias’s Social History’, *Sociology* 21, 1987, 1–17.
- 20 For recent examples, see Shani D’Cruze, *Crimes of Outrage: Sex, Violence and Victorian Working Women*, DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1998; Robert B. Shoemaker, ‘Reforming Male Manners: Public Insult and the Decline of Violence in London, 1660–1740’, in Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen (eds), *English Masculinities, 1660–1800*, London: Longman, 1999, pp. 133–50; Robert B. Shoemaker, ‘Male Honour and the Decline of Public Violence in Eighteenth-Century London’, *Social History* 26, 2, 2001, 190–208; Robert B. Shoemaker, ‘The Taming of the Duel: Masculinity, Honour and Ritual Violence in London, 1660–1800’, *The Historical Journal* 45, 3, 2002, 525–45; Peter King, ‘Moral Panics and Violent Street Crime, 1750–2000: A Comparative Perspective’, in Barry S. Godfrey, Clive Emsley and Graeme Dunstall (eds), *Comparative Histories of Crime*, Cullompton: Willan Publishing, 2003, pp. 53–71; Philippe Chassaigne, *Ville et violence: Tensions et conflits dans la Grande-Bretagne victorienne (1840–1914)*, Paris: Presses de l’Université de Paris, 2005; Drew D. Gray, *Crime, Prosecution and Social Relations: The Summary Courts of the City of London in the Late Eighteenth Century*, London: Palgrave, 2009; Drew D. Gray, ‘Settling their Differences: The Nature of Assault and its Prosecution in the City of London in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries’, in Katherine D. Watson (ed.), *Assaulting the Past: Violence and Civilization in Historical Context*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007, pp. 124–40; Rosalind Crone, *Violent Victorians: Popular Entertainment in Nineteenth-Century London*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012; David G. Barrie and Susan Broomhall, *Police Courts in Nineteenth-Century Scotland, Volume 2: Boundaries, Behaviours and Bodies*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2014, Chapter 1.
- 21 John Carter Wood, *Violence and Crime in Nineteenth-Century England: The Shadow of Our Refinement*, London: Routledge, 2004; Barry S. Godfrey, ‘Changing Prosecution Practices and their Impact on Crime Figures, 1857–1940’, *British Journal of Criminology* 48, 2, 2008, 171–89; Annemarie Hughes, ‘The “Non-criminal” Class: Wifebeating in Scotland, c.1800–1949’, *Crime, Histoire et Sociétés/Crime, History and Societies* 14, 2, 2010, 31–54; Peter King, ‘Urbanization, Rising Homicide Rates and the Geography of Lethal Violence in Scotland 1800–1860’, *History* 96, 323, 2011, 231–59.
- 22 Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, p. 202.
- 23 Joanna Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing: Face-to-Face Killing in Twentieth Century Warfare*, London: Granta Press, 1999; Fear: *A Cultural History*, Emeryville: CA: Shoemaker and Hoard, 2005; and Rape: *A History from 1860s to the Present*, London: Virago, 2007.

- 24 Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, p. 192.
- 25 Pieter Spierenburg, ‘Violence: Reflections about a Word’, in Sophie Body-Gendrot and Pieter Spierenburg (eds), *Violence in Europe: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, New York: Springer, 2009, p. 18.
- 26 Muchembled, *A History of Violence*.
- 27 See Gerd Schwerhoff, ‘Criminalised Violence and the Process of Civilization: A Reappraisal’, trans. Lukas Hoffmann, *Crime, Histoires et Sociétés* 6, 2, 2002, 103–26.
- 28 Spierenburg, ‘Violence: Reflections about a Word’, p. 13.
- 29 Spierenburg, ‘Violence: Reflections about a Word’, p. 20.
- 30 Spierenburg, ‘Violence: Reflections about a Word’, p. 17.
- 31 Stuart Carroll, *Blood and Violence in Early Modern France*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006; Stuart Carroll (ed.), *Cultures of Violence: Interpersonal Violence in Historical Perspective*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007; Watson (ed.), *Assaulting the Past*; Davies (ed.), *Aspects of Violence in Early Modern Europe*. Important works using cultural and anthropological analyses of violence include Bettina E. Schmidt and Ingo Schröder (eds), *Anthropology of Violence and Conflict*, London: Routledge, 2001; D. Riches (ed.), *The Anthropology of Violence*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1986; Elizabeth A. Stanko (ed.), *Violence*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002; C. Besteman (ed.), *Violence: A Reader*, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002; and Elizabeth A. Stanko (ed.), *The Meanings of Violence*, New York: Routledge, 2003.
- 32 See, for example, Natalie Zemon Davis, ‘The Rites of Violence: Religious Riot in Sixteenth-century France’, *Past and Present* 59, 1, 1973, 51–91; William Beik, ‘The Violence of the French Crowd from Charivari to Revolution’, *Past and Present* 197, 2007, 75–110. See also the recent supplementary volume, Graeme Murdock, Penny Roberts and Andrew Spicer (eds), *Past and Present* 214, supplement 7, 2012.
- 33 Denis Crouzet, *Les Guerriers de Dieu. La violence au temps des troubles de religion*, 2 vols, Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1990.
- 34 Carter Wood, ‘Locating Violence: The Spatial Production and Construction of Physical Aggression’, in Watson (ed.), *Assaulting the Past*, p. 20.
- 35 Andreas Reckwitz, ‘Affective Spaces: A Praxeological Outlook’, *Rethinking History: the Journal of Theory and Practice* 16, 2, 2012, p. 254.
- 36 Nancy Sheper-Hughes and Philippe I. Bourgois (eds), *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology*, Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2004, p. 1.
- 37 Most recently, Carroll, *Blood and Violence*.
- 38 Yves Castan, *Honnêteté et relations sociales en Languedoc au XVIIIe siècle*, Paris: Plon, 1974; Malcolm Greenshields, *An Economy of Violence in Early Modern France: Crime and Justice in the Haute Auvergne, 1587–1664*, University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994.
- 39 Greenshields, *An Economy of Violence*, p. 231.
- 40 David Nash, ‘Blasphemy and the Anti-Civilizing Process’, in Watson (ed.), *Assaulting the Past*, pp. 58–76.
- 41 Nash, ‘Blasphemy and the Anti-Civilizing Process’, p. 61.
- 42 Nash, ‘Blasphemy and the Anti-Civilizing Process’, p. 63.
- 43 Sarah Covington, ‘Racking, Cutting, Branding, Whipping, Burning: The Spectacle of Judicial Punishment in Early Modern England’, in Mathew R. Martin and James Robert Allard (eds), *Staging Pain: Violence and Trauma in British Theatre, 1500–1800*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009, pp. 93–111; Covington, ‘“Broken Verses across a Bloodied Land”: Violence and the Limits of Language in the English Civil War’, in Davies (ed.), *Aspects of Violence in Early Modern Europe*; Susan Broomhall, ‘Narrating Experiences and Emotions of Distressing Events in the French Wars of Religion’ and Andreas Bähr, ‘Remembering Fear. The Fear of

- Violence and the Violence of Fear in Seventeenth-Century War Memories', in Erika Kuijpers, Judith Pollmann, Johannes Müller and Jasper van der Steen (eds), *Memory before Modernity: Practices of Memory in Early Modern Europe*, Leiden: Brill, 2013, pp. 253–68 and 269–82 respectively; Susan Broomhall, 'Reasons and Identities to Remember: Composing Personal Accounts of Religious Violence in Sixteenth-century France', *French History* 27, 2013, 1–20; Erika Kuijpers, ‘“O, Lord, Save us from Shame”. Narratives of Emotions in Convent Chronicles by Female Authors during the Dutch Revolt, 1566–1635’, in Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Emotions and Gender in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Destroying Order, Structuring Disorder*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2015 (forthcoming).
- 44 Crouzet, *Les Guerriers de Dieu*.
- 45 Jean Delumeau, *La Peur en Occident XIVe–XVIIIe siècles: une cité assiégée*, Paris: Fayard, 1978; William G. Naphy and Penny Roberts (eds), *Fear in Early Modern Society*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997.
- 46 Erin Felicia Labbie and Allie Terry-Fritsch (eds), *Beholding Violence in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2012.
- 47 Labbie and Allie Terry-Fritsch (eds), *Beholding Violence in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, p. 126.
- 48 Anna Clark, *Women's Silence, Men's Violence: Sexual Assault in England, 1770–1845*, London: Pandora, 1987; Shani D'Cruze, *Crimes of Outrage*; Martin J. Wiener, 'The Victorian Criminalisation of Men', in Pieter Spierenburg (ed.), *Men and Violence: Gender, Honor, and Rituals in Modern Europe and America*, Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1998, pp. 197–212; Ulinka Rublack, *The Crimes of Women in Early Modern Germany*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999; Shani D'Cruze (ed.), *Everyday Violence in Britain, 1850–1950: Class and Gender*, London: Longman, 2000; Martin J. Wiener, 'Alice Arden to Bill Sikes: Changing Nightmares of Intimate Violence in England, 1558–1869', *Journal of British Studies* 40, 2001, 184–212; Barry S. Godfrey, Stephen Farrall and Susanne Karstedt, 'Explaining Gendered Sentencing Patterns for Violent Men and Women in the Late Victorian and Edwardian Period', *British Journal of Criminology* 45, 5, 2005, 696–720; Anne-Marie Kilday, *Women and Violent Crime in Enlightenment Scotland*, Woodbridge: Boydell, 2007.
- 49 Sally Engle Merry, *Gender Violence: A Cultural Perspective*, London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008, p. 19.
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Part 1

Order and disorder

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1 Emotions in the heart of the city

Crime and its punishment in Renaissance Italy

Elisabeth Crouzet-Pavan

At a time when, in study after study, historians of Italian cities regularly reveal the diversity, in such communities, of methods of conflict resolution,¹ at a time when it is no longer enough to consider the complex plurality of the legal authorities,² and the diverse social uses that such institutional wealth allowed, at a time when increasing attention is being given to the vendetta culture,³ it might appear odd, and historiographically outmoded, to direct our attention to punitive justice. Studies of criminal justice and law and order in urban Italy once dominated the historiography.⁴ Some years ago, analyses of the repressive judicial system and its successive developments serving a more authoritarian organization of power were the subject of numerous works on Florence and Venice.⁵ The history of a criminalization of behaviour and reinforcement of the public justice system was organized according to this paradigm. It therefore comes as no surprise that a study of the spectacle of public justice would coincide with this process of the increasing power of the penal system. While the inquisitorial proceedings, tightening of social control and the progress of, if not the state, then at least a more coercive political power, were being widely discussed, it was logical to extend that interest to the staging of punitive ceremonies.

Thus began the descriptions of tortured, dismembered bodies, exhibited at the city gates. Thus also came, in the quest to restore the ‘éclat’ of torture, and the character of the administration of punishment, references to gallows, stocks and gibbets erected around the city. Most importantly, information surfaced on public ceremonies and the messages they carried from powers having conceived a new ideology of justice based on social pacification. These numerous works bore fruit and thus we went from the purposely teleologic initial studies, which read in the torment of the bodies and sophistication of the executions the sole progress of the state, to more nuanced interpretations. As we know, public justice did not signal the disappearance of the other means of conflict resolution in the final centuries of the Middle Ages. On the contrary, the proceedings, whether within or outside of the judicial system, would often be combined, in order to restore social equilibrium. As to punitive ceremonies,

they did not eradicate more violent ritual practices. Indeed, from one system to another, records of exchanges exist. Certain lynching scenarios would pick up on elements provided for in contemporary penal standards. Similarly, local authorities sometimes borrowed certain violent ritual practices to perfect the exemplary nature of the punishment.

The question thus arises: why return to this subject when this historiographic and problematic introduction would tend, however briefly and schematically, to paint it as closed? We may observe the very often perfunctory, even repetitious and conventional remarks reserved for the places where punishment was administered. The initial goal here is therefore to expand the earlier analyses, limited to the merely repressive aspects of the judicial process,⁶ by showing the complexity and mobility of the scenarios employed, with one ambition: to stop treating the urban space like a platform, an obedient and malleable support upon which public authorities would mark their presence. In a second series of observations, the Venetian example will highlight how punishment could also be administered in everyday locations of life and crime. This will be followed by a conclusion discussing the range of uses for spaces in order to better understand the diverse territorialities which managed to coexist in an Italian city in the final centuries of the Middle Ages. Judicial violence is thus at the heart of this analysis, but the aim here is not so much to understand how it was inflicted on the body but rather to explore the complex range of places where it was staged in the city. One can identify the intended audiences of such scenes and the emotions that they were being encouraged to experience. Judicial archives are hence the essential source here, for they reveal not only the places where violence could be inscribed by public authorities in response to the degree of violence of the crimes, but also the whole range of emotions that were designed to be provoked, as well as, more rarely, the spontaneous emotions that these spectacles could engender when the violence of the crowd supplanted the violence of the punishment being administered by the public authorities.

An initial observation will serve to summarize the abundance of available sources. While in the Italian cities, extensive doctrine served the process of consolidating political autonomy by reserving criminal sentencing to the public authorities,⁷ the exercise of justice was soon facilitated by the institution of judicial authorities⁸ and theory about degrees of punishment, resulting in a veritable typology of sanctions – the law was therefore becoming more visible. The locations chosen to seat the magistrate of the *podestà* were, in their initial construction, reconstruction and extensions, the first public *palazzi pubblici* in Northern and Central Italy.⁹ Later, with the *palazzi* belonging to the *capitani del popolo*, other buildings, larger and more ornate, would come to house this new body of magistrates. There were also prisons built,¹⁰ such as those in Florence, Siena, Bologna and Padua, in the immediate vicinity of the town square except where, as in the case of Venice, the areas of confinement were also located within the government *palazzo* itself.¹¹ Painted and sculpted images also figured in the same staging, at the heart of the urban space. Consider

the images of the so-called ‘*pittura infamante*’ in the fresco paintings documented in Parma, Bologna, Pistoia, Florence and Siena starting from the middle of the thirteenth century, dishonouring and sentencing traitors, forgers and corrupt officials, most often *in absentia*, or fallen political enemies, to social death.¹² The iconographic models are set, the perpetrator represented hanging upside down. All sorts of images – devils and skulls – contribute to the dishonour, and the written word combines forces with the image. The drawing makes reference, of course, to the crime, as do the inscriptions, and these *tituli*, written in large letters, on certain statutes like those of Parma, indicate the name of the guilty party and his crime. In Bologna, 112 individuals were thus punished between 1283 and 1303. At first located inside the palaces, these images were then shown outside, where they could be seen by the greatest number of people, upon the walls of the *palazzo comunale*. But the law itself is also repeatedly represented, and not only in the courtrooms, nor in the oft-cited and commentated *Good Government* of Siena fresco. Another example is the figure of Venice by Filippo Calendario adorning the ducal palace close to the Piazzetta: a woman, with a severe look and sword in hand, the sea at her feet, like an allegory of Justice with an inscription to accentuate the meaning: *Venecia. Fortis iuste trono furias mare sub pede pono.*¹³

The law was therefore fully visible in the urban space,¹⁴ and this visibility was still that of punishments administered under an urban-centric system calling for public participation. What do the available sources tell us? Justice was the indispensable auxiliary of political power: to each criminal his punishment, punishment which was hortatory, as all the theorists, even at the end of the Middle Ages, insisted. Its exemplary nature was intended to educate and dissuade, teach and prevent, inform and admonish. In that way, punishment required a wide audience. Penal ceremonies, announced in advance, were held at times and on days, such as those of the market, when the crowd would be at its largest. But there was also a spreading out of the punishment, from sunrise to sundown, or repetition of when the display took place, for example, three days in a row. Throughout the ceremony, messages were delivered. There was the reading aloud of the sentence, the solemnity of such a formal procedure thereby increasing its public character. Criers denounced the crime; such proclamations always accompanied sentences of flagellation and banishment. Moreover, very often this public announcement was reinforced when the crime was displayed on signs which were, for example, nailed to the stocks or mitres carried by the punished. The message is not difficult to decipher when, under the principle of mimicry between punishment and crime, thieves or forgers are shown on the stocks with the product of their crime hanging around their necks. The principle of mimicry which, as we know, was even more apparent in those cases where the offending member was punished: the hand of thieves and forgers, the tongue of traitors and blasphemers.¹⁵ In any case, the widest public display would accompany the degrading punishment with a double purpose: proclaiming that the offensive act had been punished and stigmatizing the criminal.¹⁶

It is not surprising then that the places of punishment would have been located in the public spaces according to the typology identified by recent studies, without major variation, as follows: the *palazzo communale*, the major public squares and sometimes the square at the cathedral entrance. In those spaces, such as the marketplace, stocks were placed, and men and women were displayed for hours at a time. A cage could be hung from the *campanile* of the Piazza San Marco in Venice.¹⁷ Players of games of chance, were immersed in the basin of the Piazza dei Priori in Florence ('*perfusi sive baptizati*').¹⁸ As for the ceremonial procession of the condemned person, often dragged *ad locum iusticie* 'while attached to the tail of a donkey or a horse' ('*ad caudam unius equi vel asini*'), documents show a well-travelled route. It could vary according to the importance of the crime, and was sometimes punctuated by stops, at crossroads or in front of churches. But in any case, the procession of infamy, with the condemned atop an ignoble cart or, in Venice, a small boat, would follow a well-trodden route, where the crowd, drawn by the town criers, gathered. Stocks and columns, poles with hanging baskets to plunge the condemned into the river, cages, processions, trumpets and town criers: the setting for justice, whether permanent or fleeting, thus filled the urban space.

But it was also to be found at the fringes, since gibbets and gallows, intended to be seen by those entering the city, were placed around its limits. Examples abound. One will suffice: that of the complex punitive rituals used against the Milanese conspirators, guilty of what was called a 'tyrannicide', the assassination of Galeazzo Maria Sforza in 1476.¹⁹ Their body parts were exhibited, according to a careful calculation which distributed half torsos, arms and legs around the city gates of Milan, while the heads were placed, with that of the conspiracy leader, on the *campanile* of Broletto, the remains of which were said to be still visible in 1490. Even Venice, a city without walls surrounded by water, did not deviate from the practice. But it is in the lagoon, from pitchforks erected at selected points of entry into Venetian territory, that the tortured body parts were hung.²⁰

From here on, we discover what only rare sources state. Derisory practices and punitive and degrading punishments were reserved for the city centre. Executions more often took place outside the city limits, or at least in a marginal outlying area; examples include Florence, Bologna and Ferrara. There was nothing systematic, however, about such a duality of locations to administer justice. Some cities ignored it. Others, at times, failed to respect the tradition. In Florence, when popular sentiment ran high and the crowd had to be appeased, hangings would take place in the heart of the public space, instead of the '*locum consuetum*' in the outlying Santa Croce area, with its industrial activity.²¹ Finally, changes were starting to appear. In Ferrara, starting in 1457, certain executions began to move within the city walls; this example is far from exceptional, it is merely better documented. The former '*logo de la iustitia di là da Po*', beyond the city limit, could be abandoned.²² Capital punishment was becoming urbanized: in the square, in the windows of the *Palazzo della*

Ragione, on the crenels of *Castello Vecchio*, in the government auditors' windows. For certain exceptional affairs, such as treason cases, the duke would perhaps reserve first quartering, decapitations or hangings 'so that the people could see well' ('perché li popolo ben li vedesse'), but after 1481 all executions, and they were numerous, would take place within the city. The lords of Ferrara acted as dispensers of justice: from 1441 to 1557, 853 people, with an annual average of six executions with the condemned hanged atop pikes, just as under the government of Borso d'Este (106 in 1450–1471), and that of Duke Hercules I (191 executions in 1471–1505).²³ Execution thus made a return to the centre. The chronology coincides with the dozens of hangings that Lorenzo de Medici ordered in 1478, the time of the bloody repression of the Pazzi conspiracy,²⁴ which took place in the windows of public buildings, and was repeated in Genoa, Siena,²⁵ Parma and Perugia where, in 1491, 130 individuals were hanged, then displayed on the Baglioni Palace.²⁶ Against conspirators and their public enemies, Italian lords thus availed themselves of a new and spectacular means of punishment.

What inferences can be drawn from this? Capital punishment, blood and death were first expelled beyond the city walls, or at least moved away from the city centres. The ritual of impurity, although carried out before the largest number of spectators, was not to soil the urban space. Then, gradually, the princes, to put it to better use, began to introduce it to the heart of the city; it is doubtless worth noting that at the same time the brotherhoods in charge of preparing the condemned were becoming more visible as their members, having spent the night before preparing the person, then walked him to his death, dressed in black, carrying crosses and lit candles in a pious and purifying procession.²⁷ Violence, tool of the masses, tool of all *Italia communale*, tended to be controlled by lords, then by princes, until becoming a political tool. The powers – the Medici in Florence, the Sforza in Milan – craftily employed it in their punitive rituals. This is not yet another assertion that the state imposed its monopoly on violence. The state, in this Italy, because it was still fragile, used all kinds of instruments, resorted to all kinds of practices. When punishment was meted out, it was, of course, to demonstrate how evil is eradicated, and how the guilty party, the sinner, is punished. It was also perhaps intended to elicit compassion, definitely fear and undoubtedly terror, but also respect for exemplary justice. But such emotions in the gathered masses go well beyond the repertoire that historians of the law and the state are content to cite. From the spectacle of suffering bodies, which, in their agony, reproduce that of the martyred saints of Christianity, the public authorities infused the violence with a dose of sacredness.²⁸ The violence of power was thus restored to its original dimension and its importance for symbolic communication.

Punishments administered according to a common system between the spaces at the city centre and on the outskirts, punitive processions held in the heart of urban life, sometimes directed through the city's most populous areas, or its symbolic monuments: such is the research available and the Venetian example, which has been cited from time to time, would appear upon

preliminary analysis likely to support these conclusions. Where did the degrading punishment which precedes punitive punishment or a second degrading sentence take place? It followed the main artery of the Grand Canal and San Marco to Santa Croce,²⁹ from the heart of the city to its western border, with the condemned exhibited on a boat, tied to a post, while the town crier proclaimed his crime. Where was corporal punishment administered in Venice? '*In medio duarum colunporum*',³⁰ between the two columns which form, toward the water, the edge of the Piazzetta. This is where marks were made, tongues pierced, hands, ears and noses cut off, people hanged, sodomites burned. The place of torture would thus be in this most public and central urban milieu, on this square of sovereign influence which was, since the very origins of the city, the religious heart of Venice, the reliquary basilica and political centre joined together there. Such an assertion, however, should be immediately qualified. The square itself has double roots, almost the very symbol itself of the constituent relations that the city maintains with land and sea. Firmly rooted in the urban fabric, the square opens widely onto the lagoon. The placement of columns at the edge of the Piazzetta, at an ideal and propitiatory limit, where the land meets the sea, was made under the doge Sebastiano Ziani, in the last third of the twelfth century. This central location is thus also and especially – it should be insisted despite the dominant studies³¹ – a borderland, a threshold, a monumental threshold, flanked by two immense columns, which travellers must cross upon their arrival.

But another element should be considered in this analysis. As elsewhere in the Italian cities, since gaming had to take place in daylight, an enclave was reserved for the players in the centre of the civic space. Where was it located? Right between the two columns. But the *Insula Sancti Marci* area where the functions and symbols of power were concentrated and where the sacredness of the city was first and foremost expressed, had been protected by early specific laws imposing heavier sentences for crimes and misdemeanours committed within the limits of that island.³² Within the Piazzetta, a space thus escaped such sanctification-sanctuary status, reserved as it was for both punishment and gaming, with its possible excesses. Such are the initial nuances of note in this interpretation.

Duly warned against the risks of precipitous interpretations, we may now attempt to go beyond such preliminary considerations. As interesting as they are, they tend in effect to paint the urban space as a neutral element, a support on which the public authorities would leave their marks.

To obviate such a risk, let us attempt to dig a little deeper into the complexity of spatial scenarios. Thus, we discover that they are not as fixed as the descriptions would have us believe. In Venice, where the Piazza San Marco was increasingly influential in the late Middle Ages, the '*locum consuetum*' defined between the two columns did not host all corporal punishments. The Rialto market also began to play a role. Flogging could be administered on the stairs of the bridge or in front of the magistrates' courts.³³ The bridge provided the backdrop for a degrading exhibition of the guilty.³⁴ Poles were

erected in the market, or facing one of the large halls on the Grand Canal.³⁵ It would be difficult to find a more central space where the masses gathered than the market, an urban distribution centre, the square around which the Venetian commercial power reigned. Laws were proclaimed there, just as at San Marco. The commercial magistrates were located there. But above all, in administering punishment in that square, the authorities were recognizing the original polarization of the Venetian space. Put another way, in the decades in which the relations between the two centres of San Marco and Rialto were shifting in favour of San Marco, the long history of the urban organism continued to carry weight and the Venetian spatial configuration proffered resistance. Structured space, as from the very founding of Venice, was wielding its power.³⁶

It was a power that was also wielded differently. Beyond even these central locations, under remarkably creative rules which resulted from the *arbitrium* of magistrates, sentences could be administered locally, at the scene of the crime. This is certainly not a claim that such a practice would have been unique to Venice. Certain studies mention the example of such a punitive scenario, but do not push the analysis further. From the Venetian archives, let us study the question.

To begin with, an introductory observation is needed before proceeding on to the description. Such punishments corresponded to a large variety of crimes. First, offences of a relative seriousness, or mitigated by attenuating circumstances, are atoned for facing the neighbourhood. The youth of a thief, for example, lessened his sentence. The 25 lashings that he received were administered on the *campo* of his parish.³⁷ Or the woman accomplice in a prostitution case was flogged from the main bridge of the *contrada* to her house (see Figure 1.1). Nothing else. The scene is intended for the local audience, thus showing that justice had been served, and it also informed locals of the offence of a guilty woman who thereafter would lose her reputation in the neighbourhood.³⁸ But cases of another degree of gravity also employed this local stigmatization, although this time in a complex punitive ceremony. Melchiore Ravagnano was a thief and sacrilegious. He was sentenced to a degrading procession along the Grand Canal. But the return trip from Santa Croce took him toward San Gregorio where the crimes were committed. The wooden pitchfork from which Melchiore was hanged was raised over the opening of the *rio*, at the limit between San Gregorio and the point of Santa Trinità.³⁹ In these cases, the local theatre was thus mobilized after the central scene for a final tragic act when the gibbets were raised over the canals, leaving no doubt that in the widespread horizontality of the Venetian architecture, such poles carried a heightened impact, visible as they were from all over. But the scene can also be the opposite. After an initial parochial act, the final phase then saw the condemned person brought back to the city centre for corporal punishment or execution.⁴⁰

It will thus be surmised that the offence and the punishment communicate between themselves in diverse ways. In these societies, there was not only a

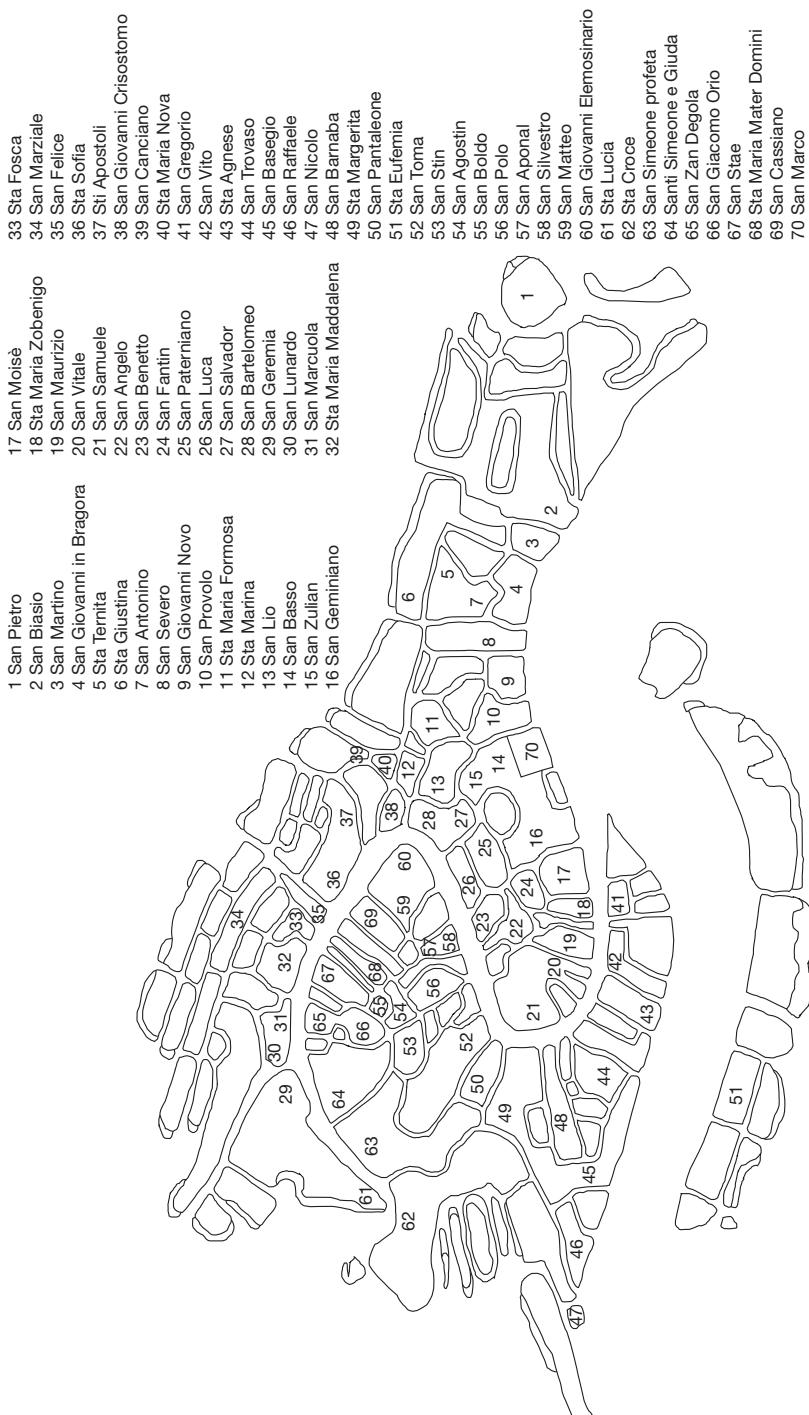


Figure 1.1 Map of the *contrade* of fifteenth-century Venice

strict symbolic rapport, going as far as mimicry, between the punitive sentence – the punished body part – and the crime. The same symbolic rapport could associate the space to the punishment of the deed. In other words, a third element was an actor in this story, and attentive readings identifying ordinary places of punishment and emphasizing merely the public character of sentences in the most central of public spaces have downplayed or even ignored this. An initial conclusion may be drawn. When the punishment is served by the spatial dimension of the crime in order to, under the principles of mimicry, incorporate it into the execution itself, the space becomes a fully fledged player in the punitive ceremony.

Let the typology of the crimes punished be noted at this point, putting aside minor cases whose explanation, as I have mentioned, is not in question. Other offences existed whose gravity necessitated, for the demonstrative value of the punishment to be complete, that the places of punishment be linked; these were very often sacrilegious and iconoclastic acts to be atoned for, as the community required, before the desecrated holy image or holy place. One example illustrates, in a methodical quest, precisely the reverse of the legacy of certain ardent followers of the Virgin Mary, a certain Marino who attacked 14 images of the Virgin in churches and street shrines.⁴¹ The sentence reproduced his iconoclastic itinerary across the Venetian space:⁴² his punishment included 14 stops before the desecrated images and 12 lashings were administered at each stop, from Misericordia to Celestia, from San Barnaba to Castello. But the same type of punishment could be ordered for murders motivated by theft, all types of offenders who incite absolute opprobrium, violent thieves, murderers, repeat offenders, those who commit hideous crimes offending God, at the great risk of attracting His wrath on a city harbouring such sinners.

It was therefore necessary in such cases that the law manifest its exemplary and public value locally and that the power, even within the human and social cells whose mix formed the city, express its capacity to punish. We should not forget what studies, often captivated by the process of *damnatio memoriae*, tend to overlook. These societies also intended, for the serious offences, to preserve and maintain the memory of the crime, a memory which, to properly function, focus and guarantee its survival, clung to the local space through such ceremonies.⁴³ But it was especially important that order be restored in the *contrada*, deeply disturbed by the crime, and that the soiled area be purified. Moreover, even if the legal sources available are silent on the issue, we can pose the very probable hypothesis, in the case of a desecrated holy image,⁴⁴ of the existence of other reparation rituals organized this time by the parish community: prayers, candle offerings, ceremonies preceding and following the restoration of the icon, with a large group of residents participating. As we know, the worshipping of these images, these Virgins of the street corner, albeit particularly strong among certain local believers who filled the lamps with oil or decorated the shrines with flowers, was undoubtedly more routine for the majority of passers-by, accustomed to the familiar

landmarks. But religious devotion sprang to life when the icons had been desecrated, with the example of the street shrine built in Florence to shelter the Madonna de Santa Maria de' Ricci that an unlucky gambler had desecrated with horse manure.⁴⁵ Punishment was administered after the offence, order after disorder, redemption after sacrilege, at the exact scene of the crime, because directly or indirectly, it is that space which had also been desecrated by the act and its perpetrator, so reparation was also due to the space itself.

These scenes should not be considered unique to Venice. However, in Venice as elsewhere, they have not been studied. An example is that of Bartomeo de Cases who, according to his confession, desecrated several images of Mary in 1493 in Florence. The sentence ordered that the perpetrator have his left hand cut off before a first image, his right hand in front of a second, and a stoning before the last Virgin, perhaps the most sacred, the Madonna di Orsanmichele.⁴⁶ But the sentence was not carried out. De Cases, before the procession even began its planned itinerary off the busy roads, was taken by the mob at Santa Croce. He was lynched, his body dragged through the city to be symbolically taken, once the ritual violence was carried out, beyond the city limits; the dead body then underwent a final act of collective punishment, as both hands were cut off and the eyes gouged out.⁴⁷

What can be gleaned from these related examples? The first observation is that they highlight the *arbitrium* of the magistrates and, related to that *arbitrium*, the very great formal flexibility of the punitive processes. Also of note is that in all the various forms, space plays a role in the punishment. There is in fact the centre, or centres, the squares and routes organizing urban life and, for the punishment to be, like the law which orders it, fully visible, the former serve the punishment, the degrading processions, and all types of punitive sentences. There are outskirts, habitual places of execution, even if, in the course of the fifteenth century, torture tended to return to the city. There are places to exhibit the bodies and gallows still marked the importance, for the urban community, of the limits and thresholds. But there is also an extraordinary variety of spatial scenarios. To each crime its punishment, as specialist historians on the penalization of crime say. To each punishment should be added its space.

It may be deduced that the history of punitive ceremonies, once the spatial element is properly attributed its importance, is much more complex than it first appears. In studying only the most visible penal practices, an interpretive risk threatens, that of believing that the city would mark, without modification from the communal era to the modern age, the signs of power in certain predetermined places. While the obvious character of leaving such marks to denote the exercise of the law has been emphasized, the analysis cannot stop there. As we have seen, the law does not show itself only in such places. Efficiency requires that the punitive ceremony message be carried on different levels, in the centre, in the outskirts, as in each of the districts forming the city. It is a matter of communicating, persuading, intimidating and warning in the most convincing manner possible. But these few comments do not say

it all. It would seem that the dominant studies, perhaps a bit hasty, identifying only the ordinary geography of punishment, are in some ways victims of an illusion: the belief that the rhetoric of power could only be heard in certain places, vested with such power early on, and the assumption that the *loca publica* recommended by the magistrates for the administration of punishments were all necessarily located in the city centre. To counter this illusion we must, in the Italian case, clarify the complexity of a spatial system. Even in a city such as Venice, which was soon marked by political and symbolic unification, the public authorities knew and recognized the various levels at which inhabitants functioned. That is why a broad territory was favoured when punishments were administered at San Marco or the Rialto, within these areas which capitalized on the signs of power; a broad territory like that of the degrading processions by water or land and their mobility, a synonym of unity. However, when the punishment was delivered locally, we may now recognize the plurality of living spaces, practices and spatial usages.

From these examples we may note that, while grappling with the management and control of a populated city, as dynamic and complex as its existence appeared in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, marked by strong pressure for unification, the power still recognized and appreciated the force of local roots, the realities of daily rituals, the multiplicity of spatial uses, all the possible cities that, in obeying laws or in crime, social players would tirelessly invent.

In its subtle variations, invisible to those who let themselves be taken in by the illusory repetition of data, the research reveals that the public authorities were entirely conscious of the multiple territorialities which the city produced. It exercised its rhetoric of power in certain *loca consueta* fully inhabited by the theatre of justice, within the centre or on the outskirts. It favoured, depending on the type of punishment involved, certain places and processional paths. But it would be a mistake to believe that the geography of punishment was unchanging. Changes took place that brought punishment into the heart of the city. There were occasions when the emotions of the mob disrupted the usual organization of the ceremonies. Space, in particular, far from being obediently pliable, organized and recognized by the sole decisions of those in power, put up resistance. We discover that punishment had to demonstrate spatial inventiveness and that it was administered according to changing configurations. Finally, we understand that in the dialogue between crime and punishment, space, in its definitions and multiple uses, far from being a fixed backdrop, also played its role. The best-established scenarios are therefore no longer repeated. Suddenly flexible, they adapt and innovate, and space – that of the crime and purification, of life and stigmatization – suddenly reveals itself, imposes its power and tells another story.

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2 Violence, anger and dishonour in sixteenth-century broadsheets from the collection of Johann Jakob Wick

Charles Zika¹

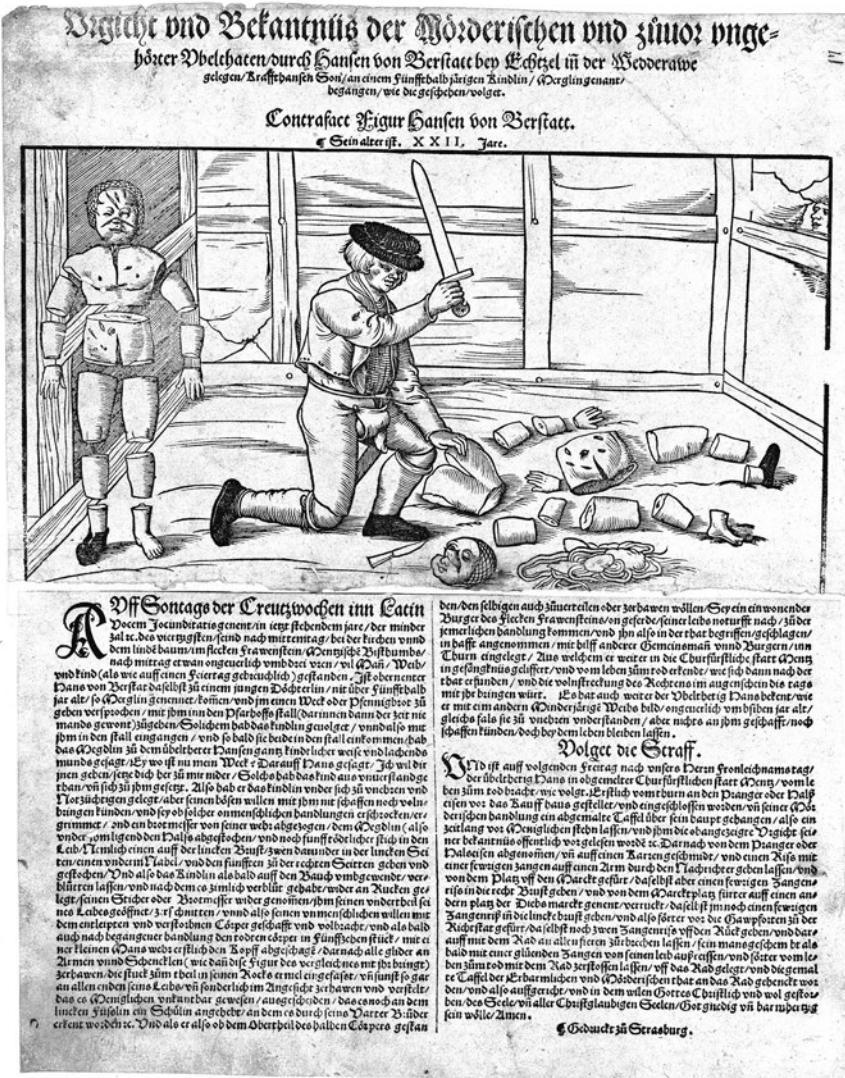
The vast documentary archive that the second Archdeacon of the Zurich Grossmünster, Johann Jakob Wick, put together over almost three decades between 1560 and 1587, provides us with a rich source of material through which to consider the role of emotions in the mental and religious economy of later sixteenth-century Europe.² The textual and visual documents in the collection concern all manner of wondrous and terrifying events – meteorological phenomena, such as comets, eclipses, aurora, and storms; natural disasters, such as floods, earthquakes, avalanches and fire; unnatural births and physical deformations; terrible crimes as well as major moments in political and religious life. These accounts were meant to demonstrate the extremely frightening and uncertain nature of contemporary times, to stimulate readers and viewers to reflect on the meaning of such terrible events, and to urge them to penitence in order to try to mitigate or avoid any such events in the future. A large number of such events were considered exemplary in their supernatural or providential significance. They become linked to divine reaction or intention, signs of God's growing impatience, the boiling over of his anger, the registering of his disgust, as well as expressions of God's zeal for justice, his merciful nature and the love for human kind in registering such warnings.³

In this essay I want to discuss one particular set of broadsheets and images in this collection that reflect a sense of disordered nature and demand a religious and emotional response from their readers and viewers. These images do not depict a disorder made manifest in the phenomena and disasters of the natural world, but a disorder written on human bodies. While the violence and disorder of natural disasters represent expressions of God's righteous anger and punishment in response to human sin, the violence and disorder meted out on human bodies represent the direct outcome of human sin, signs of a world that has abandoned God and is in danger of suffering the full force of divine anger. The numerous horrific social crimes and murders included in the textual and visual documentation found in Wick's collection represent a sinful world gone seriously awry.⁴ The violent anger that lies at the heart of such events and their representation would seem to be twofold. On the one

hand, there is the anger stirred up by the impatience or frustration of the evildoer, that leads to terrible physical and psychic violence; and on the other, there is a commensurate, yet justified and even zealous anger enacted by God's representatives on earth, the magistrates, to pursue justice through the violent punishment of the evildoer.⁵ Therefore the response demanded of the reader and viewer of such images would also seem to be twofold: anger and disgust at the shame and dishonour brought by such violent deeds on the victim and on the broader community, and a zealous anger for the meting out of violent justice in order to prevent the repetition of such shame and dishonour in the future.

The broadsheets that I explore in this paper represent a kind of template that has been applied to two separate yet similar crimes separated by time and place. The first occurs in the central Rhine region in the vicinity of Frankfurt and within the Archbishopric of Mainz in 1540; the other takes place in the Upper Palatinate more than 30 years later in 1573. Despite the different dates, perpetrators, victims, and some narrative details, the two events are depicted visually in very similar ways, the creators of the later broadsheets clearly having been influenced by the earlier. For that reason the images are useful in exploring the relationship between image and text, the ways in which small changes in the visual depiction of the two cases might have been influenced by the different literary accounts. These changes may also present an opportunity for understanding contemporary attitudes towards violent crime – such as the emotional source of violent crime within the psyche of the perpetrator, and then the emotional impact of the violent crime not only on an individual victim but also on the broader community of which perpetrator and victim are part.

An account of the 1540 crime is found in a Strasbourg broadsheet entitled *The Testimony and Confession of the Murderous and Unprecedented Evil Deeds Carried Out by Hans von Berstatt, the Son of Explosive Hans, in Echzell in the Wetterau against a Five-and-a-Half-Year-Old Girl Called Mergelin* (Figure 2.1).⁶ The epithet used for the father of the perpetrator of this terrible crime, 'Brassthans', which I have translated 'Explosive Hans', may well have been included by the publisher to alert the reader at the very outset to the disturbed personality of the father, and thereby offer some explanation for the younger Hans' unspeakable crime by reference to his father's reputed character. For 'Brast' can refer to crackling and creaking noises made by fire, lightning and collapsing buildings, to heartfelt worry and misery, or to feelings of grief and anger.⁷ As we shall see, the broadsheet suggests that sudden outbursts of rage were in part the explanation for some aspects of Hans' unspeakable actions. Moreover, a sub-heading that claims the woodcut represents an exact likeness (*Contrafactur*) of the 22-year-old Hans, also seems intent on eliciting emotional disgust towards Hans from its readers by emphasizing the relative ages of perpetrator and victim, as well as underlining the authenticity of the broadsheet's account. This reference might well have been to another earlier woodcut, published in 1540 in Mainz, the city in which



*Figure 2.1 The Murder, Rape and Dismemberment by Hans von Berstatt of the five-and-a-half-year-old girl Mergelin in 1540, woodcut, in *Urgicht und Bekannts der mörderischen . . . Ubelthaten . . .* Strasbourg, [1542]*

Source: Zentralbibliothek Zurich, Graphische Sammlung [PAS II 12/26]

Hans was executed (Figure 2.2). This highly unusual broadsheet, which depicted what seems to be the very first head and shoulders portrait of a young murderer of no social status in print, clearly sought to represent Hans' criminal nature through his physiognomy. It also displayed an identical and prominent statement of Hans' age and declared the woodcut to be a true likeness.⁸

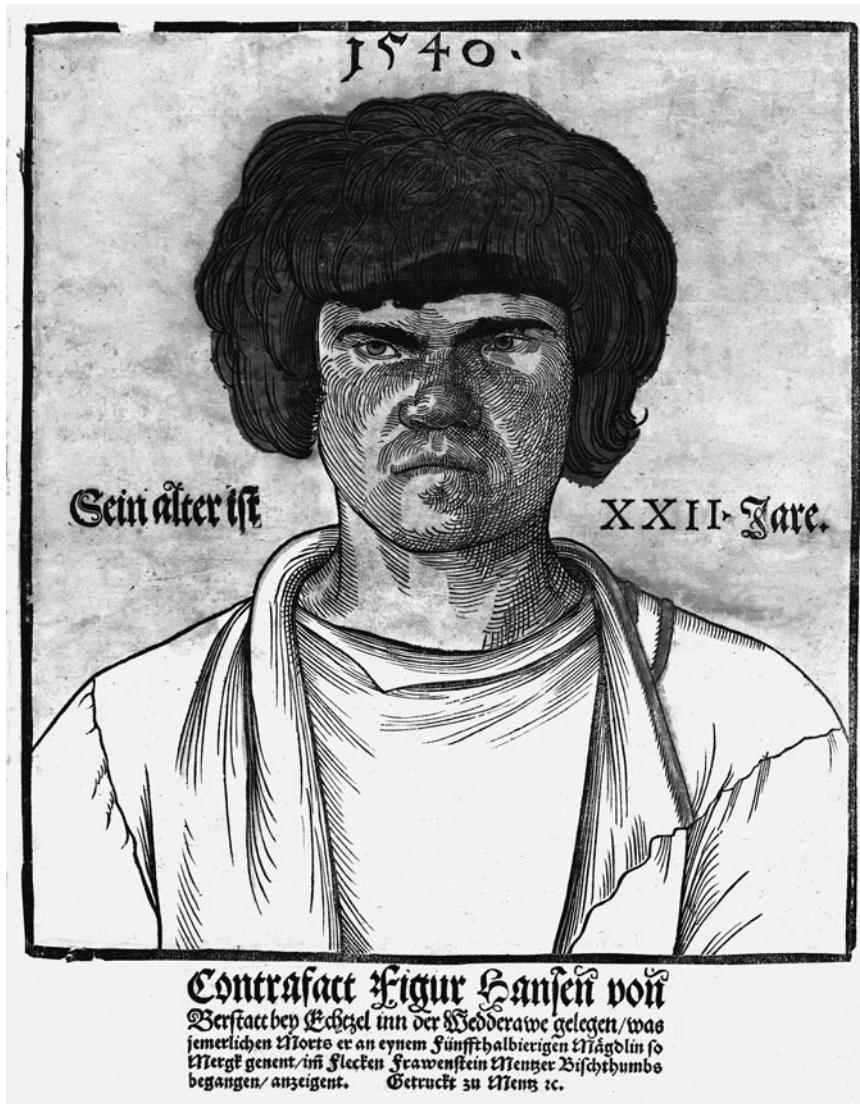


Figure 2.2 *Portrait of the Murderer, Hans von Berstatt*, coloured woodcut, Mainz, 1540

Source: © Stiftung Schloss Friedenstein Gotha [Inv. 39,23]

The text of the 1542 Strasbourg broadsheet is divided into two parts. First there is a formal account of the events based on court testimony and Hans' confession; and this is followed in the second column with an account of Hans' punishment. A notable feature of the account of the crime is its attention to detail in the manner of an official court record. It first locates the crime very precisely in both time and space. It describes how on the afternoon of Rogation Sunday, the Sunday before the feast of the Ascension, at about three o'clock in the afternoon, near the church and the linden tree in the tiny hamlet of Fleckenstein within the territory of the Archbishop of Mainz,⁹ Hans von Berstatt lured the five-and-a-half-year-old girl Mergelin from the crowd of men, women and children that usually gather on such feast days into a parish shed located behind the church. He did this by offering the girl a small cookie. The text highlights the child's innocence and lack of awareness of danger when it describes her laughing and asking her murderer in childlike fashion: 'And so where is my cookie?' In response Hans enticed Mergelin to come and sit by him; and then followed the first shameful crime that the text refers to: Hans lay on top of Mergelin 'in order to dishonour and rape her'.

But it was Hans' frustration at his failure, presumably his failure to penetrate the child, together with a fear created by an awareness of his beastly behaviour, that catapulted him into the next stage of his crime depicted in the accompanying woodcut. The broadsheet relates that this mixture of frustration and fear caused him to explode with rage.¹⁰ He took a breadknife (as depicted in the woodcut), cut Mergelin's throat and then stabbed her fatally five times, each blow carefully described in the text and also depicted (though not precisely) in the accompanying woodcut: one on the left breast, two below that on the left side, one above the navel, and a fifth on the right side. He then turned the child onto her stomach so as to let the blood flow out of her; and when her body was significantly drained of blood, his crime reached a new level of cruelty. He turned the child on her back again, took his bread knife and a dagger, and cut open her lower body so that he could carry through the rape of 'the lifeless, dead body'.¹¹ When he had done that, he cut the dead body into 15 pieces, first cutting off the head, then chopping the limbs into pieces. At that point the broadsheet text directs the reader to the identikit-like figure of the victim in the woodcut in order to make clear how the victim's body was dismembered ('as shown in this figure depicting her'),¹² before returning to the narrative. He then wrapped up some of the body parts in his jacket sleeves and even chopped up and made unrecognizable the extremities of the body and especially the face. The one exception was that he left a small shoe on the girl's left foot, and it was by this shoe that the girl's uncle was later able to recognize the victim.

As Hans was about to chop up and divide the girl's upper body (the very moment in the narrative caught by the woodcut), a burgher of the hamlet came to that place by chance in order to urinate, and so discovered this 'pitiful event'. With the help of others he had Hans apprehended and imprisoned – after which he was taken to the electoral city of Mainz, locked up and condemned to

death. Moreover, during his interrogation Hans confessed that he was a serial offender: he had previously tried to rape another young girl of about seven, but despite the fact that he was unable to do so, he did not kill her.

In exploring the nature of the violence in this terrible story of murder, paedophilia, necrophilia, defilement and dismemberment, two particular features stand out. First, there is a particular moment in this narrative when the violence of the perpetrator escalates dramatically, when the aggressive sexual urges of a paedophile give way to the outpouring of extreme physical aggression involved in raping, defiling and dismembering the dead body of a child. The text describes this as the outcome of furious rage, a vicious fit of anger triggered by thwarted sexual desire. Although fundamentally a sexual crime, the viciousness and brutality that differentiate this particular episode from the attempted rape of a seven-year-old to which Hans confessed during his interrogation, stem from his uncontrollable anger, his furious rage. The verb used in the broadsheet to express this rage is *ergrimmet*. Far from being a common term, it does appear frequently in Luther's almost contemporary bible translation into German. It is the word used by God, for instance, to refer to the fury of Cain's anger before he murdered Abel (Gen. 4, 6); Moses uses the word in begging God that his anger not 'blaze out' against those worshipping the golden calf (Ex. 32, 11); the word is used to describe God's anger that 'blazed out' and burnt down a part of the Israelite camp in the desert, (Num. 11, 1); and it also describes the fury of God when he took a yoke of oxen and cut them in pieces (1 Sam. 11, 6).¹³ In other words, *ergrimmet* describes the blazing of anger or fury that precedes and results in various forms of extremely destructive violence – murder, annihilation and dismemberment.

A second striking feature of this narrative account is its meticulous detail. Despite the description of Hans' deed as 'inhuman' or 'beastly',¹⁴ everything is precisely recorded – the number of stabbings, the process of dismemberment, the different weapons used, the number of body parts that result. The butchery is very methodical. The quantitative element matches the careful attention given to time and place, all pointing to the nature of this report as official testimony proven by the authorities, a quality referred to by the use of the opening word *Urgicht*, testimony provided as part of a judicial process. This methodical account of the offender's violence, with its accounting-like concern for quantitative description, is typical of changes in the description of violence from the mid-fifteenth century, according to Daniel Baraz.¹⁵

The visual account of violence expressed through the medium of the woodcut, however, only accords partially with this highly methodical approach. Here the perpetrator is caught in the act, as it were – in his furious and murderous act of chopping up Mergelin's body – both by the burgher who apprehended him, shown peeping through a hole in the shed on the right, and by the viewer of the broadsheet. Hans' engorged testes and the floppy penis that hangs out of his codpiece communicate the sexual nature of his frustrated rage, while the body parts, organs and defaced head strewn on the ground in front of him demonstrate his murderous fury. The identikit-like figure on the



Figure 2.3 North Bavarian artist [?], *Blessed Simon of Trent*, coloured woodcut, broadsheet bound with Johann Matthias Tuberinus, *Relatio de Simone pueru Tridentino*, Nuremberg: Friedrich Creussner, after 1475

Source: Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich [Rar. 338]

left perimeter of the woodcut, however, is not part of the narrative, a fact emphasized by its greater than life-size form. It acts as a kind of unitary image that represents in iconic fashion the cruelty at the heart of this crime. Through this form it also draws visual and emotional connections to other cultural images of crimes against children – viz. those of Christian children supposedly murdered at the hands of the ‘cruel Jews’, as they are so often described in the later fifteenth and early sixteenth century.¹⁶ Most importantly, there are the fairly recent accounts and images of the death of Simon of Trent, a notorious case of alleged ritual murder by the Jews of that city in 1475. This crime was also described as ‘unprecedented’, featured in numerous publications over the next century, was subsequently proved to be baseless, but led to the canonization of Simon in 1588.¹⁷

A common image of Simon of Trent depicted the two-and-a-half-year-old child prostrate on a bench that represents the almemar, a liturgical platform in the synagogue, his wounds visible for all to see, and surrounded by the awls with which the wounds were inflicted, and a container filled with his collected blood (Figure 2.3). In the late fifteenth century such an image of Simon was painted on the Frankfurt city wall under the arch of the town’s busiest gate, the Brückenturm, as a reminder to passers-by of Jewish cruelty in the martyrdom of this Christian child.¹⁸ A significant element in the legend of

Simon was the collection of Christian blood. A woodcut reproduced in the five editions of the *Nuremberg Chronicle* was one of the most significant ways in which the story achieved greater circulation and popularity, and in this image Simon's death is all about the collection of blood (Figure 2.4).¹⁹

A group of Jews hold Simon upright on a table while they collect the blood that drains from his body into a bowl, mimicking the ritual of circumcision. Likewise, in an illustration to a four-page song sheet recounting the ritual murder alleged to have occurred in the village of Sappenfeld in the Upper Palatinate in 1540 – the very year of the atrocious murder carried out by Hans von Berstatt – the murdered child is depicted standing up tied to a pillar, his body covered in gashes, and next to him is the perpetrator, clearly identified as a Jew with his *Judenhut*, holding up the instrument used in this terrible crime as well as the dish in which he is collecting the child's blood (Figure 2.5).²⁰ The 1542 Strasbourg broadsheet account of Hans von Berstatt's crime, in which he first stabbed his victim five times and then turned over her body until the blood had flowed out, may well have taken its cue from the description and depiction of such ritual murders.



Figure 2.4 *Simon of Trent*, woodcut, in Hartmann Schedel, *Liber chronicarum*, Nuremberg: A. Koberger, 1493, fol. 254v

Source: Special Collections, Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne [SpC/RB 62 FF/1]



Figure 2.5 Ritual Murder at Sappenfeld, woodcut, in *Ein hübsch new Lied von zweyen Iuden/ vnd einem Kind/ zu Sappenfelt newlich geschehen*, s.l., 1540

Source: © The British Library Board [11517.de.6, title page]

The displaying of the child's lacerated body in the Sappenfeld song sheet, a feature common to many such depictions of ritual murder cases,²¹ suggests that the 1542 woodcut depicting Hans von Berstatt's crime may be drawing on this tradition. News of the Sappenfeld ritual murder case circulated widely in the undated song sheet as well as in a work by Luther's disputant in the famous Leipzig debate of 1519, Johann Eck, Professor of Theology at the University of Ingolstadt.²² Both works told the story of a boy named Michael Pisenharter whose body was found in the forest mutilated – fingers and toes cut off, three wounds in the shoulder, foreskin of the penis cut off, and stab wounds all over the body. This mutilated body of the child was then supposedly brought to a church and put on display – and began to bleed miraculously some weeks later, as a sign of God's mercy. The wounded and bleeding body was clearly treated as a relic, its bleeding a sign of association with the narratives and images of the blood of Christ's passion – whether in the collecting of Christ's saving blood by angels at the time of his crucifixion, or in depictions of Christ in the Winepress.²³ Another related contemporary visual subject that presented Christ's bleeding body as a form of iconic relic

was that of the *Arma Christi*, an image displaying Christ's bleeding wounds in hands, feet and side (Figure 2.6).²⁴ I am certainly not arguing that the body parts of the child dismembered by Hans von Berstatt in 1540 should be seen as Christian relics similar to the *Arma Christi* or the mutilated body of Michael Pisenharter. I am simply suggesting that the identikit figure inserted into that woodcut was likely to have been inspired by that visual tradition and would have therefore carried some of the emotional power of those other mutilated and dismembered figures. For in this case too, the wounds and dismembered body parts of the child Mergelin are held up for all to see, to reflect on the terrible evil of Hans' deed, to feel empathy for the victim, and no doubt to learn its moral meaning.

The moral meaning of the brutal violence inflicted on the body of the child Mergelin by Hans von Berstatt is spelt out in the second part of the broadsheet's text, in the description of the terrible punishment inflicted on Hans' body by the judicial authorities. On the Friday after the feast of Corpus Christi in the electoral city of Mainz, the evildoer Hans was put to death 'as follows' (*wie volgt*). First Hans was placed in the pillory with an image of his terrible deed hanging above his head while a description of his crime as found in the broadsheet was read out publicly. We can only presume that the image was most likely the dismembered body of the innocent child, and the broadsheet referred to was this very one. Then he was taken to the place of execution in a cart, and at several different public locations on the way he was mutilated five times with burning hot pincers – on one arm, in the right breast, in the left breast, and twice on the back. He was then tied to a wheel; his penis was ripped off with hot pincers; and he was crushed to death on the wheel. The image of his pitiful and murderous deed was then hung on the wheel, before it was raised up for all to see.

The violence previously inflicted on Mergelin was now exacted on Hans' body. The ritual mutilations with hot pincers were common humiliating punishments applied to the bodies of those who had committed ghastly or multiple murders, but the five times they were applied in Hans' case would seem to echo the five wounds he inflicted on Mergelin. Likewise, his brutal castration matched Mergelin's sexual dishonour and defilement.²⁵ The public display of his crime by means of an image, first above the pillory, and then hanging from the wheel on which his broken body was raised, was meant to magnify his public dishonour and link it to the shame he had brought upon his victim. The fundamental contrast between the two descriptions of violence in this broadsheet is that Hans' punishment includes no references to frustration or anger. The description is matter of fact and orderly – wholly devoid of the sight of blood, the smell of gore and the screams of suffering that must have accompanied Hans' brutal mutilation and execution. Such silence carries through to the very last lines of the description of Hans' punishment – that he 'died in the will of God, in proper Christ-like fashion, to whose soul and the souls of all Christian believers God wishes to grant

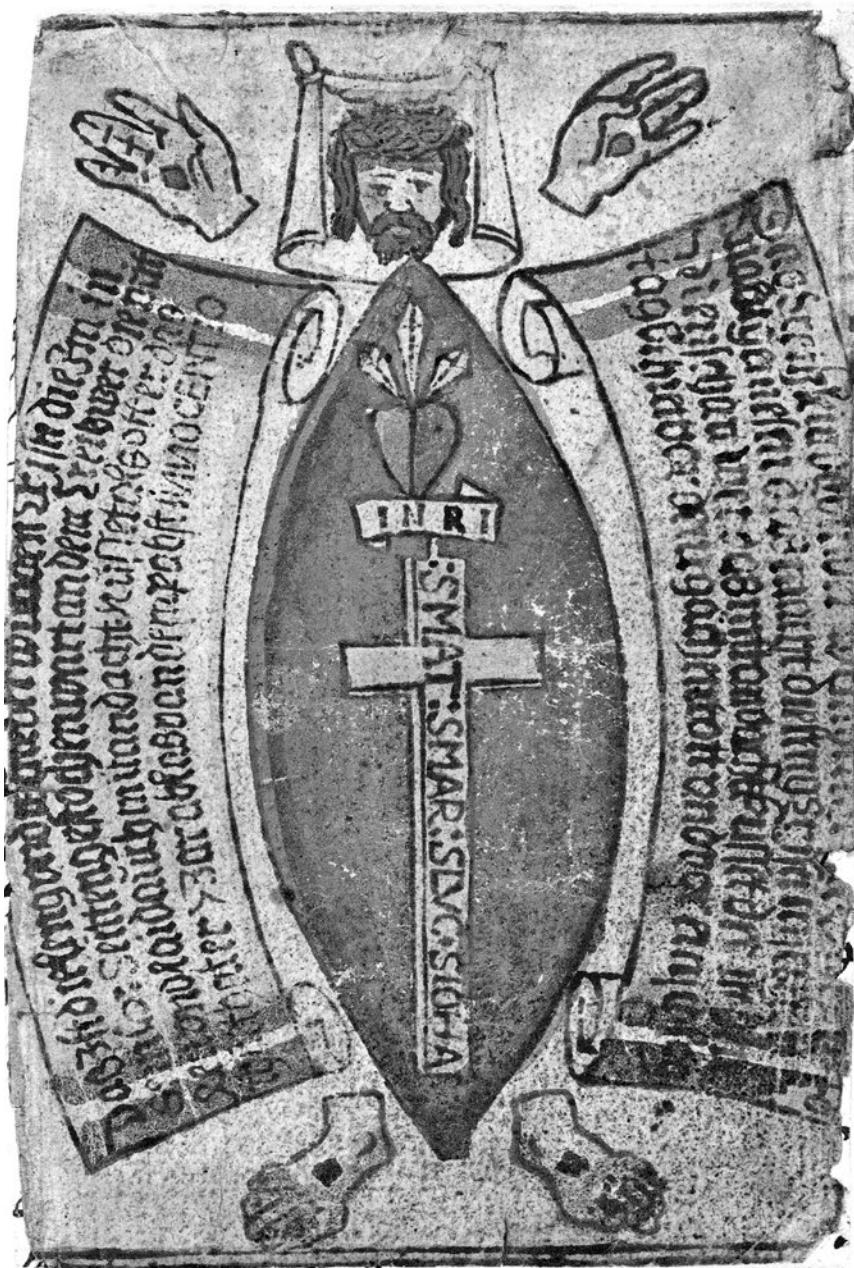


Figure 2.6 *Measure of the Side Wound and the Body of Christ*, coloured woodcut, c. 1484–92

Source: Courtesy National Gallery of Art, Washington, Rosenwald Collection [1943.3.831]



Figure 2.7 The Murder, Rape and Dismemberment by a twenty-five-year-old journeyman of the eighteen-year-old Freymüller Daughter in Tirschenreuth in 1573, coloured woodcut, in *Ein warhaftige und erbermliche neuwe Zeytung von einem jungen Gesellen . . . 1573*

Source: Zentralbibliothek Zurich, Graphische Sammlung [PAS II 10/12]

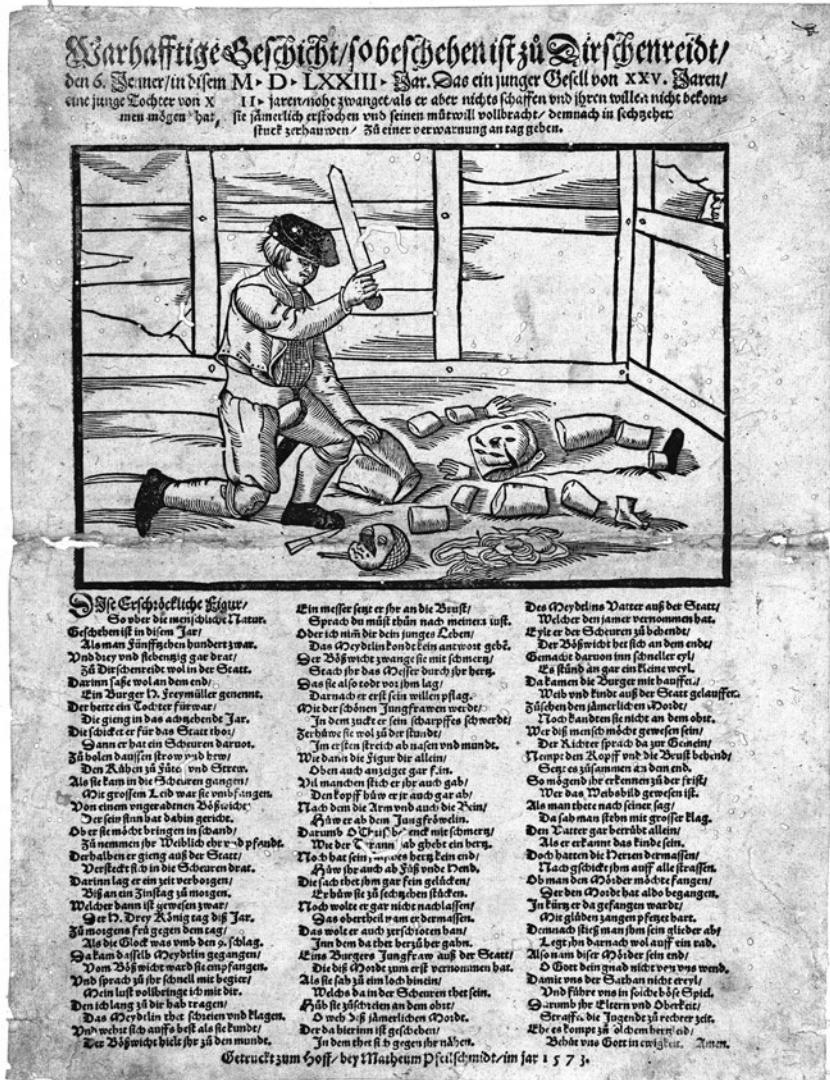


Figure 2.8 *The Murder, Rape and Dismemberment by a twenty-five-year-old journeyman of the eighteen-year-old Freymüller Daughter in Tirschenreuth in 1573*, woodcut, in *Warhaftige Geschicht so beschehen ist zuo Dirschenreidt . . . Hof an der Saale*: Matthäus Pfeilschmidt the Elder, 1573

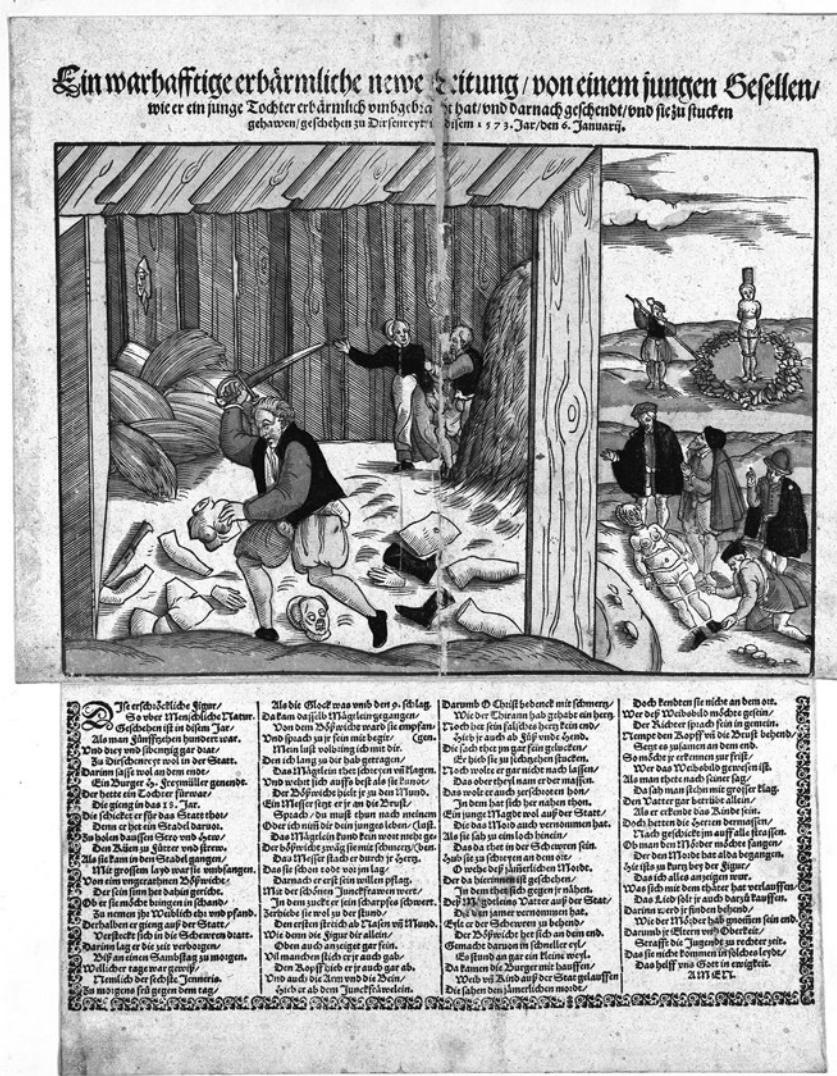
Source: Zentralbibliothek Zurich, Graphische Sammlung [PAS II 12/76]

his grace and mercy, Amen'.²⁶ The ultimate moral meaning of this story of atrocious violence and counter-violence, of frustrated lust and anger, of shame, punishment and dishonour, is how to die a good Christian death and be redeemed.

We know that Hans' terrible murder created considerable interest in 1540, because of the unusual broadsheet featuring his portrait that was published in Mainz in that year (Figure 2.2). Even more unusual for the printed publicity of this event was the fact that the woodcut used in the 1542 broadsheet appeared again 33 years later in two very similar broadsheets of 1573 – one without a place of publication in almost identical form to that of 1540, except that it was coloured (Figure 2.7); and one published in Hof an der Saale by Matthäus Pfeilschmidt the Elder, in which the identikit figure on the left has been removed and a few other small yet significant changes have been made (Figure 2.8).²⁷ The texts are quite different to that found in the Hans von Berstatt broadsheet of 1542, but are reasonably similar to each other.²⁸ Moreover, a third broadsheet appeared in 1573 published by Hans Moser in Augsburg (Figure 2.9). This introduced two new scenes – the examination of a dismembered female body by a group of burghers, and the execution of the murderer at the stake – as he is also depicted in a drawing accompanying a handwritten account of the event in the Wick collection (Figure 2.10).

All three broadsheets tell the story of an unnamed 25-year-old journeyman who on 6 January 1573, the feast of Three Kings, murdered and raped an 18-year-old daughter of a burgher named Freymüller, in a barn owned by that family in the town of Tirschenreuth, in the Upper Palatinate near the Bohemian border. The male perpetrator did not inveigle the young woman into the barn, as Hans von Berstatt had Mergelin, but he hid there, and then surprised and grabbed her when she came in to collect feed for her master's cows. Despite her physical struggle and screams, the journeyman was determined to satisfy his sexual desires and when the young woman continued to resist, he stabbed her through the heart, and then raped her dead body. After that he took out his sword, disfigured her mouth and nose, and then cut off her head, arms, legs, hands and feet – into 16 pieces. But just then the daughter of a Tirschenreuth burgher came across the terrible deed, whereupon the murderer fled and the townspeople were alerted. As the pieces of the young woman's body were put together in an attempt to identify her (unlike the 1540 case, when Mergelin's shoe immediately identified her to her uncle), her father recognized her, the murderer was apprehended and later executed. According to the Pfeilschmidt broadsheet account, he was mutilated with hot tongs, dismembered and then broken on the wheel; but in the other two broadsheets his execution was not described, although the woodcut in Moser's Augsburg broadsheet filled in that information by including a scene of the perpetrator tied to a stake about to suffer death by fire.²⁹

Unlike the 1540 case, these 1573 broadsheets do not focus on frustrated anger driving the young man to his murderous actions, but sexual lust. The text refers to his lust for his victim on a number of occasions, and it is her



*Figure 2.9 Murder, Rape and Dismemberment by a twenty-five-year-old journeyman, the identification of the corpse of the eighteen-year-old Freymüller daughter, and the execution of the murderer, in Tirschenreuth in 1573, coloured woodcut, in *Ein warhaftige erbärmliche neue Zeitung von einem jungen Gesellen . . . Augsburg: Hans Moser, 1573**

Source: Zentralbibliothek Zurich, Graphische Sammlung [PAS II 13/24]

rejection of him after he specifically tells her she must subject herself to his desires, accompanied by struggling and screaming, that leads him to stab and rape her.³⁰ The text begins by referring to the terrible woodcut depicting this story as ‘terrifying’ (*erschröcklich*), ‘inhuman’ (*uber die menschliche Natur*) and ‘wretched’ (*erbermlich*), and the young woman’s stabbing and death as

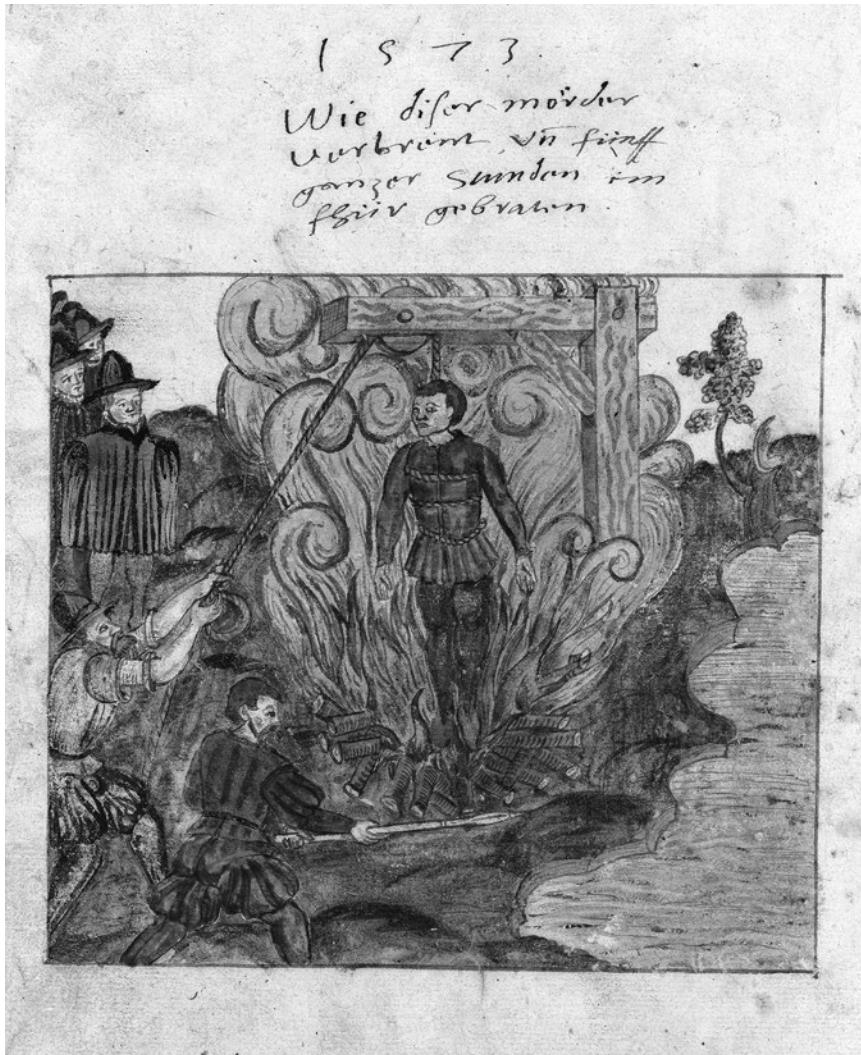


Figure 2.10 The execution over five hours of the rapist and murderer of the eighteen-year-old Freymüller daughter in Tirschenreuth in 1573, pen and coloured ink, in Wick [Sammlung]

Source: Zentralbibliothek Zurich, Handschriftenabteilung (MS F.22, fol. 297r)

'pitiable' (*jaemerlich erstochen, jaemerlicher Mordt*). The authorities do not express any overt anger either. The execution is covered in just three of the more than 100 lines in the Pfeilschmidt broadsheet, while in the two other broadsheets readers are invited to buy a copy of a ballad that has been published if they want to learn what happened to the murderer. The emphasis is rather on the shame and dishonour that this terrible act has unleashed. Unlike the title in the 1542 broadsheet, all three 1573 broadsheets refer specifically to the rape as well as the murder and dismembering, and two of them to the defiling and dishonouring (*geschendt*) of the victim. Her rape is her shaming, a taking away of her female honour and treasure.³¹ It would also seem that in these three broadsheets the cutting off of the woman's nose and mouth as the very first mutilation after stabbing her through the heart (rather than simply a 'defacement' conducted after the dismemberment, as in the 1542 Hans von Berstatt case) is a reference to the ritual disfigurement, degradation and dishonour frequently practised on women and sexual miscreants in late fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Germany.³²

This emphasis on shame and dishonour is even more clearly pronounced in a ballad printed at Eger by Hans Burger probably very soon after the event and certainly before the anonymous and the Moser broadsheets were published, since they refer to it.³³ The heading of the ballad that narrates this 'wretched story' of a 'dishonourable scoundrel' is more expansive than that in the broadsheets, and refers to the dishonour the journeyman brought upon a young woman in murdering, dismembering and despicably defiling her. This dishonouring and shame is repeated four times more within the story, and is highlighted by the reference to the woman's honourable father. The woman has far more agency in this ballad, and when told to surrender her honour and treasure, asks in reply whether this disloyal man (a journeyman in her father's house) really wishes to rob her of her female honour and treasure and bring her such great shame.³⁴ To explain the terrible disloyalty and dishonour that allows the journeyman to continue to pursue his lust, however, the ballad suddenly draws on diabolical influence and power. The devil has possessed him and instilled in him this desire for violence.

The sexual power and violence as well as the defilement and dishonour that characterizes the textual narrative of this crime is also highlighted in two of the woodcuts in the 1573 broadsheets. The anonymous 1573 broadsheet (Figure 2.7) reproduces the woodcut used 31 years earlier for the crime of Hans von Berstatt (Figure 2.1). But as Tina Asmussen has argued, the Pfeilschmidt broadsheet (Figure 2.8) adapts the earlier woodcut in three fundamental ways: it excises the identikit figure on the left; it replaces the simple codpiece and flaccid penis of the earlier woodcut with the highly stylized and erect Renaissance bragette, a codpiece adopted by mercenaries and nobility from the mid sixteenth century to flaunt their sexual and military prowess; and it transforms the journeyman's trousers into the flouncy slashed hose (*Pluderhosen*) typical of the fashion associated with mercenaries in the second half of the sixteenth century and the subject of intense critique and

condemnation by Protestant moralists.³⁵ This transformation of a journeyman into a mercenary is even clearer in the Moser broadsheet (Figure 2.9), in which the original bread knife is converted into a sword – with which in the 1573 accounts, the journeyman dismembers the young woman’s body. Although the artist has depicted the moment in this narrative when the journeyman is stopped from slicing up the upper body of his victim even further by the cries of a female burgher who comes upon the scene, the murderer’s clothing and weapon give the strong impression that this is a case of a mercenary running amok.

Tina Asmussen has argued persuasively that the transformation of the murderer in these two 1573 broadsheets into a military figure, and the murder into something resembling a war crime, is further supported by Johann Jakob Wick’s positioning of the anonymous broadsheet and ballad in his collection.³⁶ Wick inserted the anonymous broadsheet, the ballad and the pen drawing (Figure 2.10) into Volume 11 of his collection, which was primarily concerned with the events of 1573 and 1574, in particular the horrors of religious war and military sieges in France and the Netherlands. More specifically he located these documents after the account of an aurora that was seen in the sky for five months between November 1572 and March 1573, and which was considered to have referenced the treacherous death of Admiral Coligny, the leading Calvinist murdered three months before in the St Bartholomew’s Day massacre, and to have also prophesied a bitterly cold winter and many other miseries; and before the accounts of murder, rape, mutilation and cannibalism associated with the sieges of Harlem, Zutphen and Merck by the Spanish Duke of Alba. In this way the terrible rape and murder achieved broader social meaning as a crime linked to Spanish atrocities, and might have even been related to local and regional religious tensions in the region of Tirschenreuth, given that just two years earlier the Upper Palatinate had adopted the Reformation.

Despite the similar and variously entangled nature of these literary and visual accounts of two spectacular crimes over 30 years and 250 kilometres apart, the broadsheets seem to be directed to stimulating quite different responses in their readers and viewers beyond the overwhelming horror at the extent and graphic nature of the crime. The 1540 broadsheet presents a highly choreographed cycle of violence and counter-violence, stimulated by different forms of extreme anger, and ultimately directed towards an understanding of the personal redemption of the perpetrator through a good confession and a good death. In the case of the 1573 broadsheets, the focus is more on recognizing the hurt and suffering undergone by the victim, and emphasizing the way she has been robbed of her honour and pitying her in her shame. The 1573 broadsheets conclude with a warning and entreaty: ‘O God do not remove your mercy, so that the devil not land us in such evil; and therefore parents and authorities punish the young in timely fashion. And before any such heartache has the chance to occur, protect us O God for ever and ever.’³⁷

The basic difference between these two sets of documents is that the latter are far more sensitive to what might be called ‘socially distributed shame’, a concern for the social impact of violent crime, and an awareness that shame radiates out from such events and engulfs different members of the community. I am not suggesting that the broadsheet concerning Hans von Berstatt’s crimes rejects communal impact, involvement or responsibility for individual crime. The very nature of Hans’ public punishment and dissemination of his crime contradicts any such view. But I am arguing that the broadsheet focuses primarily on the emotions that drive individuals to violence and the violent punishment required to expunge their sin and ensure the redemption of the individual and the ongoing well-being of the Christian community. The broadsheets of 1573, on the other hand, possibly in response to the growing social, moral and religious conflict that had gripped much of Europe over the last half century, seem to be far more sensitive to the social impact of violent crime, how it impacts both on the individual victim and members of the broader community. That impact is defined by an emphasis on shame and loss of honour in the literary accounts, and by the link to war atrocities and the presence of the community in the visual accounts (Figure 2.9 and Figure 2.10). The emotional responses to serious violence that sixteenth-century broadsheets attempt to stimulate in their readers and viewers are clearly very varied, even when the events they describe are reasonably similar. Violent physical and sexual crime is certainly understood to be driven by violent emotion as well as by political and religious zeal; and it can also unleash excessive feelings of shame and dishonour on victims and their communities.

Notes

- 1 I would like to thank Charlotte Millar, Julie Davies and the editors, for assistance with this chapter. The research was supported by the Australian Research Council’s Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions (project number CE110001011).
- 2 For Wick and his ‘archive’, see the references in Charles Zika, ‘Visual Signs of Imminent Disaster in the Sixteenth-Century Zurich Archive of Johann Jakob Wick’, in Monica Juneja and Gerrit Jasper Schenk (eds), *Disaster as Image: Iconographies and Media Strategies across Europe and Asia*, Regensburg: Schnell und Steiner, 2014, pp. 43–53; Franz Mauelshagen, *Wunderkammer auf Papier: Die Wickiana zwischen Reformation und Volksglaube*, Zurich, 2008. The collection of handwritten documents, drawings and pamphlets is held in 24 folio volumes of an average 600 pages each in the Manuscript Department of the Zentralbibliothek Zurich (hereafter Wick [Sammlung]). The broadsheets, however, were removed from these volumes in 1925 and are held in the Graphic Collection (hereafter PAS).
- 3 Zika, ‘Visual Signs’.
- 4 In addition to the many stories and images of single and multiple murders, at least three depict cases involving dismemberment as in that discussed below: Daniel Läberli, who killed his wife with a sword in Zopfingen in May 1559 and then dismembered her with an axe (Wick [Sammlung], F.16, 146v); a woman dismembered in Weil der Stadt in 1561 (Wick [Sammlung], F.12, 184r); and a child in Lenzburg in 1567 who was decapitated and dismembered by his father (Wick [Sammlung], F.17, 268v). For accounts of horrendous murders in print, see Joy Wiltenburg, *Crime*

- and Culture in Early Modern Germany*, Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2012; and for an illustrated broadsheet featuring the dismemberment of Jacob Spohr in Halle in 1605, see pp. 144–5.
- 5 The view of anger as twofold is common in the Middle Ages, originating with Gregory the Great. See Lester Little, ‘Anger in Monastic Curses’, in Barbara Rosenwein (ed.), *Anger’s Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998, pp. 9–35, at p. 12 ff; Stephen D. White, ‘The Politics of Anger’, in Rosenwein, *Anger’s Past*, pp. 127–52, at pp. 149–50.
 - 6 The broadsheet and commentary is reproduced in Wolfgang Harms and Michael Schilling (eds), *Deutsche illustrierte Flugblätter des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts*, vol. 6, *Die Sammlung der Zentralbibliothek Zürich. Kommentierte Ausgabe Teil 1: Die Wickiana I (1500–1569)*, Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2005, pp. 38–9, and is dated 1542. Franz Maelshagen, ‘Was ist glaubwürdig? Fallstudie zum Zusammenspiel von Text und Bild bei der Beglaubigung außergewöhnlicher Nachrichten im illustrierten Flugblatt’, in Wolfgang Harms and Alfred Messerli (eds), *Wahrnehmungsgeschichte und Wissensdiskurs im illustrierten Flugblatt der Frühen Neuzeit (1450–1700)*, Basel: Schwabe & Co. AG Verlag, 2002, pp. 309–38, dates it 1540 and suggests Jakob Fröhlich may be the printer. See also Tina Asmussen, ‘Die Gewalt der Repräsentation in Darstellungen von Grausamkeit: Analyse und Kontextualisierung ausgewählter Flugblätter der Sammlung Wickiana’, Lizentiatsarbeit, Medieval and Early Modern European History, University of Basel, chapter 4 and Appendix, where this and related documents are reproduced. I am grateful to Tina Asmussen for making this unpublished work available to me and am indebted to her insights.
 - 7 See *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm*, Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1854–1960 (hereafter, Grimm, DWb), vol. 2, Sp. 307–9.
 - 8 For the unique nature of this woodcut, see Harms and Schilling, *Deutsche illustrierte Flugblätter*, vol. 6, p. 38. For the authenticity of these broadsheets, see Maelshagen, ‘Was ist glaubwürdig?’.
 - 9 Fleckenstein is now a suburb of Wiesbaden.
 - 10 ‘Also hab er das kindlin under sich zuo unehren und Notzüchtigen gelegt/aber seinen boesen willen mit jhm nit schaffen noch voln bringen künden/und sey ob solcher onmenschlichen handlungen erschrocken/ergrimmet/...’ (Strasbourg, 1542).
 - 11 ‘... unnd also seinen unmenschlichen willen mit dem entleipen und verstorbnen Coerper geschafft und volbracht/...’ (Strasbourg, 1542).
 - 12 ‘wie dann dise figur des vergleichnes mit jhr bringt’ (Strasbourg, 1542).
 - 13 See Grimm, DWb, vol. 3, Sp. 829–31. In middle high and new high German, the more common verb is *grimmen*.
 - 14 See above notes 9, 10: ‘onmenschlichen handlungen’; ‘seinen unmenschlichen willen’.
 - 15 Daniel Baraz, *Medieval Cruelty: Changing Perceptions, Late Antiquity to the Early Modern Period*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003, p. 145.
 - 16 Baraz, *Medieval Cruelty*, pp. 146–9.
 - 17 See Baraz, *Medieval Cruelty*, pp. 146–9; David Areford, *The Viewer and the Printed Image in Late Medieval Europe*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2010, pp. 164–227; Ronnie Po-chia Hsia, *Trent 1475: Stories of a Ritual Murder Trial*, New Haven: Yale University Press, in cooperation with Yeshiva University Library, 1992; Ronnie Po-chia Hsia, *The Myth of Ritual Murder: Jews and Magic in Reformation Germany*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988, pp. 43–62.
 - 18 Hsia, *Myth of Ritual Murder*, pp. 61–2, 210–15, figs 8, 14.
 - 19 The *Nuremberg Chronicle* was published in Nuremberg by Anton Koberger in Latin and German editions (1493), and in pirated German (1496, 1500) and Latin

- (1497) editions by Johann Schoensperger in Augsburg. Widespread distribution was assured through the large runs (1,000 for the Latin 1493 edition and 1,500 for the German 1493 edition) and the Europe-wide Koberger network of branches. See Adrian Wilson and Joyce Lancaster Wilson, *The Making of the Nuremberg Chronicle*, Amsterdam: Nico Israel, 1976; *Chronicle of the World: The Complete and Annotated Nuremberg Chronicle of 1493*, Introduction and appendix by Stephan Füssel, Cologne: Taschen, 2001.
- 20 Hsia, *Myth of Ritual Murder*, pp. 59–60, 124–31.
 - 21 See the etchings from Mattheus Rader's *Bavaria Sancta* (1615), in Hsia, *Myth of Ritual Murder*, figs 15, 16, 17.
 - 22 Hsia, *Myth of Ritual Murder*, pp. 125–31.
 - 23 For a recent study of the latter iconography, see Elina Gertsman, ‘Multiple Impressions: *Christ in the Winepress* and the semiotics of the printed image’, *Art History* 36, 2, 2013, 310–37.
 - 24 For the *Arma Christi* and related literature, see Areford, *The Viewer and the Printed Image*, pp. 229–67.
 - 25 For rituals of punishment and execution, see Richard van Dülmen, *Theatre of Horror: Crime and Punishment in Early Modern Germany*, trans. Elisabeth Neu, Cambridge: Polity, 1990; Mitchell B. Merback, *The Thief, the Cross and the Wheel: Pain and the Spectacle of Punishment in Medieval and Renaissance Europe*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.
 - 26 ‘... und in dem wilen Gottes Christlich und wol gestorben/des Seele/und aller Christglaubigen Seelen/Got gnedig und barmherzig sein woelle/Amen’ (Strasbourg, 1542).
 - 27 These two broadsheets, as well as the third of 1573, are found together with commentary in Harms and Schilling, *Deutsche illustrierte Flugblätter*, vol. 7, pp. 76–9.
 - 28 The text of the broadsheets by the unknown printer and Hans Moser are virtually identical, even in their orthography. The main difference between these and Mathäus Pfeilschmidt’s broadsheet, apart from some words and orthographic differences, is found in lines 6–12 before the end: different modes of execution are referred to, mention is made of a ballad describing this event (see below), and the Pfeilschmidt broadsheet calls on God to maintain his mercy so that one is not led into such evil by Satan.
 - 29 In a drawing from the Wick collection (Figure 2.10) and a ballad about the event published by Hans Burger in Eger (see below), the murderer is hung over a fire and smoked to death.
 - 30 ‘Und sprach zuo ihr schnell mit begier/Mein lust vollbringe ich mit dir/. . . Sprach du moust thoun nach meinem lust./Oder ich nimm dir dein junges Leben/Das Meydtlin konde kein antwort geben./Der Boesswicht zwange sie mit schmerz/Stach ihr das Messer durch ihr herz./Das sie also todt vor ihm lag/Darnach er erst sein willen pflag’ (Pfeilschmidt broadsheet).
 - 31 ‘Von einem ungeradtnen Boesswicht/Der sein sinn hat dahin gericht. Ob er sie moecht bringen in Schand/Zuo nemmen ihr Weiblich ehr und pfandt’ (Pfeilschmidt broadsheet). The Moser and anonymous 1573 broadsheets only differ in their orthography.
 - 32 See Valentin Groebner, *Defaced: The Visual Culture of Violence in the Late Middle Ages*, New York: Zone, 2008, pp. 67–86.
 - 33 *Ein warhaftig unnd doch Erbermlich Geschicht/so sich begin hat/z Duersenreit/von einem ungeradtnen Ehrlosen Boesswicht . . .* (Eger: Hans Burger), in Wick [Sammlung], F 22. 299–306. It is also reproduced in Asmussen, ‘Die Gewalt der Repräsentation’, Appendix to Chapter 4.

- 34 ‘Sie sprach zu jm behende/du treyloser man/woelstu mich allhie pfende und mein ehr berauben thon/ich hab ein frommem Vatter zu hand/der mich und dich hat erzogen/O weh der grossen Schand’ (*Ein warhaftig unnd doch Erbermlich Geschicht*, in Wick [Sammlung], F 22. 301–2).
- 35 Asmussen, ‘Die Gewalt der Repräsentation’, pp. 43–4; Gundula Wolter, *Die Verpackung des männlichen Geschlechts. Eine illustrierte Kulturgeschichte der Hose*, Marburg: Jonas, 1988, pp. 65–74.
- 36 For the below, see Asmussen, ‘Die Gewalt der Repräsentation’, pp. 47–52. The Pfeilschmidt broadsheet was originally located in Volume 13 (= F.24) of the Wick collection together with other documents that had previously constituted Heinrich Bullinger’s collection of wondrous events. Why the Moser broadsheet was included in Volume 14 (= F.25, events of 1576) is unclear.
- 37 ‘O Gott dein gnad nicht von uns wend. Damit uns Sathan nicht ereyl/Und fuehre uns in solche boese Spiel. Darumb jhr Eltern und Oberkeit/Straffe die Jungendt zuo rechten zeit. Ehe es kompt zuo solchem herzleid/Behuet uns Gott in Ewigkeit’ (Pfeilschmidt broadsheet).

3 Murder and *misericordia*

Reconstructing violent death and emotion in the Roman Campagna in the seventeenth century

Lisa Beaven

To work in the flat plains of the Roman Campagna (the countryside around Rome) in the seventeenth century was to risk your life. As early as 1593 Paolo Paruta wrote:

The countryside for thirty miles around the city is very fertile . . . but almost entirely uninhabited, and so to cultivate it and to make the harvest and the grape harvest, every year from various places, as far away as Lombardy, come approximately forty thousand workers, who, after the work is finished, return home with some earnings, those who remain alive; because always a large number remain there dead, either [as a result] of the unusual heat of the sun or due to the malign sea breezes.¹

To mortality resulting from heat or illness (primarily malaria) could be added the risk of a violent death. Banditry was rife, in spite of vigorous campaigns carried out by the popes, and many of those working the fields were subject to aggression at the hands of their overseers. In what follows I focus on the physical violence enacted on the bodies of marginal seasonal workers in the fields around Rome, both before and after their deaths and examine contemporary attitudes and responses to such acts. Two sources of evidence for physical violence in the plains of the Campagna were the edicts and bands issued by the civic and papal authorities of Rome, and the *Elenco dei Morti*, the List of the Dead, compiled by the Archconfraternity of S. Maria dell’Orazione e Morte.² Edicts and bands took the form of a public proclamation issued by the authorities in an attempt to regulate behaviour, while the *Elenco dei Morti* was a private list of the corpses retrieved by the Archconfraternity from the city and the countryside around Rome. When combined these sources provide an important insight into the interweaving of violence and disease during the period. They can also be used to explore the relationship between emotions and violence, in particular responses to the aftermath of violence and the more personal and conflicting range of feelings experienced by the members of the Archconfraternity as they journeyed through the Campagna

to collect the dead. Catholic attitudes to poor relief were complex, particularly the emotions associated with *misericordia*, which incorporates the love of God and the desire for salvation, as well as empathy for the suffering of the poor. The rituals enacted by the Archconfraternity around the burial of the bodies they had collected served to strengthen their emotional ties, providing comfort and support to each other in the execution of their grisly tasks.

Edicts and bands

The edict (*editto*) or band (*bando*) was a proclamation in the form of a street poster that attempted to impose control and order on all aspects of public life in the city of Rome and the surrounding countryside. While some of these were issued by the civic authorities of Rome, and others by papal representatives, in reality, as San Juan has shown, the two were interconnected.³ Most civic bodies were presided over by a papal appointee, and in some cases edicts displayed both civic and papal arms. Edicts and bands would be displayed in a range of locations, depending in part on content. Many contain within them the instruction that they should be published ‘in the usual locations’ of Rome, which certainly included the gates of the city.⁴ Leaving aside the issue of their effectiveness,⁵ which is open to question considering the regularity with which identical edicts were issued, they were one of the primary means by which the authorities communicated with the population of the city and the countryside. While the majority focused on the city of Rome, a significant minority of these were addressed to regulating behaviour in the Campagna.

The countryside around Rome formed a desolate, unhealthy and largely empty rural landscape, swampy in parts, known as the ‘*disabitato*’, or uninhabited zone. It consisted of very large landholdings owned by baronial families or ecclesiastical authorities.⁶ Almost all of these owners sublet the land, renting it to agricultural merchants for a set period, usually nine years.⁷ These merchants hired summer seasonal workers to work the fields and harvest the grain. The workers would arrive from other parts of Italy, including Abruzzo and the Marche, in groups of approximately 25 people controlled by a *caporale* or overseer who would be entirely responsible for feeding them and who would be their intermediary with the merchants.

The feudal nature of landownership in the country meant that judicial jurisdiction lay with the landowner, many of whom refused to recognize any papal legal authority for law enforcement on their territory. In spite of campaigns by such popes as Sixtus V to reduce the power of the baronial families in the country, in reality, papal actions, as Fosi has noted, ‘barely nibbled at this immunity’.⁸ The weakness of papal military resources meant that in practice the papal authorities had to rely on a system of bounties for the capture of criminals, the issuing of edicts, and a network of spies.

Sometimes a combination of these approaches was adopted. For example, one edict issued in 1647 by the Camera Apostolica banned the unlicensed

hunting of any type of animal – winged, aquatic or four-legged – in the territory of Conca,⁹ with the penalty of 25 scudi for each infringement and three lashes of the cord, to be given publicly. The identities of informers would be kept secret and they would receive half of the value of the fine. This edict specified where it was to be displayed: on the door of the farm-building of Conca near where the transgressions took place, so that ‘no-one could pretend ignorance [of having seen it].’¹⁰

Depopulation as the result of disease served to encourage illegal activities (particularly banditry) as it reduced the number of people who could resist bandits.¹¹ Only in those parts of the Campagna with stable permanent populations did landowners collaborate with authorities to take action against them. In 1622 the Marchese Mattei was sufficiently alarmed by groups of men armed with arquebuses¹² and hunting weapons traversing by day and night his territory of Maccarese to request help from the Governor of Rome, Monsignor Gipsio Berlingeri.¹³ Berlingeri issued an edict on 23 April 1622 that specified that it should be displayed on the church, palace and coastal tower of Maccarese.¹⁴ It ordered all those not employed on the *tenuta* of Maccarese to leave immediately, or face three lashes of the whip and exile from Rome and its territories. It also empowered soldiers and guardians of the *tenuta* of Maccarese to disarm any persons they found passing through. It was specifically aimed at ‘vagabonds’ who were criss-crossing this coastal region.¹⁵

Part of Maccarese was densely wooded, which made it an ideal environment for bandits (Figure 3.1). The size of these gangs of bandits could be considerable: graffiti on the wall of S. Rocco in the town of Arsoli elsewhere



Figure 3.1 Detail of Maccarese from Gio. Battista Cingolani dalla Pergola *Topografia Geometrica dell'Agro Romano . . . 1704*

Source: Reproduced with the permission of the British School at Rome Library

in the Campagna records the sack of the town for six hours in 1591 by 990 bandits led by one Marco de' Sciarra.¹⁶ The tower of Maccarese itself was testament to the fact that such armed bands were not a new phenomenon, and to the fact that they did not always travel by land: it was built as a defence against Saracen pirates, who in the sixteenth century still occasionally raided the coast for the purpose of capturing peasants to be sold as slaves.¹⁷

A number of edicts were designed to address violence directed towards seasonal workers in the Campagna who were ill and dying of malaria. The first such edict was issued by the civic authorities of Rome in the name of three of the Conservators of the Capitoline (Maffei, Iacovacci and Massimo) on 15 August 1651.¹⁸ The date clearly indicates that they were concerned about the treatment of summer seasonal workers. Subsequent edicts forbade the plundering of bodies left in the fields or beside the road and the burying of dead bodies without notifying the local priest. An edict issued on 1 February 1656 prohibited *caporali* from imprisoning their workers, and from leading pilgrims and those who came to Rome for devotional reasons into the countryside to work by force and by deceit.¹⁹ A decree from the S. Congregazione della Visita Apostolica (Holy Congregation of the Apostolic Visit) issued on 28 October 1660 denounced the situation discovered in the course of an apostolic visit by Marc Antonio Tomati to the districts of Porto and Ardea, where adolescents were recruited in Rome with violence and deceit for summer seasonal labour and held there against their will.²⁰ This decree instructed all proprietors in the district of Porto to allow their workers freedom of movement, and to employ only volunteers.

A more private glimpse into the intersection of disease and violence is given by Abate Ottavio Sacco. In 1626 he was deputized by Pope Urban VIII to be apostolic visitor of the hospitals of Rome and overseer of the conditions of the workers in the Campagna.²¹ Those who transgressed edicts and proclamations concerning the treatment of agricultural workers, the vast majority of whom were *caporali*, came before him.²² Sacco compiled a numbered list of the worst abuses he had witnessed in 16 years in this role.²³ In first place came casual murder, in which 'one finds the dead buried with a cord around their neck, and in other ways violated'.²⁴ In seventh place came the actions of *caporali* who 'keep the sick until their final breath, and leave them to die in the street like animals, without the sacred sacraments, and some are eaten by dogs'.²⁵

An edict issued by the papal government on 4 July 1722, also testifies to the desperate conditions endured by those who fell ill in the Campagna.²⁶ Asserting that Christian charity is exercised with more fervour where the need is greatest, and there is evident danger to the body and soul, as in the *disabitato* of Rome, the text describes the sick workers who are under the control of the *caporali* as being deprived of every help, both spiritual and corporeal, and 'almost in the arms of desperation'.²⁷ The edict also states that because the Pope sympathizes 'most piteously' or 'compassionately' in such cases, and wants as far as he is able to provide with his innermost feelings or his heart

his paternal charity,²⁸ he commands all the overseers employing workers and children not to abandon or mistreat them when they fall ill, but instead immediately to consign them to an inn or *casale* (farm building) where the owner can provide them with a bed, and to bring a priest to them, or transport them to hospital. It finishes by commanding innkeepers and landowners to affix the edict to their inns and farm buildings somewhere where it can be seen, as well as giving instructions for posting it in the city of Rome in the ‘usual places’ and on the gates of the city. The wording of this edict is unusual in its use of highly emotional language. The Pope not only sympathizes ‘most piteously’ but wants to provide paternal charity ‘viscerally’ (*con le viscere*).

The Compagnia dell’Orazione e Morte and *misericordia*

The care of the poor and sick in the countryside was often more forthcoming after death than in life, which is where the Archconfraternity of S. Maria dell’Orazione e Morte comes in. The Archconfraternity was founded in Rome in the 1550s with the express aim of burying the dead in the city and surrounding countryside.²⁹ According to their statutes, the Archconfraternity had been founded when members were moved by the ‘zeal of charity and piety’ to undertake works of *misericordia*, or mercy. Their primary aim was the salvation of the soul of the Archconfraternity member by means of acts of charity. The emotions associated with such charity were therefore complex, as they involved both the target of the act of charity and its donor. As Black argues, ‘salvation’ in relation to confraternities was the ‘salvation of both the donor and recipient and their inter-relationship’.³⁰ The chapter of the statutes of the Archconfraternity, entitled *Opere di Misericordia*, states that:

The works of Misericordia are the fruit of a prolific tree of charity, and particularly towards [our] neighbour (as the Lord says) because those truly are our neighbours who show mercy to one another. He who will have charity will show it in works of piety and mercy (*misericordia*) done for his neighbour for the love of God. We want the brothers and sisters of this archconfraternity to give abundantly of these fruits, being the fruits of eternal life, that with the works of mercy (*misericordia*) they may reach the kingdom of heaven.³¹

Misericordia is derived from the Latin word *misericors*, which is usually understood as corresponding to ‘merciful’ in English, and is a term associated with many early modern confraternities in Italy.³² John Florio’s 1611 Italian-English dictionary translates it as ‘mercy, pity, compassion’.³³ Scruton, drawing on the work of Ben-Ze’ev, distinguishes between compassion and pity by arguing that compassion is associated with situations where the subject is close to the object, while pity describes situations where the subject is distant from the object.³⁴ At the same time that confraternity members were helping others, they were also contributing to their own salvation, so their involvement

was both selfless and selfish, and the emotions they experienced were therefore more complicated than simply the feeling of pity for those less fortunate.

Furthermore, as Pullan has argued, charity in early modern Europe can be understood as an emotion, not simply an act. It is an emotion that could be defined as a form of love: ‘Kindness to fellow creatures became an expression or proof of love of God and affirmed the divine presence among men and women.’³⁵ Hence many preachers and writers argued that beggars, the homeless, and vagrants stood for Christ, and to neglect them was to reject God, so through their identification with the marginalized as Christ, confraternity members were in theory at least supposed to be motivated by compassion and love, as well as pity, and perhaps also fear or anxiety about their eternal soul. *Misericordia* was also closely connected to other Catholic ritual practices such as communion and confession and often had a penitential dimension. The range of emotions associated with the term *misericordia* therefore was far more complex and intense and grounded in the ritual practices of the time than can be conveyed by the English term ‘mercy’.

Misericordia was connected with the six acts of mercy that featured in the vision of the Last Judgment in the Gospel of St Matthew (25, 35–40): feeding

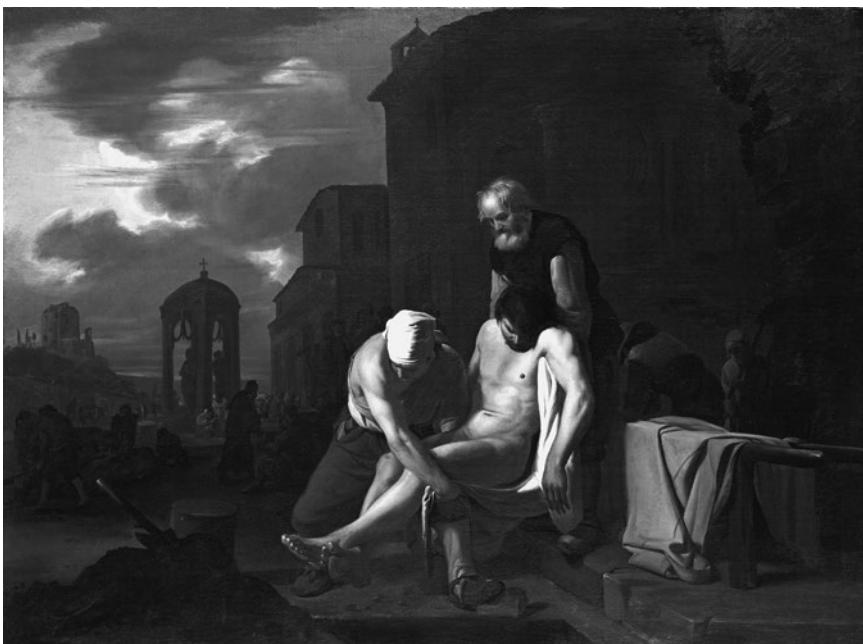


Figure 3.2 Michael Sweerts (1618 Brussels–Goa 1664), *Burying the Dead*, c.1650. Oil on canvas, 29–1/8 x 39 in. Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Connecticut

Source: The Ella Gallup Sumner and Mary Catlin Sumner Collection Fund, 1941.595

the hungry, clothing the naked, giving liquid to the thirsty, visiting the sick, looking after the stranger and visiting prisoners. In the medieval period a seventh was added: burying the dead, possibly inspired by the Book of Tobit, which begins with Tobit's father burying the dead in the face of official persecution. Michael Sweert's painting, *Burying the Dead* (Figure 3.2), from his cycle of the *Seven Acts of Mercy*, vividly illustrates the goal of such confraternities, which was to bury the dead with dignity. The older man and his younger assistant gently lower the naked body of a man into his grave, which they have just dug, the pile of fresh earth and the spade visible on the left. All Christians had to prepare for death by performing these acts, which would become their defence against going to hell; only by saving the soul of those assisted could they in turn be saved. Catholic seventeenth-century writers added a new twist to the idea of *misericordia* by ascribing the Sack of Rome in 1527 by imperial troops to divine retribution for the failure of the Roman people to care for the poor, the sick and the dead. They attributed the subsequent rapid growth of confraternities to a spiritual re-birth that followed that traumatic event.³⁶

The Elenco dei Morti

The *Elenco dei Morti*, or list of the dead, tells us who was dying in the Campagna during the seventeenth century and how they died. It was compiled for the Archconfraternity by F. De Rossi and identifies where possible the individuals concerned, their age, occupation, and cause of death. If the body could not be identified, sometimes it was displayed in a public place in the hope someone might come forward to recognize it.³⁷ Although this strategy was sometimes successful, many of those collected from the fields or streets of the country remained anonymous. The list explicitly distinguishes between natural deaths, described as having occurred *naturalmente* (naturally) or *improvisamente* (suddenly) and violent deaths, such as murder, where the individual is described as having been killed (*ucciso*).³⁸

Of the violent deaths few are explained in any detail. One unidentified older summer seasonal worker, a reaper, is described as having been killed by a blow from a cudgel or a staff on the landholding of Casal Vittoria on the road to Tivoli.³⁹ Another unidentified man is described as being killed in the same way in the public street past the landholding of Acqua Traversa on 29 January 1628.⁴⁰ Another, known only as Ruggiero, was killed by an arquebus, in a vineyard in the fields of Acquacetosa near Ponte Milvio.⁴¹ Some had been beheaded, such as Domenico Lamberti of Cascia, whose nicknames were 'The Red', and 'The Governer', and whose headless body was collected on the last day of 1646 from the landholding of S. Andrea near the Osteria della Storta.⁴² A significant number were found still alive but in the last stages of malarial illness, and are described as '*gravemente malato*' or '*moribondo*'.

Often the process of collecting a body created a moral dilemma for the Archconfraternity. On 21 October 1619 the Company ventured out to Tor di

Quinto to recover a body, only to discover that the man had hanged himself, and as a result they could not touch the corpse, as a suicide ‘cannot have a religious burial’.⁴³ On another occasion they were informed of an unburied body, but upon arrival at the location that they were given they found a naked man, very much alive and hostile, who resisted all attempts to touch him. After some time trying to coax him into coming with them in a most affectionate way, they left him alone, realizing he was mad.⁴⁴

A number of bodies, both natural deaths and murder victims proved to have been violated or tampered with. An entry from 6 February 1593 reads:

Dead in the countryside a poor unknown [man], approximately 2 miglia outside of Porta S. Pancrazio, and when the Company reached that place where it had been indicated that they could find the body, they realized that he had been stripped naked, and then buried in a corner of an alley, nor could one discover who had done such a thing.⁴⁵

He was dug up by the members, and then carried to the cemetery of S. Maria in Trastevere. This anecdotal experience accords with the official edicts banning the casual burying of bodies by the side of the road and the plundering of bodies.

The work of the Archconfraternity and the emotions

If we understand emotion as a kind of practice, ‘emerging from bodily dispositions conditioned by a social context, which always has cultural and historical specificity’, as Monique Scheer defines it,⁴⁶ then how can we begin to approach the emotions that might have been engendered in the members of this Archconfraternity in the course of performing their duty? When an unburied body was reported to them they would gather outside the church, dressed in their black habits,⁴⁷ tied with a black cord and the insignia of the Archconfraternity sewn on their chests. This insignia consisted of a skull, a cross and two hour-glasses, all placed on top of three mounds. A variation of this insignia can still be seen today at the entrance to the crypt of the church of S. Maria dell’Orazione e morte (Figure 3.3). With a priest or chaplain, a cross and a stretcher they set off, hooded in order to remain anonymous.⁴⁸ These hoods could be removed once outside the city limits.⁴⁹ As several contemporaries noted, they ventured out in all seasons, all weathers and at all hours to collect bodies, sometimes walking for 15 or 20 kilometres or more.⁵⁰ There is no doubt that these expeditions were underpinned by profound piety, but what emotions other than those connected to their religious zeal might the members have experienced on these arduous expeditions? Pompilio Totti in his guidebook to Rome, *Ritratto di Roma Moderna*, of 1638, describes their task as one consisting of ‘great effort and much melancholy’.⁵¹

This melancholy might not unreasonably have been mixed with fear. Many of the bodies they set out to recover were victims of malaria and several



Figure 3.3 Photograph of the entrance to the crypt of S. Maria dell'Orazione e Morte, Rome

Source: Author

members of the Archconfraternity died suddenly while in the Campagna. On 29 January 1624 Stefano di Attilio died unexpectedly in a farm building on a vineyard near Acquacetosa,⁵² and on 30 January 1629 Silvestro Schiara died unexpectedly in a hut in the landholding of Torre in Pietra.⁵³ These two deaths were probably malarial deaths, and members of the Archconfraternity would have been aware that it was unsafe to venture into the Campagna during the summer months, particularly after sunset.

What about the more visceral issue of handling, touching and carrying decomposing or partly dismembered bodies? Did increased exposure mean that members grew more hardened to the sight of corpses than most of us are today? The *Elenco dei Morti* suggests that it was not uncommon to stumble across the dead and the dying in the Campagna, and certainly in the years 1647 and 1648 it was also not uncommon to see dead bodies on the streets of Rome. Serra publishes an interesting extract from the statutes of the confraternity of

S. Girolamo della Carità which suggests that increased exposure to dead bodies did not translate to people becoming more inured to the sight. The statute states that ‘seen by everyone on the public streets of the city are the corpses of the dead, not without the great horror, and disgust of those who pass by’.⁵⁴ The word used here is *stomachagine*, which could perhaps be translated as ‘nausea’. It is reasonable to assume from this statement that members would have experienced some measure of horror and disgust in the course of retrieving bodies, particularly when many had been lying in the fields for days, or weeks, and some had been partially eaten by animals. How did members feel when in December 1634 they were faced with the task of collecting the body of an 18-year-old boy who had been buried for some time in the middle of open country on the landholding of Spinaceto near the *casale detto di mezzo camino* (farmhouse called ‘in the middle of the way’) on the road to Ostia, but which had been dug up by animals so that when found he was almost entirely eaten except for the face, two hands, a foot and all of the bones?⁵⁵ To what extent did disgust, distaste or even horror negate positive feelings of mercy and compassion? And if so to what extent were these negative emotions able to be channelled into a genuine penitential religious experience?

Santing highlights an episode described by De Rossi that occurred in the middle of summer, on 18 July 1595. An unidentified peasant, killed on the *tenuta* of Caffarella, three miles (*miglia*) outside Porta Latina, was so broken and putrid that it was deemed impossible to transport him, and he was instead buried in a ditch on the landholding.⁵⁶ Santing suggests that in this case it was disgust that prompted the party to tip the body into a ditch, in direct contradiction of their mission to bury the poor on consecrated ground.⁵⁷ On another occasion on 18 June 1645, following their return to Rome with a dead body, the Archconfraternity found a gravely ill field worker by the name of Lorenzo Celati di Cerchi and carried him to the hospital of the Fraterebenefratelli. Those inside refused to open the door, so they left the dying man on the doorstep.⁵⁸ Is this a sign of a lack of compassion on the part of the Archconfraternity, or simply an indication that we need to be wary of interpreting the association between emotion and morality experienced by the Archconfraternity in contemporary terms?

Rituals and religious practices such as prayer, the *Quarant'ore* (40 hours’ devotion), confession and processions structured the daily life of the Archconfraternity. These were important in containing, controlling and directing the intensity of the emotions felt by members in the course of their activities. These practices correspond to ‘emotional practices’ as defined by Sheer: ‘habits, rituals and everyday pastimes that aid us in achieving a certain emotional state’.⁵⁹ How these rituals bound members together and created a structured environment in which to operate is glimpsed in the example of four abandoned babies discovered by the Company on 9 September 1618. This is the only expedition made by the Archconfraternity into the country that is mentioned by Gigli in his chronicle of Roman daily life, the *Diario di Roma*.⁶⁰ Approaching a little chapel at the *casale* of Prima Porta to collect a

body at three hours before dawn they heard the sound of crying. Taking their torches, they followed the sound behind the chapel. There they found on the bare earth four half-naked babies who had been abandoned. They were so cold that they were more dead than alive. Around the necks of the three male children were labels with their names. The fourth, a girl, had no name. In a literal enactment of some of the biblical acts of mercy, the members of the Archconfraternity took the children to the Osteria (inn) of Prima Porta where they removed what little clothing they had and dressed them more warmly before taking them to the hospital of S. Spirito.⁶¹ When these children died one by one over the course of the following months, each was accompanied to their burial place by large numbers of members of the Archconfraternity. One called Silvestro was taken in procession to S. Spirito in Sassia by 80 brothers, who then, still in procession, accompanied the body with torches to the confraternity's church of S. Maria dell'Orazione e Morte, where he was buried. The small personal tragedy of these abandoned children was thus transformed into a public spectacle by means of a funerary procession. The tradition for the Archconfraternity was to sing the office of the dead and religious psalms on their knees around each recovered body and to bury it with 'much devotion and piety'.⁶² When the second child, Silvestro's brother Carlo, died the members of the Archconfraternity repeated these actions in a spectacle described as a 'beautiful honour with the intervention of many brothers'.⁶³ In this way the rituals associated with the burial would have been a way for members of the confraternity to collectively achieve a certain emotional state, which would have helped them to manage the 'melancholy' associated with their tasks. The intensity and frequency of the rituals would have amplified and renewed these shared emotions. In this way religious ritual aligned the individual to the community and protected members from the rawness of the emotions generated by their confrontation with the grim reality of the bodies they collected.

Notes

- 1 P. Paruta, 'Relazione di Roma', in *Tesoro Politico*, Cologne: Accademia Italiana, 1593, p. 19: 'Il paese intorno trenta miglia della città è fertilissimo . . . ma è quasi del tutto disabitato, onde per coltivarlo e per fare il raccolto e la vendemmia, vanno ogni anno da diverse parti, fin di Lombardia, intorno a quaranta mila lavoranti, i quali, finita l'opera, ritornano con qualche guadagno a casa, chi resta vivo: perciò che sempre ne rimane una gran parte di loro estinta, o per l'insolito calor del sole o per la malignità de' venti marini.'
- 2 F. de Rossi, *Elenco dei morti di campagna associati dalla Venerabile Arciconfraternita di Santa Maria dell'Orazione e Morte di Roma nelle Campagne del territorio Romano dell'anno 1552 a tutto il 31 Decembre 1699*, Biblioteca Casanatense, Ms 4978.
- 3 R.M. San Juan, *Rome: A City Out of Print*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001, pp. 9–10.
- 4 *Editti e Bandi*, Biblioteca Casanatense, Rome, (Per. Est 18), 6, p. 111. See, for example, the *bando* entitled 'Bando di taglia, & impunità' issued on 1 June 1635 by Giovanni Battista Spada, the governor of Rome, which sought to identify and

- bring to justice the murderers of a unknown man found in the Tiber with a wound to his neck. This *bando* was also concerned with attempting to identify the victim, even to the extent of minutely describing his clothing. The relevant part of the *bando* reads ‘Et acciò nessuno possa scusarsi sotto pretesto d’ignoranza vuole Sua Signoria Illustrissima che il presente bando affisso, & pubblicato nelli soliti luoghi di Roma habbia forza, & vigore, come se fosse stato pubblicato in ciascheduno luogo del distretto.’⁵
- 5 In fact San Juan suggests that the daily contact with the *bando* created an antagonistic relationship with authority on the part of the population of Rome and ‘frequently led to direct confrontation with the legal system’. San Juan, *Rome*, p. 26.
- 6 See G. Rossi, *L’Agro di Roma tra ‘500 e ‘800. Condizioni di vita e lavoro*, Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1985, and V. Franchini, ‘Terra e Lavoratori della terra nello Stato Pontificio del Secolo XVIII’, *Archivio della Società Romana di Storia Patria* 77, 1954, 15–26.
- 7 See J. Coste, ‘Missioni nell’Agro Romano nella primavera del 1703’, *Ricerche per la Storia Religiosa a Roma* 2, 1978, p. 169; R. Ago, ‘Braccianti, Contadini e Grandi Proprietari in un villaggio Laziale nel primo Settecento’, *Quaderni Storici* 16, 1981, p. 61.
- 8 I. Fosi, ‘Justice and its Image: Political Propaganda and Judicial Reality in the Pontificate of Sixtus V’, *Sixteenth Century Journal* 24, 1, 1993, p. 92. See also L. Devoti (ed.), *Insorgenza e Brigantaggio nel Lazio dal XVI al XX Secolo*, Rome: Lunario Romano 29, 2001.
- 9 Conca was one of the largest landholdings in the Campagna, consisting of 3214 *rubbia* which incorporated the territories of Cisterna and Nettuno.
- 10 *Editti e Bandi*, Biblioteca Casanatense, Rome, (Per. Est 18), 6, p. 139: Entitled ‘Contro li Cacciatori, Ucellatori, & Pescatori nella Tenuta, & Casale di Conca, spettante al S. Offitio’, the relevant part reads: ‘vogliamo, che una copia del presente Editto, affissa alla porta del detto Casale di Conca, habbia forza di publicatione, e che nessuno possa pretendere ignoranza’.
- 11 For banditry in the Roman Campagna see I. Polverini Fosi, *La società violenta: Il banditismo nello Stato pontificio nella seconda metà del Cinquecento*, Rome: Edizioni dell’Ateneo, 1985.
- 12 An arquebus was a type of muzzle-loaded firearm commonly used from the sixteenth to the end of the seventeenth century.
- 13 In spite of being swampy in parts and therefore unhealthy, Maccarese had a larger fixed population than most *casali* in the Campagna, as it included a *prococio*, which was devoted to the raising of large beasts, such as cattle, horses, and water buffalo. Rossi estimates that the salaried employees (not including the casual or seasonal workers) of the land-holding numbered approximately 65, with eight or so in the most responsible positions. See G. Rossi, ‘Nobiltà Romana e proprietà Fondiaria: La Tenuta di Maccarese dei Rospigliosi’, *Archivio della Società Romana di Storia Patria* 126, 2003, p. 203.
- 14 C. de Cupis, *La Caccia nella Campagna Romana secondo la storia e i documenti*, Rome: Nardeccchia, 1922, p. 105.
- 15 The edict implies that these were bandits, pretending to be hunters.
- 16 A. Crielesi, ‘Cerreto 1592: I briganti di Marco Sciarra e l’episodio della Jatta (Gatta)’, in L. Devoti (ed.), *Insorgenza e Brigantaggio nel Lazio dal XVI al XX Secolo*, Rome: Lunario Romano 29, 2001, p. 84.
- 17 C. De Cupis, *La Caccia*, p. 107. Remarkably a group of 26 Turkish pirates was captured near the tower of Maccarese as late as 1748 (See Carlo Pietrangeli’s foreword in G.M. De Rossi, *Torri costiere del Lazio*, Rome: De Luca, 1971, p. 7).

- 18 *Editti e Bandi*, Biblioteca Casanatense, Rome (Per. Est 18), 7, p. 357.
- 19 Rossi, *L'Agro di Roma*, p. 16. The *caporali* were instructed not to ‘condurre in Campagna a lavorare, con la forza e con l’inganno, i pellegrini e quelli che vengono a Roma per devozione’.
- 20 Rossi, *L'Agro di Roma*, p. 18. Tomati was so shocked by what he found that he wanted to ex-communicate the entire diocese of Porto (Rossi, *L'Agro di Roma*, pp. 37–9). Rossi notes that among those accused by Tomati of press-ganging and imprisoning people were religious institutions such as Santo Spirito, where ironically workers dying of malaria would be taken to be looked after (Rossi, *L'Agro di Roma*, p. 66).
- 21 For more on Sacco see N. Del Re, ‘L’abate Ottavio Sacco ed una singolare magistratura romana’, *Studi Romani* 3, 1955, 11–26. Sacco was so concerned by what he witnessed in the countryside that he created an Archconfraternity specifically to assist those who were poor and sick, the Archconfraternity of the Blessed Virgin ‘*de succursu pauperum infirmorum et miserabilium personarum missionum*’.
- 22 Rossi, *L'Agro di Roma*, p. 16.
- 23 This document, entitled ‘In 16 anni, che l’Abb. Sacco è stato deputato da N. S. per la campagna seguirno inconvenienti, e abusi in particolare in tutti li suddetti delli numeri’, from the archive of the *Ven. Archiconfraternità della Madonna Santissima del Soccorso* (in the Archivio Vicariato di Roma) was published by F. Ferrero, ‘La Conciencia moral en la Camiña Romana durante Los Siglos XVII Y XVIII’, *Spicilegium Historicum* 20, 1972, p. 132.
- 24 Ferrero, ‘La Conciencia moral’, p. 132: ‘Al primo, si trovorno morti sotterrati con funicella in gola, e d’altro modo violentato.’
- 25 Ferrero, ‘La Conciencia moral’, p. 132: ‘L’infermi li trattengono fin all’ultimo spirito, e licentiat morono per strada come bestie senza S.mi Sacramenti, et alcuni magiati da cani.’
- 26 Archivio Generale del Vicariato di Roma (AGVR), Bandimento ab anno 1721 usque ad annum 1729, ff. 42v–45, *Editto per la cura e condotta degl’operarii ammalati nella Campagna di Roma*.
- 27 AGVR, Bandimento ab anno 1721 usque ad annum 1729, ff. 42v–45, *Editto per la cura e condotta degl’operarii ammalati nella Campagna di Roma*: ‘Convenendo, che la carità christiana s’eserciti con più fervore, dove è maggiore il bisogno, et evidente pericolo del corpo, e dell’anima de nostri prossimi, e vedendosi frequentemente, che nel desabitato di questa Campagna di Roma gli operarii condotti alle facende di essa da caporali (che chiamano) vengono nelle malattie derelitti, con che restano privi d’ogni soccorso corporale, e spirituale, quasi in braccio alla disperazione.’
- 28 AGVR, Bandimento ab anno 1721 usque ad annum 1729, ff. 42v–45, *Editto per la cura e condotta degl’operarii ammalati nella Campagna di Roma*: ‘Perciò la Santità di Nostro Signore compatendo pietosamente un tal caso, e volendo per quanto si può, provedere con le viscere della sua paterna carità, per ordine espresso datoci a bocca.’
- 29 For the Archconfraternity of S. Maria dell’Orazione e Morte see A. Bevignani, ‘L’arciconfraternita di S. Maria dell’Orazione e Morte in Roma e le sue rappresentazioni sacre’, *Archivio della R. Società Romana di Storia Patria* 33, 1910, 5–176; M. Chiabò and L. Roberti, ‘L’arciconfraternita di S. Maria dell’Orazione e Morte. Inventario dell’archivio’, in L. Fiorani (ed.), *Storiografia e archivi delle confraternite romane. Ricerche per la storia religiosa di Roma*, Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1985, pp. 116–74; A. Serra, ‘L’Arciconfraternita di S. Maria dell’Orazione e Morte nella Roma del Cinquecento’, *Rivista di Storia della Chiesa in Italia* 1, 2007, 75–108; C. Santing, ‘Death and the City: The Human Corpse as

- an Embodiment of Public Wellbeing in Counter-reformation Rome', in P.A. Baker, H. Nijdam, K. van't Land (eds), *Medicine and Space: Body, Surroundings and Borders in Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, Nijmegen: Brill, 2007, pp. 197–223.
- Santing argues that the purpose of the Archconfraternity was to cleanse society of bodies: 'to obtain the highest quality for the public body, private bodies and especially the above indicated cadavers of individuals who were marginal for one reason or another, had to be disposed of in order to maintain a pure society' (p. 204). I think instead that the formation of the Archconfraternity was prompted by more practical considerations, in the form of the growing number of unburied bodies in the countryside, due to malaria worsening in the second half of the sixteenth century. Santing states that the small number of bodies collected in the early years of the confraternity negates this explanation, but not only was the Archconfraternity not the only institution collecting bodies, in the early years its activities were also curtailed by lack of funding and small numbers of members. For the confusion over the exact date the confraternity was founded, see Serra, 'L'Arciconfraternita di S. Maria dell'Orazione e Morte', pp. 77–8.
- 30 C. Black, *Italian Confraternities in the Sixteenth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 10.
- 31 Serra, 'L'Arciconfraternita di S. Maria dell'Orazione e Morte', quoting the statutes of the Confraternity written in 1590, pp. 83–4: 'Le Opere della Misericordia sono frutti dal fecondissimo arbore della carità, et particolarmente verso il prossimo: imperocché quelli veramente sono prossimi al prossimo (come dice il Signore) li quali usano la misericordia verso il suo Fratello. Chi haverà dunque la Carità lo mostrerà con l'opere di pietà, et misericordia fatte al prossimo per amor di Dio. Di questi frutti desideriamo che abbondino li Fratelli, et Sorelle di questa Archiconfraternita, essendo frutti di vita eterna, perchioché con l'opere di misericordia s'acquista il Regno del Cielo.'
- 32 The literature on confraternities is vast. For some of the major sources for confraternities in Italy see N. Terpstra (ed.), *The Politics of Ritual Kinship: Confraternities and Social Order in Early Modern Italy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000; B. Wisch and D. Cole Ash (eds), *Confraternities and the Visual arts in Renaissance Italy: Ritual, Spectacle and Image*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000; S. Pastore, A. Prosperi and N. Terpstra, *Brotherhoods and Boundaries: Fraternità e barriere*, Pisa: Edizione della Normale, 2011; C. Black, 'The Public Face of Post-Tridentine Confraternities', *Journal of Religious History* 28, 1, 2004, 87–101; N. Terpstra, A. Prosperi and S. Pastore (eds), *Faith's Boundaries: Laity and Clergy in Early Modern Confraternities*, Turnhout: Brepols, 2012. For Roman confraternities see C. Crescentini and A. Martini (eds), *Le confraternite romane. Arte Storia Comittenza*, Rome: Collana di storia e arte 1, 2000; Black, *Italian Confraternities*; L. Fiorani (ed.), *Le confraternite romane: esperienza religiosa, società, committenza artistica*, Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1984; L. Fiorani, 'L'esperienza religiosa nelle confraternite romane tra Cinque e Seicento', in *Le confraternite romane*, pp. 155–96; V. Paglia, *La morte confortata. Riti della paura e mentalità religiosa a Roma nell'età moderna*, Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1982.
- 33 John Florio's Italian/English Dictionary, 1611. Available at: www.pbm.com/~lindahl/florio/331.html.
- 34 A.P. Scruton, *Thinking through Feeling: God, Emotion and Possibility*, New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2011, p. 76. Again drawing on the ideas of Ben-Ze'ev she notes the close relationship between compassion and empathy. Compassion she defines as 'feeling with' while empathy as the 'imaginative reconstruction of another's feelings' (Scruton, *Thinking through Feeling*, p. 77).

- 35 B. Pullan, 'Catholics, Protestants and the Poor in Early Modern Europe', *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 35, 3, 2005, p. 442.
- 36 Serra, 'L'arciconfraternita di S. Maria dell'Orazione e Morte', p. 78–9.
- 37 For example, on the 16 December 1645 the members collected a victim of drowning from the river and displayed the body at the church of S. Anthonio Abbate, near S. Maria Maggiore where it was immediately recognized, De Rossi, *Elenco*, f. 228.
- 38 This strangely impersonal language of the *Elenco dei morti* is in contrast to the official language of the *bando* which more commonly refers to a violent death as a *delitto* or *homicidio*.
- 39 De Rossi, *Elenco*, f. 217, 8 July 1644: 'Morto in Campagna N.N. Incognito, di anni 65 circa, Mietitore, di grano, quale era stato ucciso a colpi di bastone, in una tempia in una stoppia grano, nella tenuta detta di Casal Vittorio, miglia 3 fuori di Porta S. Lorenzo, per la strada di Tivoli, e sepolto nella Chiesa Parrocchiale di S. Lorenzo fuori le mura.'
- 40 De Rossi, *Elenco*, f. 116, 29 January 1628: 'Morto in Campagna N.N. Incognito, ucciso a colpi di bastone sulla pubblica strada passato Acqua Traversa, miglia 4 fuori di Porta del Popolo, per la via corriera, e sepolto nella Chiesa della Morte.'
- 41 De Rossi, *Elenco*, f. 152, 21 February 1632: 'Morto in Campagna Ruggiero N. Ucciso con un'archibugiata dentro una vigna nei prati d'Acquacetosa verso il Ponte Milvio, miglia 2 fuori di Porta del Popolo, e sepolto nella Cappella di S. Andrea al Ponte Milvio sudetto.'
- 42 De Rossi, *Elenco*, f. 232v: 'Morto in Campagna Domenico Lamberti, di Cascia, detto il Rosso, e detto pure il Balio, ucciso nella Tenuta di S. Andrea, vicino alla Osteria della Storta, quale fu trovato senza la testa, miglia 8 fuori di Porta Angelica per la via corriera, e sepolto nella Chiesa della Morte.'
- 43 De Rossi, *Elenco*, f. 57: 'Dal Rev. Parroco di S. Maria del Popolo fu fatto sapere alla Compagnia della Morte, che da diverse persone gli era stato riferito come nella macchia di Tor di Quinto si trovava un Cadavere insepolti, per cui pregava la Compagnia di associarlo. Ricevuta appena tale notizia, si parti subito la Compagnia, e giunta nella suddetta Macchia, fu trovato il Cadevere di uno quale da se stesso si era impiccato, per cui non fu neppure toccato, giacchè questi morti non possono avere sepoltura Ecclesiastica. Si seppe dai Contadini dimoranti vicino alla selva, che già vi era stata la Ricognizione del Governo, ed aveva veduto ed informato – non si pote conoscere chi fosse.'
- 44 De Rossi, *Elenco*, f. 265, 26 September 1649: 'Dietro avviso ricevuto, si portò la Compagnia della Morte al Casale della Tenuta dell'Inviolata, miglia 10 fuori di Porta del Popolo, per associare il Cadavere di un povero Contadino morto naturalmente nel casale sudetto; pervenuta però in detto luogo fu trovato ancora in vita e stava nudo affatto. Si tentò dai Fratelli colle maniere le più affettuose di persuaderlo a venire in Roma all'Ospedale onde curarsi, ma non volle lasciarsi mai toccare. In fine si conobbe benissimo che era mentecatto, e si lasciò stare.'
- 45 De Rossi, *Elenco*, f. 34, 6 February 1593: 'Morto in Campagna un povero incognito, miglia 2 circa fuori di Porta S. Pangrazio, e quando la Compagnia giunse al luogo ove gli era stato indicato trovarsi il Cadavere, conobbe che era stato spogliato ignudo, e quindi sotterrato in un cantone di un vicolo, nè si pote sapere chi avesse operato una simil cosa. Fu dai Fratelli scavato, e quindi portato a seppellire nel Cemeterio di S. Maria in Trastevere.'
- 46 M. Scheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?', *History and Theory* 51, 2012, p. 193.
- 47 Serra, 'L'arciconfraternita di S. Maria dell'Orazione e Morte', p. 91. Santing notes that in the early days of the Archconfraternity, when they lacked funds, these habits were often much patched and mended, and even sometimes borrowed from other confraternities (Santing, 'Death and the City', p. 217).

- 48 For Serra the hoods were worn for reasons of anonymity and to prevent the ostentation of individual acts of charity (Serra, ‘L’arciconfraternita di S. Maria dell’Orazione e Morte’, p. 91), while Santing interprets them as reinforcing humility (Santing, ‘Death and the City’, p. 218).
- 49 Santing drawing on the statutes claims the members had to remain hooded, and were only given permission to remove the hood in conditions of extreme heat, whereas Serra states that they could remove these once outside the city. See Santing ‘Death and the City’, p. 218 and Serra, ‘L’arciconfraternita di S. Maria dell’Orazione e Morte’, p. 91.
- 50 See for example C. Fanucci, *Trattato di tutte l’opere pie dell’alma città di Roma*, Rome, 1601, p. 274: ‘quello che fa più stupire è che vanno non solo dentro alle mura della Città, ma ancora fuora per grande spatio al caldo, al gelo, alla pioggia, & a i venti, per le vigne, & campi’.
- 51 Totti, *Ritratto*, p. 194, ‘Perche dunque l’andare cercando i corpi de’ morti è una gran fatica, e di molta melanconia . . .’
- 52 De Rossi, *Elenco*, f. 86v, 29 January 1624: ‘Morto in Campagna Stefano di Attilio, Nostro Fratello, improvvisamente in un casale di una vigna, miglio uno circa fuori di Porta Salaria, e sepolto nella Chiesa della Morte.’
- 53 De Rossi, *Elenco*, f. 121, 30 January 1629: ‘Morto in Campagna Silvestro Schiara nostro fratello, improvvisamente in una capanna nella tenuta di Torre in Pietra, nel Quarto detto La Leprignana, miglia 18 fuori di Porta Cavalleggeri, per la via di Civitavecchia, e sepolto nella chiesa di S. Pietro in Montorio.’
- 54 Serra, ‘L’arciconfraternita di S. Maria dell’Orazione e Morte’, p. 86, n. 60: ‘Veggendosi da per tutto per le vie pubbliche della Città gli cadaveri de morti non senza molto horrore, et stomachagine di quegli, che passavano.’
- 55 De Rossi, *Elenco*, f. 164, 26 December 1634: ‘Morto in Campagna N.N. Incognito, di anni 18 circa, annegato nel Tevere nella tenuta di Spinaceto, presso il Casale detto di mezzo camino, miglia 7 fuori di Porta S. Paolo, per la strada d’Ostia, il quale già da qualche tempo era stato sotterrato in mezzo alla Campagna nella detta tenuta di Spinaceto, vicino alla riva del fiume, ma gli animali l’avevano riscavato, e quasi tutto divorato; restandogli solo il viso, due mani, un piede, e tutta l’ossatura, meno che uno stinco. Fu portato a seppellire nella Basilica di S. Paolo fuori le mura.’
- 56 De Rossi, *Elenco*, f. 38r, 18 July 1595: ‘Morto in Campagna N.N. Incognito, povero Contadino, ucciso nella Tenuta della Caffarella, miglia 3 fuori di Porta Latina, e siccome era talmente fradiccio e putrefatto che non si pote trasportare, così fu fatta una fosse nella detta tenuta, ed ivi fu sepolto.’
- 57 Santing, ‘Death and the City’, p. 219: ‘The brothers decided to simply dig a hole and shovel the odorous lump into it. Officially this procedure was followed because it could not be established with certainty that the deceased had followed the Christian faith, but one can guess that the carriers might also have judged their task too revolting.’ De Rossi does not make any mention in his entry that it could not be established with certainty whether the deceased was Christian, but rather states only that the body was so broken and putrid (‘talmente fradiccio e putrefatto’) it could not be moved.
- 58 De Rossi, *Elenco*, f. 225v, 18 June 1645: ‘Nel tornare verso Roma fu rinvenuto nel Casale della Tenuta detta di Casetta Mattei un povero Campagnolo di nome Lorenzo Celati di Cerchi, di anni 22 circa, il quale stava gravemente malato. Fu portanto preso dai Fratelli, e condotto a Roma si portò all’Ospedale dai Frate-bene-Fratelli, ma quei R. R. Padri non vollero in alcuno conto aprire la porta per quanto si diceva; finalmente fu fatta una protesta, e fu lasciato il povero malato sulla siglia della porta.’
- 59 Scheer, ‘Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?’, p. 209.

- 60 G. Gigli, *Diario di Roma*, vol. 1, ed. M. Barberito, Rome: Editore Colombo, 1994, p. 64: ‘A di 7 di Settembre la Compagnia della Morte andò per sepellire un morto, et nell’istesso tempo liberò dalla morte cinque vivi, il che fu in questo modo. Era morto un Poverhomo per un trave, che li era caduto adosso assai lontano for della Porta del Popolo: andò la detta Compagnia, come è suo solito, per dargli sepoltura, nel tornare sentirono assai da lontano alcuni vagiti come di bambini, che piangessero, et cercando, trovorno in un Prato esposte igniude quattro creature, tre maschi, et una femina, ciascuno de’ quali haveva con un laccio legata al collo una carta, dove era scritto il nome . . .’ Gigli incorrectly reports that five babies were found.
- 61 De Rossi, *Elenco*, f. 51r, 9 September 1618: ‘Morto in campagna Giovanni N. putto quale si era ucciso da se stesso per disgrazia con una stanga di un’ argano nell’Osteria di Prima Porta, miglia 8 fuori di Porta del Popolo, per la via di Tor di Quinto, e sepolto nella Chiesa Parrocchiale di S. Maria del Popolo.’
- Per l’associazione del sopradetto cadavere si partì la Compagnia della Morte alla mezza notte, e giunse al Casale di Prima Porta 3 ore avanti giorno. Nell’approssimarsi alla Cappelletta, ove era stato portato il Cadavere da associarsi, furono udite delle voci che pareano di creature che piangessero. Furono prese dai Fratelli delle torcie a vento, e s’incamarinarono dietro a quel pianto per vedere quello che era. Giunti al toraccio di Prima Porta viddero in mezzo alla campagna sopra la nuda terra quattro povere creature, mezzo nude, tre maschi ed una femina, quali erano state abbandonate in quel luogo con pericolo manifesto della vita, e per il gran freddo della notte erano più morte che vive. Si presero subito dai Fratelli con tutta la carità e furono portate all’Osteria di Prima Porta, e qui toltagli quei pochi stracci che avevano in dosso, furono scaldate, e poi rivestite alla meglio. Si trovo al collo di ciascuno un biglietto ove era scritto il nome di ciascuno, ed uno si chiamava Carlo, uno Silvestro, e l’altro Clementino, quale Clementino aveva anche un grosso di Paolo V tagliato per mezzo, e la femmina non aveva bigliettino, per cui fu battezzata in S. Spirito e mossogli nome Pulcheria. Portate in Roma dai stessi Fratelli furono posti a balia a spese di alcuni di loro.’
- 62 *Statuti della Venerabile Archiconfraternità della Morte, et Oratione. Prima approvati, poi confermati l’Anno 1590*, Rome: Paolo Blado, 1590, p. 84.
- 63 De Rossi, *Elenco*, f. 51v: ‘ed a questo ancora fu fatto un bellissimo onore coll’intervento di molti fratelli.’

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Part 2

Bodies and souls

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4 ‘Big mouth, big belly, fat pig!’

Tumults and troublemakers in the sixteenth-century Paris Hôtel-Dieu

Lisa Keane Elliott

In April 1505, after two decades of conflict between themselves and the nuns and monks, the Chapter of Paris formally relinquished their temporal governing responsibilities for the Paris Hôtel-Dieu to the *Parlement* of Paris, citing the ‘obstinate resistance and inveterate malice of the monks and nuns’.¹ On 2 May 1505, a parliamentary *arrêt* was issued establishing a board of eight secular governors to manage the Hôtel-Dieu.² Outright rioting by the Hôtel-Dieu’s religious staff, particularly its nuns, had erupted a few years earlier when the Chapter of Paris removed Jehan Lefèvre, the Hôtel-Dieu’s master, from his position in 1497 after a decade of failing to produce his accounts for auditing. Lefèvre was replaced by canon Jehan Aimery, and a lay treasurer, Laurent Laîne, was appointed to bring order to the Hôtel-Dieu’s finances. This move so outraged the Hôtel-Dieu’s nuns, who remained loyal to Lefèvre despite his alleged financial transgressions, that they refused to accept Aimery and Laîne’s authority, and actively thwarted attempts by their fellow nuns who sought Aimery’s spiritual administrations. When Aimery or canons from the Chapter of Paris tried to set foot in the Hôtel-Dieu they were chased from the premises by the nuns, who incited several *pauvres malades* and members of the lay staff to join the protest, with the nuns loudly proclaiming, ‘Scoundrels! Scoundrels! Lechers! Jews! You have on your premises great thieves [who] come here only to steal from the poor! One should strike you!’³ As for Laîne, he was so violently hounded by the nuns, who armed themselves with sticks and knives, and descended upon him in his chamber crying, ‘Judas, you are dead! You sold out the master! You have delivered us to false Jews! But you will die for it in this hour!’, that he was too frightened to leave his chambers. Twelve days later, he died from a fever his colleagues believed to have been brought on by these violent attacks.⁴

The events leading up to the May 1505 reform foreshadowed the problems that the new board of secular governors would encounter during the sixteenth century and beyond, but particularly within the first four decades of their governorship. Opposition to their reforms and proposed changes in the way the Hôtel-Dieu ran generally originated with the religious staff, in particular with the nuns and *filles blanches* (novices). The Paris Hôtel-Dieu’s nuns were the bedrock of the day-to-day running of the hospital,⁵ but they were excluded

from the consultation process on the reforms of their spiritual and working lives, which led to emotive and sometimes violent outbursts against the new governors and anyone who supported or acquiesced to their reforms. This study examines how the sense of powerlessness and alienation aroused emotional responses in the nuns and how these emotions manifested themselves. The sources being investigated indicate that reasoned argument was followed with public verbal protests and personal insults against the governors and those nuns and Hôtel-Dieu staff seen as ‘evil reformers’. The protests sometimes took a violent turn with some nuns erupting into physical attacks, again, against the governors, their fellow religious and other Hôtel-Dieu staff. Statements from the more moderate nuns indicate their distress at the actions of the troublemakers among their ranks and the verbal insults, and sometimes, physical attacks they were subjected to, not to mention the damage that they felt was being done to the reputation of Hôtel-Dieu.

Far from being unusual, recent studies would suggest that the nuns of the Paris Hôtel-Dieu, were merely acting in ways that their secular female contemporaries adopted to preserve and protect their reputation, and the economic security of their family unit. In her recent paper on women and gossip in early modern France, Suzannah Lipscomb demonstrates the spoken word being used against women, generally by other women, as a form of moral control, and that it was sometimes a woman’s only weapon in defence of herself, or to use against others who were deemed to be behaving outside the accepted moral and social norms.⁶ In addition, Julie Hardwick’s research on domestic violence has shown how ‘early modern women employed a repertoire of publicizing actions as a central part of their strategy to secure help’ from their neighbours given that they had little legal recourse. She argues that women had to publicly defend themselves as good women suffering a level of violence that had gone beyond the socially acceptable and bordered on ‘abusive’, rather than ‘corrective’.⁷ Thinking about the events occurring within the Paris Hôtel-Dieu with these studies in mind, it is interesting to see how the sometimes violent atmosphere, both declared and implied, resulted in nuns utilizing the same trope of ‘doing as good women do’ in their statements to the investigators and in their public appeals for assistance to those outside the Hôtel-Dieu. Like their secular counterparts, they fought against the gossip being used against them to deny them a voice within their own economic and domestic space, by broadcasting reports of their good work and concerns about the effects of the reform on their continued ability to provide for Paris’s sick and poor, to secure help from outside the Hôtel-Dieu against the male governors and, in the case of the troublemakers, to rein in their tumults and protests, which were seen as counterproductive to their efforts to dissuade the governors from the reforms being imposed upon their community.

The focus of this study is the investigation that took place within the Paris Hôtel-Dieu on 4–5 October 1535, and the subsequent discord that arose from this over the following two years. The documents under investigation are extant in Paris’s Archives Nationales and form part of the Hôtel-Dieu archives, the

main documents entitled, ‘Enquiry by the capitulary vicars on the state of the hospital; interrogation of the personnel and the sick; visit to the house, 4–15 October 1535’ and ‘Enquiry on the tumult of 6 November, 8–17 November 1537’, and the only surviving complete statement by a pauper, Jehan Souchet, a long-term resident of the Hôtel-Dieu, in which he outlined his thoughts when interviewed during the 1535 investigations.⁸ Using these documents, this essay will examine the emotional and, at times, violent relationship between the governors and religious staff, particularly the nuns, and between the nuns themselves, during the 1530s when the parliamentary mandate for statutory reform at the Paris Hôtel-Dieu was being investigated and imposed upon the religious staff without consultation with those who would be forced to live and work under them.

In addressing these questions, I look to the work of Peter and Carol Stearns for definitions of key terms and concepts within the field of the history of emotions, but particularly Barbara Rosenwein’s work on ‘emotional communities’.⁹ The world in which the Hôtel-Dieu’s nuns lived was not a typical cloistered religious community in that their vocation called them to actively participate in the secular world inside and outside the walls of the Hôtel-Dieu. They were a religious community, which meant they were subject to the regulations and statutes of their order, but the physical and sometimes intimate nature of their nursing work, which could take them outside the Hôtel-Dieu, was of great concern to their male religious and secular governors, who saw this as a threat to the moral and social fabric of the Hôtel-Dieu. However, the nuns argued that the governors’ reforms did not fit with the broader role of the nuns’ vocation and threatened not only their ability to care for Paris’s sick and poor, but also the economic security of the Hôtel-Dieu.¹⁰ As prioress Jehanne L’Asseline declared following the conflicts of the late fifteenth century, ‘the nuns’s [life] is not a contemplative life, but an active [one in which] . . . they are commanded to serve the poor, and also the bourgeois and those of the town, from which come the acquisitions and assets of the house’.¹¹ However, with the secular assumption of the financial and administrative control of the Paris Hôtel-Dieu, reform was inevitable. Indeed, the Hôtel-Dieu would become the test case for the Crown’s reforms of France’s charitable institutions in the 1540s and beyond, as discussed in Timothy McHugh’s 2007 study on hospital politics in France, Susan Broomhall’s recent work on poverty and charity in sixteenth-century France, as well as this author’s own research into the Paris Hôtel-Dieu in the sixteenth century.¹² However, as the largest charitable institution in France, the demands upon the Paris Hôtel-Dieu were unique and, as the nuns continued to argue throughout the century, they were sometimes forced to operate outside the confines of their religious statutes and the governors’ regulations in order to maintain the high level of care demanded by the great numbers of Paris’s sick and poor.¹³

When thinking about the emotive and sometimes physically violent reactions of the Hôtel-Dieu nuns during these contentious years of statutory reform, it is important to think of them as a distinct ‘emotional community’ whose

vocational, spiritual and domestic experiences created emotional and economic bonds, which were shaped within both the religious and secular spheres. Rosenwein defines as ‘emotional community’ as

precisely the same as social communities – families, neighborhoods, parliaments, guilds, monasteries, parish church memberships . . . what these communities (and the individuals within them) define and assess as valuable or harmful to them; the evaluations that they make about others’ emotions; the nature of the affective bonds between people that they recognize; and the modes of emotional expression that they expect, encourage, tolerate and deplore.¹⁴

Thinking about the nuns in this way, as a group who shared emotional practices, expressions and experiences, this study explores the emotional experience, or the emotional reactions, of the Hôtel-Dieu’s nuns to the reforms being imposed upon their community; that is, the changes being made to every aspect of their spiritual, personal and working community without consideration of or consultation with them. The 1535 investigations demonstrate that like their secular counterparts studied by Lipscomb and Hardwick, the nuns of the Paris Hôtel-Dieu sought to draw public attention to what was happening in the hospital with emotive language and, in some cases, violent physical demonstrations toward their religious and secular governors, and even their fellow sisters, that reflected their anger at their sense of powerlessness within their own ‘emotional community’. The sources demonstrate that, notwithstanding the more violent opposition of the troublemakers among them, the Hôtel-Dieu nuns were united in their concerns and protests against the measures being imposed upon them, and when their concerns were ignored, some arose in violent protest against the governors and their fellow nuns, they felt were ‘villainous reformers’; those whose lack of public outrage the troublemakers felt denoted acquiescence with the governors’ reforms.

Defending their position: doing as good nuns do

In March 1535, the Chapter of Paris reported to the governors about the urgent need for all-encompassing spiritual, administrative and financial reforms at the Hôtel-Dieu. The master Jehan Mailly, a canon of the Chapter of Paris and a doctor of theology, responded to the investigators’ question about whether the nuns ‘obeyed’ him, stating ‘that they do not do what they are commanded and go outside the house without his leave’.¹⁵ The Chapter recommended the governors begin with the removal of the master, the prioress and *sous-prioress* from their offices, which suggests they were thwarting the governors’ reform efforts.¹⁶ As a result of this report, Jean Bertoul, canon of Paris and doctor of theology, was appointed to lead a team of theologians, including the abbot of Saint Victor and the priest from Saint Lazare – parish churches in Paris – charged with the investigation and reformation of the Hôtel-Dieu’s statutes.¹⁷

On 4 October 1535, Canon Bertoul, along with Jerome de Marle and Robert le Lieur, governors of the Hôtel-Dieu since the early 1520s and deputized to represent the abbot of Saint Victor and the priest of Saint Lazare, began their investigations at the Hôtel-Dieu.¹⁸

Based on the nature of the responses, it seems apparent that the investigators were principally concerned with the conduct of the Hôtel-Dieu's female religious staff (the extant material does not contain the questions that were asked). In her study, Lipscomb demonstrates how gossip was used by women to enforce a moral standard upon other women in their community; however, within the Hôtel-Dieu, gossip appears to have been primarily utilized by the male religious and secular governors against the nuns, not so much as a form of moral control, but as a means by which to undermine the nuns' oppositions to the reforms and their reputation within the secular community.¹⁹ However, as their statements clearly indicate, the nuns felt that they were unjustly accused, and many attempted to portray themselves and their community, with reasoned statements of the facts as they had experienced it, as good nuns doing the best they could with what they had. The blame for poor conditions within the Paris Hôtel-Dieu, they insinuated, or in some cases stated outright, lay elsewhere.

Sister Françoise Cullote defended her unorthodox employment of an 18-year-old boy to assist her on the maternity ward (*salle des accouchées*) with reason and fact. She explained that he swept the ward, helped to distribute meals and as meat was not always on the menu, with '10 *sous* from the *poullerie* . . . [he would] buy cheeses, pears, raisins for distributing to the poor' from the market leaving Sister Cullote free to care for the women'.²⁰ With this statement, Sister Cullote not only justified her employment of her young male assistant as a benefit for the women on the maternity ward, but also demonstrated that it was he, not she, who went outside the Hôtel-Dieu to conduct marketplace transactions for the welfare of the *pauvres malades*.

Sister Jehanne le Cirete, who was in charge of the Hôtel-Dieu's laundries, defended her decision to allow the nuns to sing as they worked, which indicates complaints had been made about it. She argued that, 'sing[ing] songs [helped] to pass more easily the pains and woes' of their 'extremely taxing' duties. The Hôtel-Dieu laundry was on the ground floor and opened out to the Seine, which meant that the nuns could be seen, and heard, by the public.²¹ The investigation does not indicate who made the complaint about the singing nuns or Sister Françoise's young helper, but once again, the nuns had to justify to the male investigators the ways and means by which they undertook, as former governor, Jehan Henry wrote, their 'laborious and exhausting' duties.²²

Several nuns referred to economic problems within the Hôtel-Dieu that made it difficult for them to provide quality care for the *pauvres malades*. In response to what was obviously a question about the ill-treatment of the *pauvres malades*, the prioress, Perenelle la Tache, noted that the poor had not had any meat to eat since Easter: 'no sheep or beef, and at no point had they had veal, nor poultry.' She also reported that the wine was of poor quality and very

watery.²³ Sister Cecille criticized the governors for selling off the Hôtel-Dieu's grain stocks leaving the hospital vulnerable to shortages. 'It is not the custom', she said, 'to sell the grains of the hospital'.²⁴ By selling the Hôtel-Dieu's supplies, without due consideration to its daily needs, the governors' actions threatened its ability to provide for those dependent upon it. Sister Jehanne de Costes, the Hôtel-Dieu's *sous-prioress*, claimed that she had to approach her parents for money to purchase extra herring for the *pauvres malades*, and when she brought the matter to the attention of governor Jehan Briçonnet, he responded unsympathetically. 'When I am served herrings', he was reported to have said, 'I choose from amongst the smallest ones.'²⁵ Sister Costes also recounted an incident in which a poor man came to the Hôtel-Dieu seeking firewood so he could cook a small portion of food he had purchased for his sick wife, but the Hôtel-Dieu was so poorly equipped with this basic necessity that they had to send him away empty-handed. The poor man was reported to have walked away crying out: 'These great villains of the Hôtel-Dieu let the poor die of hunger!'²⁶

Through their rational statements of fact about their experience of daily life, the nuns above defended the way in which they conducted their duties by presenting their decisions as being, first, in the best interest of the poor and, second, maintaining the basic necessities of life for their community. There is not much hint within these statements of the emotional tumults already taking place within the Hôtel-Dieu, although the statement of Sister Costes in particular demonstrates an emotional connection to the Hôtel-Dieu and her role within it, and her concern about the clear lack of understanding and empathy demonstrated by the governors. These nuns had governing responsibilities over their fellow nuns and their statements indicate that they were responding to the investigators from a sense of equal standing, addressing the concerns presented to them with simple, clear statements of fact, as they had experienced it. As the new prioress, Claude Gurot, declared in 1537, following the implementation of the new statutes, although the nuns wished to 'obey God, the King, the Court . . . and the Chapter of Paris' in all things, they found it 'impossible that they had the power to observe *entirely* the new regulations with the labour [necessary for the care] of the poor of the Hôtel-Dieu' and that sometimes actions outside the statutes were 'necessary'.²⁷

Tumults and troublemakers: rebellion among the Hôtel-Dieu's nuns

For some nuns, however, the rational objections of their female governors were felt to be inadequate, and their sense of powerlessness within their own community sparked more emotive and violent opposition. Lipscomb has noted that the research of anthropologists Peter Wilson and F.G. Bailey has found that 'rather than being damaging to social unity, gossip can instead preserve a sense of community identity'. According to this interpretation, men would

enter into this female domain only when the gossip was perceived to be causing irreparable damage to reputations and, more importantly, threatened the future social and economic security of women and their families.²⁸ For the nuns of the Paris Hôtel-Dieu, gossip was something against which they were forced constantly to defend themselves; a position not made easy when the actions and behaviour of some of their order often gave credence to the scandalous rumours. In the 1498 mediation between the nuns and Chapter of Paris, the prioress countered rumours of licentious behaviour among the nuns claiming that the monks were rumour-mongering about the Hôtel-Dieu being ‘the biggest brothel in Paris’.²⁹ Such gossip would follow the Hôtel-Dieu nuns throughout the sixteenth century and in the 1535 investigation, the governors and secular staff alike used it to undermine the nuns’ authority and reputation in their battle to subdue their oppositions to the reforms. Some nuns tried hard to counter these accusations and demonstrate that their own behaviour was above reproach, however, the presence of pregnant nuns and novices among them would surely have undermined their position and cast doubt over their claims to be able to regulate and control themselves, let alone others.

When attempting to discipline unruly lay staff, Sister Marie Gilles complained that they merely laughed at and insulted her with sexual jibes:

The servants of the maison were in the basement, and singing, [and behaving] flagrantly, playing flutes and throwing glasses, in the evenings, after 10, so upsetting the *malades* and the nuns, and when they were asked to cease, . . . [they refused and called] the nuns bawds, strumpets and other insults.³⁰

Such gossip was not easily disputed or dispelled when faced with admissions from the monks of inappropriate conduct between themselves and their female counterparts. As well as the main premises located on the Île de la Cité by Notre-Dame Cathedral, the Hôtel-Dieu also controlled the premises of the Hôtel du Pressouer in Saint-Germain-des-Prés, from where its farming concerns were run. Both nuns and monks visited the Pressouer to manage operations, where they were removed from the direct authority of the master, the prioress and governors. As is clear from the 1535 investigations, this gave rise to gossip about what they got up to. In his statement, Father Claudius Paris admitted that ‘he had danced with the nuns at the Pressouer’, as did Brother Claude Stine, although he assured the investigators that they slept in separate lodgings.³¹ In the case of Paris and Stine, under examination they admitted to dancing with the nuns, but were clear that no other improprieties took place once the merriment was over. While such admissions may not have resulted in punishment for the monks (the sources do not indicate either way), for the nuns, such incidences were seen as tangible proof of the veracity of the gossip concerning the sexual licentiousness going on within the Hôtel-Dieu.

Other statements suggest a more sinister and possibly violent side to the alleged sexual improprieties occurring in the Hôtel-Dieu. Pierre the wine master

was the subject of several statements, all reporting on his repeated drunken escapades in which he and his occasional drinking companion, Guillaume, the Hôtel-Dieu's lay treasurer, wandered about drunkenly, singing loudly and sitting upon the beds of the *grieves malades* talking to them in 'crazy speech'.³² Pierre's drunken, violent tendencies were further confirmed by Sister Gilles who reported that not only did he drink the wine provided for the poor, but when she sent a servant to enquire about the stock levels, Pierre locked the servant in the cellar, where he was left shouting for his release for over half an hour.³³ Brother Jehan Clement and Sister Cacheleue also reported other incidences in which Pierre had locked young novices in his cellar. Such violent behaviour makes one wonder whether the 'two novices, one named la Tache and the other Perrete' that Clement reported seeing in Pierre's room, had gone there willingly. He described the scene as 'the said la Tache was laying on his bed with [Pierre] close to her'.³⁴ Given Pierre's aggressive behaviour and his blatant abuse of his office, could the scene Clement described have been a sexual assault?

It could be that sexual assaults against the nuns were behind Sister Cacheleue's violent attack upon 57-year-old porter Mahyet Chocquet. Chocquet did not state why Sister Cacheleue 'approached him one day, kicked him in the genitals and drew a knife against [him]', however the attack was clearly intended as a threat to his manhood.³⁵ Sister Cacheleue was clearly concerned about the reputation of the Hôtel-Dieu, expressing her frustration that 'there are many times when there are nuns who are with child, who are not being *rigorously* punished'.³⁶ Could Chocquet have failed in his duties and placed the nuns at risk of sexual assault through a less than vigilant approach to his responsibilities, or by abusing his position of trust and committing an assault himself? What we can surmise is that Sister Cacheleue, a religious woman effectively denied a voice within her own home and workplace, wanted to keep hidden the living proofs of sexual impropriety from the outside world and resorted to violent, 'rigorous' methods in order to protect the honour and moral reputation of her community when she felt proper regulation was not being maintained.

It would seem that when it came to a proposed statutory reform, not all of the Hôtel-Dieu's female religious were opposed to the idea. It was not just the sexual misconduct of some of the nuns within their community that concerned their fellow religious, but the general lack of decorum and poor attitudes among them. Sister Alis, who had been at the Hôtel-Dieu for 35 years, reported on the general disobedience and unruliness among her fellow nuns stating that: 'It is most necessary for the reform of the house, thus it seems to her that the sisters and novices be compelled to watch their language'.³⁷ The statements of *sous-prioreess* Sister Costes demonstrate her efforts to regulate the moral and social misconduct among the nuns. She was particularly bothered by the behavior of 24-year-old novice, Marie la Coque (or Marion), daughter of apothecary Pierre le Coq, who had been a novice at the Hôtel-Dieu for six years. Marie had been the subject of an investigation two years

prior in which she and two other novices, Catherine Chevesne (aged 21) and Ambroise Loyer (aged 23), were accused not only of talking with three young dyers in the *salle des accouchées*, but entertaining them in full view of the women on the ward, including spending the night together in the ward.³⁸ In her 1535 statement, Sister Costes specifically reported on Marie's continued misconduct and that any disciplinary attempts only led to Marie 'speak[ing] several insults, calling [me] big mouth, big belly, fat pig'.³⁹ She also stated that when other nuns, or even the master or prioress, attempted to discipline Marie, she refused to apologize for or rectify her behaviour and 'spoke several insults' against the master and prioress when they threatened to imprison her. Sister Costes's statement not only demonstrates the presence of troublemaking nuns and novices among the Hôtel-Dieu's female religious, but it also highlighted the lack of authority and control that the master and prioress had over some of them. Marie laughed in the faces of the master and prioress when they threatened her with punishment and Sister Alis's statement suggests that the language of insult and defiance Marie used was not uncommon.

Despite the apparent support by some of the Hôtel-Dieu's female religious for a tighter regulation over their order, the implementation of the statutory reforms in 1536 did not go smoothly.⁴⁰ Three parliamentary sources ordered visits to the Paris Hôtel-Dieu to investigate that the reforms were being observed by the nuns and monks, and punishments meted out to malefactors.⁴¹ The parliamentary *arrêts* of 1537 talk of an overall failure to observe the new regulations and on the night of 6 November 1537, the situation reached a violent climax and a 'tumult' broke out in the Paris Hôtel-Dieu. Brother Pierre Bernard, a vocal opponent of the statutory reforms, and his fellow anti-reformists caused such a disturbance among the religious staff that the Chapter of Paris was forced to imprison him. Master Nicolle François, priest and teacher of the Hôtel-Dieu's *enfants de coeur*, reported that Brother Bernard had insulted the master and other followers of the reforms, dismissing them as 'hypocrites and [offering] many other reproaches'.⁴² Sister Jehanne de Costes, by this time the prioress,⁴³ defended the master, Antoine de la Fontaine, as being 'a good man and good at his work' and that the fault for the 'disobedience and rebellion' was a direct result of the continued disobedience of Brother Bernard.⁴⁴

Brother Bernard's imprisonment angered many and during the evening in question, Sister Costes reported that

a large assembly of nuns and novices [gathered] and crying out loud, tumultuously and hoarsely . . . such language in effect . . . , 'The murderers! The torturers! The thieves!' . . . while speaking to the monks about the reformation and to the *officiers de justice* [who were] there present.⁴⁵

This statement suggests that the nuns felt that their objections to the reforms had not been heard by the governors and now, with their mouthpiece, Brother Bernard, effectively silenced, they were angered into outright rebellion against

the Chapter and governors, and expressing their outrage to the outside world via the *officiers des justice* brought in to quell the ‘tumult’. In attempting to correct what they clearly saw as an injustice, the nuns’ opposition to the reforms shifted from disobedience to an outright tumult of physical and verbal protest. The threat to their community and their powerlessness to do anything about it sparked a violent emotive response. Historian Gerd Althoff writes that history demonstrates many instances where the desire for justice sparked ‘extreme reaction and [public] emotion’ in those seeking to protect and secure their rights.⁴⁶ When Brother Bernard was imprisoned for his rebellion against the reforms, the nuns, in effect, had their (male) mouthpiece silenced. His imprisonment aroused their sense of injustice and they resorted to the only means they felt they had at their disposal, a violent and public protest.

The report on the ‘tumult’ describes the nuns descending into the basement of the Hôtel-Dieu where Brother Bernard was imprisoned, with Sister Catherine Chambaulde leading the way ‘in great clamour and insolence’, pulling along the master’s servant ‘by his arm’ to the prison doors demanding Bernard’s release. Upstairs, Sister Françoise Cullotte made ‘great abusive clamours and tumultuous injuries’ against the *officiers de justice* and others, compounding her unacceptable behaviour by doing so publicly in front of the *pauvres malades*. When Sister Costes attempted to rebuke her, Sister Cullotte shouted, ‘Big belly, big mouth, big snout who eats all the peaches!’ and ‘Leave me alone, let [me] pass big belly, big mouth, big snout, ugly, filth, you are so ugly!’⁴⁷ It seems that Marie la Coque’s earlier insults of Sister Costes had caught on. Marie and other rebels were reported by the prioress as being ‘very vehement and tumultuous in [their] clamours’.⁴⁸ The situation descended into nun versus nun in this particular tumult, with emotive language and physical violence being utilized by those now in passionate and open rebellion against the reforms, their emotional community fractured by those who felt that rational argument had failed them and their only recourse was physical and verbal violence against the governors and the ‘villain reformatresses’ among them.

It is Sister Chambaulde who appears most frequently in the report of the tumult. Many of her fellow female religious report being attacked and insulted by her. Novice Marguerite Vinaige claimed Sister Chambaulde grabbed her face between her hands, pulled her close to her own and proclaimed her to be a ‘fiend villain reformatress’. Sister Perrette reported being grabbed by the arms and denounced as a ‘great villain and fiend’!⁴⁹ Porter Daniel Dieuin claimed she attempted to ‘strike the face of Brother Jehan Bernard, a lay resident of the hospital and called him “traitor, fiend, novice” and many other insults and vulgar words’.⁵⁰ Dieuin did not indicate if Jehan Bernard had attempted to subdue or rebuke Sister Chambaulde, hence unwittingly inciting her attack, however, her reaction to a rebuke from a woman identified as her aunt, and whom Sister Chambaulde called a ‘Villain! Fiend! Reformatress!’, suggests he may have attempted to do so.

Sister Chambaulde’s violent reaction to the imprisonment of Brother Bernard may seem excessive, however, we must remember that for these nuns,

the Paris Hôtel-Dieu was the economic, spiritual and physical centre of their world. Their whole life revolved around the Hôtel-Dieu and, accordingly, they had a vested interest in the reforms being imposed upon their community. Sister Chambaulde's reply to her aunt's reproach of her behaviour demonstrated her deep and long-felt emotional connection to the Hôtel-Dieu: 'My aunt, it has been long time coming with me, but it is necessary that I remain despite the fiends, villains and monks.'⁵¹ Sister Chambaulde seems to have appointed herself as the female leader of the tumult against the reforms replacing the voice of the silenced Brother Bernard with her own vocal and physical dissent against the injustices she felt were being imposed upon her community.

As well as attacking their fellow religious, the anti-reformist nuns took their appeal to the outside world, with many reports of nuns hanging out of windows crying for passers-by to help them. As Hardwick's research has demonstrated, when the early modern woman was unable to resolve her domestic problems in private, she would take to the public sphere in an attempt to seek justice through neighbourly intervention.⁵² A Hôtel-Dieu porter claimed to have seen Sisters Agnes l'Ancellette and Ysabeau Peron issuing emotional appeals to the outside world, banging on the windows of the Saint Thomas chapel, 'crying out in loud voices, Help! Mercy!' prompting several passers-by to bang at the door and demand the porter, 'Open the doors!' Sister Jehanne Fourniere told investigators of novice Margueritte la Moynesse's continued 'great noise amongst the sick' and emotional appeals from the windows of the petit laundry for 'Aid! Assistance!', to people across the river. Novice Catherine Patine also appealed loudly to the people outside allegedly attempting to 'incite' them to 'break down the doors!'⁵³ In response to a bell sounding in the ward Saint-Denis (for the critically ill, or *navres*), Chaplain Anthoine du Four and other monks went to investigate and found assembled 'a rabble [of nuns] as if in readiness for battle' among 'the great number of *navres* [gravely ill]'. Sister Perpete allegedly came forward, grabbed the chaplain's arm causing him to drop his candle and the nuns began to cry out, 'What are these traitors doing here?'⁵⁴ Such behaviour in front of the Hôtel-Dieu's *pauvres malades* was considered highly inappropriate, as already discussed. It was the nun's religious duty to provide physical and spiritual succour for the *pauvres malades*, not subject them to such emotive and violent behaviour, even as witnesses. However, the pealing of bells, the public cries for aid and mercy, the demonstrations in front of the *pauvres malades*, were obviously, as Althoff has observed, extreme and emotive pleas by a group of disempowered women whose community was threatened with economic insecurity by reforms imposed upon it without consultation or consideration of the realities of their situation.

The documents examined do not indicate the extent of the outside world's involvement with the 6 November tumult, beyond that of the few who banged on the doors demanding for them to be opened. The consequence of the tumult was parliamentary enforcement of the statutory reforms and authorization for the Chapter of Paris and the Hôtel-Dieu master to enforce greater punitive and penal sentences on nuns and monks who continued in violent revolt against,

or failed to conform to, the reforms.⁵⁵ Tighter controls were ordered on the nuns' freedom to leave the Hôtel-Dieu, with permission from the master to be sought at all times, and after the violent and insulting language of the tumult, naturally there was a concern to repress the vulgar language of the streets that had seeped into the world of this essentially religious environment. The nuns may have attempted to employ the tactics used by their secular contemporaries, detailed in Lipscomb's and Hardwick's studies, in an attempt to restore the status quo within their 'domestic' space, however, it seems that for many, their sense of injustice fired their emotions, which overcame their reason, their actions becoming abusive and disruptive, and ultimately threatening the very economic and emotional security they were trying to protect. In effect, the 'abused' had become the 'abusers' and their violent and emotive tumults and troublemaking only confirmed to their male governors that tighter regulations were indeed to be imposed upon the Hôtel-Dieu's female religious.

Conclusion

Amy R. Leonard writes that while the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw a 'flowering of female spirituality', it was also a time of 'panic' about women's freedom and the control of women outside of the cloister or marriage, that is, outside of male control.⁵⁶ From as early as 1498, the male governors of the Paris Hôtel-Dieu had attempted to curtail the 'active life' of the nuns with little success. The documents examined here reveal a 1530s Hôtel-Dieu still beset by tumults and troublemaking nuns in increased verbal and physical opposition to statutory and administrative reforms being imposed upon their community. The reasoned objections from the Hôtel-Dieu's governing female religious to the governors' attempts to place constraints upon the ways they performed their duties for Paris's sick and poor, were deemed ineffective by some of their fellow nuns, who felt that their family unit, or emotional community, was threatened to such a point that they felt violent and emotional rebellion was their only recourse. The October 1535 investigation, and the subsequent reports by the Hôtel-Dieu's governing men on the continuing tumults, reveals the strength of the emotional bonds that the nuns had to each other, to the *pauvres malades* for whom they were responsible, and to the Hôtel-Dieu upon which they all depended for their livelihood, their well-being and the economic security of their community. Some chose to position themselves as good nuns, 'doing as good nuns do', acting in the best interests of the *pauvres malades* and the Hôtel-Dieu itself expressing their concerns with rational observations based on their long and personal experience within their small, but wide-reaching community. However, the emotional language and violent actions used by the troublemakers among them, in view of the 'corrective' and 'abusive' gauge discussed by Hardwick, definitely crossed the boundary into abusiveness. In a recent article commenting on a revolt at Manus Island where the Australian government detains asylum seekers, Australian QC Julian Burnside wrote:

[T]he passion which drove their initial hostility was the mark of people who were alienated from the community: they were accustomed to being ignored, so they fall to shouting abuse as a way of getting attention, just once to listen to them. And then they quickly fall back to observing the ordinary rules of civil behaviour.⁵⁷

This seems to perfectly capture what was happening at the Paris Hôtel-Dieu over 500 years earlier to another group of alienated and disempowered persons. Hardwick suggests that ‘the critical catalysts’ for violence within the domestic sphere were perceived threats to the political economy of the family.⁵⁸ If one recognizes that the Hôtel-Dieu nuns were effectively a family unit, like their female secular contemporaries, they were utilizing the tools of protest available to them, that of public verbal appeals and physical violence in order to preserve and protect their community within the Paris Hôtel-Dieu. As Sister Chambaulde declared to her aunt, she had no choice, ‘it is *necessary* that I remain *despite* the fiends, villains and monks’.

Notes

- 1 Ernest Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris au Moyen-Âge: Histoire et documents, histoire de L'Hôtel-Dieu (1316–1552)*, vol. 1, Paris: H. Champion, 1891, pp. 175–80; Jean Imbert, *Les Hôpitaux en droit canonique: du décret de Gratien à la sécularisation de l'administration de l'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris en 1505*, Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1947, pp. 283–4. Quote cited in Alexis Chevalier, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris et les Soeurs Augustines (650 à 1810)*, Paris: Chez H. Champion, 1901, p. 168.
- 2 Archives de l'Assistance Publique, Hôpitaux de Paris (AP-HP), Hôtel-Dieu, liasse 864, (côté 4111), *Arrêt du Parlement, portant nomination d'Administrateurs Laïcs Règlement pour l'administration du Temporel de l'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*. Du 2 Mai 1505.
- 3 Quoted in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 177: “Aux larrons! aux larrons! aux paillards! aux juifs! s'écriaient-ils, vous avez chez vous vos grosses paillards et ne venez ici que pour voler les pauvres! on vous devrait assommer!” (All translations in this chapter are my own.)
- 4 Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 177.
- 5 Jehan Henry, *Livre de Vie active de Hôtel-Dieu* in Marcel Candille, *Étude du Livre de Vie active de Hôtel-Dieu de Jehan de Henry (XVe siècle)*, Paris, 1961. See also Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, pp. 34–5, 82, 85, 92; Susan Broomhall, *Women's Medical Work in Early Modern France*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004, pp. 71–95.
- 6 Suzannah Lipscomb, ‘Crossing boundaries: Women’s Gossip, Insults and Violence in Sixteenth-century France’, *French History* 25, 4, 2011, 408–26.
- 7 Julie Hardwick, ‘Early Modern Perspectives on the Long History of Domestic Violence: The case of seventeenth-century France’, *The Journal of Modern History* 78, 1, 2006, pp. 10–11 and 19.
- 8 ‘Enquête des vicaires capitulaires sur l'état de l'hôpital; interrogatoire du personnel et des malades; visite de la maison, 4–15 octobre 1535’ and ‘Enquête sur le ‘tumulte’ du 6 novembre, 8–17 novembre 1537’ in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, pp. 353–64, 377–83; Jehan Souchet, pauper letter, Archives Nationales (AN), Série L 592, Hôtel-Dieu, n. 3 *quater*. The original sources examined in this paper

- have been extensively extracted in the 1891 study on the Paris Hôtel-Dieu by Coyecque and are the primary source for this study.
- 9 Peter N. Stearns with Carol Z. Stearns, ‘Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards’, *American Historical Review* 90, 4, 1985, 813–36; Barbara H. Rosenwein, ‘Thinking Historically about Medieval Emotions’, *History Compass* 8, 8, 2010, 828–42.
 - 10 Stearns and Stearns, ‘Emotionology’, pp. 813–14.
 - 11 Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 319: ‘Plaidoiries des parties dans l'affaire qui fait l'objet de l'arrêt du 4 avril suivant, 20 mars 1498.’: ‘... dit que les religieuses ne doivent estre de vie contemplative, mais active, comme Martha, car elles sont ordonnées pour servir les povres et aussi les bourgoys et ceux de la ville, dont vient l'acquest et les biens à la maison.’
 - 12 Timothy J. McHugh, *Hospital Politics in Seventeenth-Century France: The Crown, Urban Elites and the Poor*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007; Susan Broomhall, ‘Charitable Medicine: The Provision of Health Services in the Sixteenth-century Hôtel-Dieu de Paris’, in Witold Konstanty Pietrzak and Magdalena Kozluk (eds), *Le Cabinet du curieux: Culture, savoirs, religion de l'Antiquité à l'Ancien Régime*, Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2013, pp. 145–60; Susan Broomhall, ‘The Politics of Charitable Men: Governing Poverty in Sixteenth-century Paris’, in Anne Scott (ed.), *Experiences of Poverty in Late Medieval and Early Modern England and France*, Farmham: Ashgate, 2012, pp. 133–57; Lisa Keane Elliott, *From Pauvres to Malades: The Reformation of the Paris Hôtel-Dieu in the Sixteenth Century*, Ph.D. Thesis, The University of Western Australia, in progress.
 - 13 Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 75; Bronislaw Geremek, *The Margins of Society in Late Medieval Paris*, trans. Jean Birrell, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 66–93; Jean-Pierre Gutton, *La Société et les Pauvres en Europe, XVIe-XVIIIe siècles*, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1974, p. 106.
 - 14 Barbara H. Rosenwein, ‘Worrying about Emotions in History’, *American Historical Review* 107, 3, 2002, p. 842.
 - 15 ‘Enquête des vicaires’, in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 353: ‘... les religieux et religieuses lui ont obeï toujours, dit qu'il n'y a pas grant obedienece quant aux religieux et religieuses et que ils ne font pas ce que on leur commande, et vont hors la maison sans congé.’
 - 16 Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, pp. 350–3: ‘Rapport des chanoines, délégués au chapitre, concluant à l'urgence d'une réforme, notifiant le remplacement du maître, de la prieuse et de la sous-prieuse, et ordonnant aux frères et aux soeurs de remettre aux commissaires du Parlement ce qu'ils possèdent indûment, 5 mars 1535.’
 - 17 Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 396.
 - 18 AP-HP, Hôtel-Dieu, *Comptes*, 1530, Hôtel-Dieu, liasse 1452, no. 6599, f. 1r; Möring, *Collection de Documents pour servir à l'Histoire des Hôpitaux de Paris*, p. 173.
 - 19 Lipscomb, ‘Crossing Boundaries’, pp. 408–26.
 - 20 ‘Enquête des vicaires’, in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 357: ‘... et y a une petit garçon de XVIII ans ou environ qui ballaie la place ... Dit aussi ... bien dit que chacun semaine on lui baille de la poullerie dix sols, de quoi elle achete des frommages, des poires, raisins, pour distribuer aux pauvres.’
 - 21 ‘Enquête des vicaires’, in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 357: ‘Dit que on permet aucunes fois aux filles blanches de la lavanderie dire des chansons pour passer plus facilement les peines et douleurs qu'ils ont en hiver.’
 - 22 Henry, *Livre de Vie active de Hôtel-Dieu*.
 - 23 ‘Enquête des vicaires’, in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 356: ‘... dit que depuis Pasques ença, les pauvres n'ont eu que du mouton et du beuf et n'ont point

eu de veau ne de volaille . . . ; et aussi on ne adminstre la mesure de vin souffisante, et bien souvent trop plain de eau.'

- 24 'Enquête des vicaires', in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 359: 'Dit qu'on à vendu les bleds, qui eussent bien servi à l'advenir pour la maison, et que on n'a point coutume de vendre les bleds de la maison.'
- 25 'Enquête des vicaires', in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 357: ' . . . qui lui dist ces mots: "Quand on me presente à la table des harençs, je me prens au plus petit".'
- 26 'Enquête des vicaires', in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 357: ' . . . led. pauvre homme sallit hors dud. hostel, à la porte de Petit-Pont, crient à haultes voix: "Ces grosses villaines de l'Ostel-Dieu laissent mourir les pauvres de faim."'
- 27 Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 376, 'Acte notarié où les religieuses déclarent ne pouvoir entièrement observer le nouveau règlement, 12 juillet 1537.'

' . . . à quoy lad. prieure a faict responce qu'elles estoient prestes obeyr à Dieu, à Roy, à la Court, . . . et à mess^{rs} de chappitre de Paris, mais qu'il leur est impossible qu'elles puissent garder entierement lesd. statuz avecq le labour des paouvres dud. Hostel-Dieu.'

- 28 Lipscomb, 'Crossing Boundaries', pp. 411–12.
- 29 'Plaidoiries des parties dans l'affaire', in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 312: ' . . . qui n'est vellé et que c'est le plus grant bordeau de Paris, et est ung merveilleux scandalle.'
- 30 'Enquête des vicaires', in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 358: ' . . . les serviteurs de la maison étoient en la court basse, en chantant, crient, jouant des flutes et jettans des canons, au soir, environ dix heures, . . . et quand elle leur disoit qu'ils cessassent, ils n'en tenoient compte, mais disent injures bien souvent aux religieuses, ainsi qu'elle à oy dire, en les appellant "paillardes, ribauldes" et autres injures.'
- 31 'Enquête des vicaires', in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, pp. 354–5: ' . . . dit que oy, avecques les maîtres et autres, comme le procureur Bacot, Clerc, Gerbe, et aussi des religieuses, avecques lesquelles il a dance . . . '
- 32 'Enquête des vicaires', in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 355: 'Des serviteurs de la maison, dit: quelque jour le celerier revenoit de la ville avecques maître Guillaume, despensier, et avoit bien beu, et s'asist sur le lit d'un grief malade et dist quelques folles paroles.'
- 33 'Enquête des vicaires', in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 358.
- 34 'Enquête des vicaires', in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 355: ' . . . et deux filles blanches, l'une nommée la Tache et l'autre Perrete, dont lad. la Tache étoit couchée sur le lit et led. celerier, nommé Pierre, près d'elle, et lui semble qu'ele se leva de dessus la selle qui étoit contre le lit.'
- 35 'Enquête des vicaires', in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 361: 'Dit aussi que la Cacheleuse une journée s'approcha de lui, cuidant lui bailler un coup de pied contre les genitoires.'
- 36 'Enquête des vicaires', in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 359: 'Dit aussi que autre fois y eu des religieuses qui ont eu des enfants, qui n'ont pas esté pugnies si rigoureusement comme on a fait elle qui parle.'
- 37 'Enquête des vicaires', in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 359: 'Dit que ce qui est plus necessaire à reformer en la maison, ainsi qui lui semble, c'est que les soeurs et filles blanches soient contraintes à garder leurs langues de parler.'
- 38 Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, pp. 343–5: 'Enquête sur l'introduction par des soeurs, dans l'hôpital, de garçons teinturiers, dont l'un passa même la nuit dans la salle des accouchées, 23 fevrier 1533'.

- 39 ‘Enquête des vicaires’, in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 356: ‘Dit que entre les filles blanches y à une fille nommée Marie la Cocque . . . dit à elle qui parle plusieurs injures, en l’appellant “gros bee, grosse effondrée, grosse truie.”’
- 40 Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, pp. 370–4: ‘Arrêt du Parlement réglant dans quelles conditions seront introduits à l’Hôtel-Dieu les religieux envoyés par les abbayes de Saint-Victor, Saint-Séverin de Château-Landon, Livry, Chaage et par le prieuré de Saint-Ladre, 6 avril 1536’, and ‘Arrêt du Parlement: 1. Ordonnant à l’abbé de Saint-Victor de désigner, parmi les quatre religieux qu’il doit fournir à l’Hôtel-Dieu, celui qui aura la maîtrise et auquel le chapitre de Notre-Dame devra donner vicariate . . . , 30 septembre 1536.’
- 41 Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, pp. 375–7: ‘Arrêt du Parlement, rendu sur la requête du procureur général, nommant l’abbé de Saint-Victor et le prieur de Saint-Ladre visiteurs de l’Hôtel-Dieu, 12 mars 1537’; ‘Arrêt du Parlement ordonnant aux chanoines Merlin et Berthoul, à l’abbé se Saint-Victor et au prieur de Saint-Ladre de se rendre à l’Hôtel-Dieu pour voir comment on y observe le nouveau règlement, 25 juin 1537’; ‘Acte notairé où les religieuses déclarent ne pouvoir entièrement observer le nouveau règlement, 12 juillet 1537’.
- 42 Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 381: ‘Enquête sur le “tumulte” du 6 novembre, 8–17 novembre 1537’: ‘. . . dit led. desposant led. Bernard, . . . dire plusieurs injures au maître et à ses compagnons de la reformation, les appellants “hypocrites”, avec plusieurs autres opprobres.’
- 43 Sister Jehanne de Costes’s position within the Paris Hôtel-Dieu following the 1535 investigations was such: She was *sous-prioreess* under Sister Perenelle la Tache during the investigations; in the notary act of 12 July 1537, the prioress is noted as Sister Claude Gruot (Coyecque, p. 376), and by the night of the tumult, the statement regarding the events is given by ‘Sister Jehanne de Costes, prioress’ (Coyecque, p. 377).
- 44 ‘Enquête sur le “tumulte” du 6 novembre’, in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 377: Seur Jehanne de Costes, prieuse . . . deposé que le maître est homme de bien et fait bien son devoir . . . [et] le tumulte est venu à cause de l’inobedience et rebellion d’un religieux du precedant la reformacion, nommé frère Pierre Bernard.’
- 45 ‘Enquête sur le “tumulte” du 6 novembre’, in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, pp. 377–83: ‘. . . elle veyt une grande assemblée de religieuses, filles blanches et autre crians à haute voix, tumultueuse et esponvantable usans de telles parolles en effect ou semblables: “Aux meurtriers! aux bourreaux! aux larrons! aux meschans moynes!”, en parlant aux religieux de la reformacion et aux officiers de justice, illec presens.’
- 46 Gerd Althoff quoted in Rosenwein, ‘Worrying about Emotions in History’, p. 841.
- 47 ‘Enquête sur “le tumulte” du 6 novembre’, in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, pp. 377–8: ‘Françoise, en criant après lad. deposable, diest tels motz ou semblables; “Grosse effondrée, gros museau, gros bec, qui menga la pesche à Corbeil”, et illec étoit la soubz-prieure presente . . . ’
- ‘. . . elle rencontra lad. Françoise Cullotte, laquelle lui donna du coulde contre le bras et contre la poitrine, en lui disant: “Laisse-moi, passer, grosse effondrée, gros bec, gros museau, layde, orde, tu est tant layde!”’
- 48 ‘Enquête sur “le tumulte” du 6 novembre’, in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 377: ‘. . . lesquelles religieuses et filles blanches étoit les plus vehementes et tumultueuses aux clamieurs.’
- 49 ‘Enquête sur le “tumulte” du 6 novembre’, in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 381: ‘Marguerite Vinaige, fille blanche, trouva la Chambaulde ami les allées, et lui vint mettre les mains sur le visage, lui disant ses paroles: . . . “tu est une

- mechante villaine reformateresse!” et incontinent après seurvint soeur Perpette, qui la print par le bras, en lui disant: “Grande villaine et mechante que tu es!”’
- 50 ‘Enquête sur le “tumulte” du 6 novembre’, in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 379: ‘Daniel Dieuin, serviteur dud. Hostel . . . dit avoir veu Catherine Chambaulde soi efforcer de frapper au visage de frère Jehan Bernard, convers, resident aud. Hostel, en l'appellant “traître, meschant, boute-cul”, avec plusieurs autres injures et grosses paroles.’
- 51 ‘Enquête sur le “tumulte” du 6 novembre’, in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 378: ‘. . . “Ma tante, il y a long temps que m'avez mise seans, mais il fauldra que me remeniez en despit des villains meschans moynes.”’
- 52 Hardwick, ‘Early Modern Perspectives on the Long History of Domestic Violence’, p. 19.
- 53 ‘Enquête sur le “tumulte” du 6 novembre’, in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, pp. 378–9: ‘. . . dedans la chappelle Saint-Thomas, aux fenetres respondants sur le Pervis, soeur Agnes l'Ancellette et soeur Ysabeau Perron, . . . crier à haulte voix: “À l'aide! Misericorde!”, laquelle clamour fut oie par aucuns seculiers, lesquels vindrent a lad. clamour frapper aux portes de tous costes à grand violence, disant: “Ouvres les portes!” et heurtant fort et ferme.’
- ‘. . . la voix d'une fille blanche, nommée Marguerite la Moynesse, etant lors en la petite lavanderie, crient à haulte vois, ce etime qu'elle crioet: “À l'aide! Au secours!”, dont les gens de l'autre costé de la rivière dirent.’
- ‘. . . une fille blanche, nommée Catherine Patine, crient aux gens de dehors: “Rompes les portes!”, affin de exciter les gens de la ville à venir à l'aide.’
- 54 ‘Enquête sur le ‘tumulte’ du 6 novembre’ in Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, p. 380: ‘. . . et veit outre icellui depposant grand nombre de navres, de l'office Saint-Denis, . . . assembles tous en une troppeau, comme prets à se mettre en bataille, . . . et oit lad. Perpette et autres religieuses et filles blanches disants ces mots: “Que viennent faire ici ces traites?”’
- 55 Coyecque, *L'Hôtel-Dieu de Paris*, pp. 383–8: ‘Arrêt du Parlement ordonnant aux réformateurs de l'Hôtel-Dieu de veiller à l'observation du règlement; de punir les religieux rentrés sans permission; d'envoyer les récalcitrant dans d'autres établissements; de réprimer “les familiers colloques”; de faire une enquête sur la conduite du religieux superintendant, sur les désordres qui ont été signalés; de trancher la question de l'habit des religieux; de ne laisser sortir personne sans permission; de ne point renvoyer les *malades* avant leur complété guérison, 17 decembre 1537.’
- 56 Amy R. Leonard, ‘Female Religious Orders’, in R. Po-Chia Hsia (ed.), *A Companion to the Reformation World*, Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004, p. 237.
- 57 Julian Burnside, ‘Alienation to Alien Nation’, *The Conversation*, 19 September 2013, www.theconversation.com/julian-burnside-alienation-to-alien-nation-18290 (accessed 24 Sept 2013).
- 58 Hardwick, ‘Early Modern Perspectives on the Long History of Domestic Violence’, p. 18.

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5 Miracles and misery

Nuns' narratives of psychic and spiritual violence in sixteenth-century France

Susan Broomhall

In 1567, Françoise de Bourdeille, abbess of the convent of Ligueux in the Périgord, composed a memoir submitted to the Official of Poitiers. More than 20 years had passed since she had first entered monastic life but Bourdeille's account documented her anguish, anxieties and fears about both her mind and soul, the result of a profession into contemplative life which she argued had been forced upon her. Now she demanded that Church authorities recognize her narrative of long-standing coercion and pressure from family and friends, and the damage it had wrought on her, in order to release her from monastic vows.

This essay examines behaviours that involved threats of force, physical deprivation and withdrawal of positive emotional relationships with family and those in wider social networks, behaviours that were intended to achieve the acquiescence of young girls to contemplative life. These acts were understood variously as either psychic or spiritual violence, or as miracles, by the nuns who narrated these experiences in sixteenth-century France. In the cases analyzed here, it was words, for the most part, that constituted the means by which the violence or miracle was performed; words that expressed strong emotions of anger and disappointment, designed to generate emotional responses that ranged from fear to wonderment, and, in all cases, ultimately, compliance. These deeply emotive articulations gained particular power because of the identity of those who voiced them, typically authoritative family or household members whom these young girls trusted to care for them. The result of this process was what these nuns narrated as either damage to their minds and their souls, or as a miraculous process through which they received divinely-inspired desire to lead a contemplative life.

This essay also explores how very similar behaviours could be contextualized in distinctly different ways, depending both on the purpose for which the nuns' accounts were made, and on the outcome of each case in question.¹ This analysis of the emotional narrations of highly articulate nuns highlights how their status and the context of their opportunities for narration were crucial to how such acts were presented. However, just as importantly, what these

depictions of such acts shared were socially and culturally coded assumptions about the meanings of these acts, particularly when they were committed by women of high social status in positions of power over young girls.

In considering a psychic mode of violence, I build upon recent considerations in the scholarship of violence and of historicizing emotions that take seriously the power of emotions to affect change and to shape the psyche in violent ways. Such analyses can also speak to David Nash's suggestion that we need to develop more nuanced ways to analyze power beyond a 'model which concentrates solely upon its physicality'.² As Teresa Brennan argued in her 1997 exploration of 'social pressure', the demand to conform exerts as much force on the psyche as do physical stresses on the body.³ The work of Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe I. Bourgois insists upon a definition of violence that encompasses assaults on personhood, dignity and value in recognition of the powerful role of social and cultural aspects of violence.⁴ This has been echoed by feminist researchers who include the psychological dimensions of violence, including insults, degradations, and humiliation.⁵ At the same time, historians have been increasingly interested in the particular power of fear in early modern societies; how it could be provoked, by whom, and to what effect.⁶ Denis Crouzet has argued that fears and anxieties had profound social, political and religious consequences across whole societies in his work on sixteenth-century France.⁷ Accordingly, this study examines the acceptability of threats made through a deeply emotional discourse for deliberate and precise psychic effect in discrete and individual environments; that is, the power of these threats to provoke action and also to be recognized by contemporaries as an unreasonable coercive force that denied people their agency.

'Tormented in all sorts of ways': the profession of Françoise de Bourdeille

Françoise was the daughter of François de Bourdeille and of Anne de Vivonne. Her mother was a lady of honour to two successive queens of Navarre, Marguerite d'Angouleme, and her daughter, Jeanne d'Albret.⁸ Françoise was the sister of the celebrated memorialist Pierre de Bourdeille, seigneur de Brantôme.⁹ Bourdeille was not yet 10, when, as she recollects, 'under the power of her late father and mother', she was taken by some gentlemen from the Château de la Feuillade where she then lived, and in the company of the late Dame d'Aubeterre, to the Abbey of Sainte Croix in Poitiers.¹⁰ These adults led her to understand, as did her parents at the château, that she was going to simply learn to read, write and embroider, 'as one was accustomed to have young ladies instructed'.¹¹ Françoise was the younger of two sisters, and her elder sister Madeleine became a *fille de suite* in the entourage of Catherine de Medici, a fate Françoise perhaps also anticipated for herself.

However, Françoise related how, in 1541, she was pressured by a party including her mother, grandmother, the Sieur de Rohan and Admiral Biron

and his wife, and even the King and Queen of Navarre who were then in Poitiers, to take vows as a novice. Collectively, they 'strove to persuade [Françoise] . . . to take the habit of religion'.¹² Although she 'resisted with tears and otherwise . . . not wanting to submit to the yoke of religion',¹³ she recalled how she was 'vanquished as much by the threats of her grandmother and mother as by the great authority of the said Lady Queen of Navarre and by the importuning of the other lords and ladies' so that 'against her will and desire she took the habit'.¹⁴ Bourdeille's depiction of these events highlighted the verbal power of 'threats' and 'importuning' but also emphasized their force by her affective responses to them in 'tears'. 'However', she noted crucially, 'to her companions and her witnesses, her closest friends and relatives and other persons of whom she was not afraid, she always protested that her intention and desire was not to remain in the said religion [that is, monastic life], nor to be constrained to the vows and rules of it.'¹⁵

Bourdeille's record made clear the sense of oppression and the imprisonment of body and spirit that she experienced as a result of the verbal onslaught and social pressure which were inflicted upon her, most notably by powerful and authoritative women. Bourdeille recalled her distress at her isolated position, 'shut away inside the monastery, destitute of advice and friends in that place, and in despair to not be able to leave it, even from her parents she heard no news and knew not how to have any news of them', when she found herself 'pressured by her abbess to make her profession at the monastery'.¹⁶ Although she had at first refused, in the end, 'tormented in all sorts of ways . . . against her will and desire', Françoise made her vows, and she later described these as 'having been taken and suffered by her . . . against her conscience'.¹⁷

The torment of her mind only worsened, Françoise claimed, when she experienced brief freedom in 1546 with her removal from the Abbey of Sainte Croix and return to her family. There, however, she discovered the deception played upon her, when, instead of being welcomed home, she was lectured by her mother, aunt and other relatives, including her aunt, Jeanne de Bourdeille, abbess of the convent of Ligueux, to agree to go to live at Ligueux. 'This . . . having thought herself at liberty, she found very untoward, and she openly declared that she did not want to live in any monastery or be subject to any rule of monastic life, whether St Benedict or any other'.¹⁸ Hearing this protest, her relatives, Bourdeille claimed, first tried to coax her, but finding this achieved little, they then 'threatened her that they would put her back in the monastery of Sainte Croix and have her treated more harshly there than ever she had been before'.¹⁹

Bourdeille admitted to being partly attracted by the promise of one day replacing her aunt as the abbess at Ligueux, but also 'constrained in part by the threats', she had agreed 'to any other thing than to return to the monastery of Sainte Croix against the freedom of her conscience'.²⁰ Yet she continued to 'protest often, declaring that if and when the opportunity presented itself to her to be able to leave and live in secularity, as had always been her sole and total intention, she would do it'.²¹ Indeed, Bourdeille began to worry that

'the abbey and monastic life taken against her conscience' would lead to her 'damnation more than salvation'.²² Despair at the daily experience of monastic life took its toll. Bourdeille documented her deteriorating state of mind and fears for her soul. She 'knew well in her mind that over time the things that each does against one's conscience reign and dominate one's life, so much more is the condemnation for them'. Thus, she then began to 'accomplish her true intention'.²³

Importantly, the narrative provided by Bourdeille was composed for a specific purpose – to achieve her release from her monastic vows. Her recollection of the violent force of intimate persuasion, enacted in emotional terms upon her by family members and resulting in her tears, sufferance, isolation, loneliness, sense of abandonment, sorrow and fear was documented with the intention that it would lead to a positive outcome for her. In 1565 Bourdeille received from Pius IV the first stage of a release from her vows, possibly with the help of her brother, Pierre, who passed through Rome on several occasions during these years.²⁴ By then, both her parents and an elder brother had died. By the terms of the apostolic ruling, the Official of Poitiers, Bonaventure Aubert, was delegated to hear her case, from which stems the above account. What is key is that Bourdeille's claim that the documented actions constituted a form of violence that was psychologically and spiritually damaging to her was accepted by the religious officials who considered her case. In 1567, Aubert found in her favour, recognizing the 'continual fear, complaints and protestations of the plaintiff'.²⁵

'Strange subtleties and force': nuns' perspectives on the experiences of Charlotte de Bourbon

For many years, Charlotte de Bourbon, abbess of the convent of Nôtre-Dame de Jouarre, and the daughter of one of France's pre-eminent dynasties, had used her own social influence to record legal acts that bore witness to her unwillingness to enter monastic life. She was professed in 1559 but arranged a notarial act in 1565 in which she insisted she had not been content to enter convent life, and had it signed by Jean Ruzé, a lawyer from the *Parlement* of Paris who had been sent by Charlotte's mother and father to witness her profession.²⁶ This act documented her perception of the 'threats and fear to disobey' from both her mother and father, and that she had been 'induced and persuaded against her desire, will, and intention, to make a profession . . . [although] she had several times remonstrated and protested that she did not wish to become a nun'.²⁷ Ultimately, Charlotte took matters into her own hands. In February 1572, accompanied by two nuns, she left the abbey on what was expected to be a visit to the abbess of Paraclet. Instead, the women headed north to Heidelberg and the court of elector Frederick III.²⁸ Two months after Charlotte's defection, Louis de Bourbon, Duke of Montpensier, Charlotte's father, arranged for the preparation of a secret document which contained interviews among the convent community, hoping to identify the causes of

the events.²⁹ What it revealed was that Charlotte's unhappiness with contemplative life was no secret to the nuns of Jouarre and that a large number of women could list specific incidents of misconduct in the matter of her profession. This part examines how nuns narrated these experiences, as witness to words and acts that they understood as designed to induce fear and compliance, and which they saw as detrimental to the mental and physical health of the young girl at whom they were directed.

Many of the nuns were able to document a litany of forceful and/or cruel behaviours that were the cause of Charlotte's profession and to pinpoint the perpetrator. Catherine de Richemont outlined how the Duchess, Jacqueline de Longwy, 'had her importuned and solicited to become a nun by several people, who from reports that her daughter did not want to listen, herself wrote several harsh letters, full of threats, to her'.³⁰ Catherine de Perthuys also meted significant blame on the Duchess for this event, of whose threats and the solicitations of others 'she dared not speak even the 100th part',³¹ but 'she heard that if she had not made the profession that her mother would enact upon her all the rigours in the world'.³² It was clear to her that Charlotte's profession had been made 'by her mother's force'.³³ Radegonde Sarrot noted that Charlotte's initial refusal left the Duchess 'extremely offended', and resulted in an 'infinity of harsh words with great inducements and solicitations'.³⁴ Marie Brette, grand-prioress of the abbey, confirmed that Charlotte did not have a personal vocation: 'she did not know that my lady ever had, of her own free will, wanted to be a nun.'³⁵ Brette 'had heard it [the habit] infinitely displeased her, having taken it too young, against her will, by force of her mother, who had made her make her profession by strange subtleties and force'.³⁶ Just like the other sisters, Marie de Méry suspected that Charlotte 'would never have done it, but for the constraint of her mother and the inducements on her part in the abbey'.³⁷

Moreover, Sarrot articulated just what this forced lifestyle had done to Charlotte, whom she considered fundamentally incompatible with the religious vocation: 'she had never the heart to remain in this charge, quality and habit of religion'.³⁸ Namely, that the psychic violence found physical expression. Such was the mental anxiety that she suffered from her mother's pressure, Sarrot recounts, 'that the apprehension that she had gave her a fever and she said to all the girls in the abbey who went to see her that she did not want to be professed, and that the illness came from fear that her mother would not treat her well'.³⁹ Marie Beaucler freely admitted that there were 'rumours of the nuns who saw the manifest constraints, and [Charlotte] led by force'.⁴⁰ Beaucler also remarked that one of the specific threats that the duchess made was that 'if she did not make the profession, she would have her taken her to Fontevrault'.⁴¹ This correlates with a statement mentioned by Catherine de Richemont, who similarly stated that the duchess's letters were 'fulls of threats, to send her to the pit of religion of Fontevrault'.⁴² The abbey and order of Fontevrault had established a reputation early in the sixteenth century for its rigorous reforms. Richemont understood that, 'from fear and to avoid harsh

words, she did what her mother wanted'.⁴³ Marie de Méry remembered that Charlotte had 'cried so much that one could not hear a single word of her profession'.⁴⁴

While the nuns clearly identified the Duchess of Montpensier as a perpetrator of coercive behaviour towards Charlotte, they also suggested that her father's status prevented Charlotte from speaking out about her feelings. Richemont claimed that Charlotte was unwilling to reveal these threats to the Duke for 'she was so fearful a daughter that she never dared speak of it, for fear of annoying or angering him'.⁴⁵ Richemont felt that 'if she had not feared that my lord her father would be angry, she would have soon changed her veil'.⁴⁶ However, the nun's account also recognized that social pressures played a role in obscuring evidence of Charlotte's unhappiness more widely: 'she had spoken of it often to some people who had hidden it from my lord, for fear of irritating him'.⁴⁷ Richemont's version likely reflected the ongoing influence of the Duke over the entire convent community while his wife, significantly, had died after the events being described.⁴⁸ It is no surprise, therefore, that she did not associate the duke with any of these behaviours: she 'had never heard that the Duke had ever forced his daughter, but on the contrary was angry with his deceased wife that she had attacked his daughter'.⁴⁹ Although these women appeared to interpret the actions they saw as coercive and damaging to Charlotte, they did not generally speak out at the time of the young girl's profession. Social pressures clearly shaped their actions, as they did Charlotte's, and continued to influence the apportioning of blame that ensued.

These two cases share similarities in that each documented the psychic and spiritual violence that nuns claimed had been enacted upon themselves or others. This was largely through verbal acts that threatened force, hardship and denial of emotional connections with family and friends. These were expressions of strong emotions; violent articulations when uttered by family members, often women, to generate fear and produce compliance. In both these cases, nuns interpreted these acts they had witnessed as damaging to the minds and souls of the women in question; that is, as psychic and spiritual violence that might justify the aberrant behaviour of women who had been subordinated to their elite families' goals and that might even demand justice.

'The good girl dared not refuse': resistance and acceptance by subordinate women

Evidence of the ways in which women at other social levels entered into convents is rare in the archives, particularly if it was done so unwillingly. Few women had the social resources and power to insist upon consideration of their own feelings about the matter. Those women who did so were typically wealthy and well connected. However, there is some evidence of similar behaviours being committed in relation to women with far fewer resources to assert their own views. They did have some opportunities to have their voices

heard. Hagiographic accounts compiled within convents documented the acts of fervent elite women who insisted upon the entry to monastic life of other women in their retinue alongside them which would expand the power and prestige of their own spiritual movement. At least two examples remain that suggest that social pressure was firmly applied to subordinate women, but in each case, such acts were presented not as violence but as miraculous conversions of the spirit.

In the late 1550s, Françoise Guyard, a nun at the original Annonciades convent in Bourges compiled a history of the convent's foundation in 1502 and particularly of its virtuous founder, daughter of Louis XI, Jeanne de France (1464–1505).⁵⁰ Guyard's work was a detailed female-authored account of the creation of the Order of the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary, its rule, lifestyle and early professions, primarily based on the memories of the original founding sisters.⁵¹ The last surviving original sister, Marguerite Blandine, even signed the text with an attestation of its accuracy.⁵² Although hagiographic in intention, the chronicle's portrayal of Jeanne does not shy away from revealing a strong-minded individual and the pressure she applied upon women to conform to her plans for their future. Some of the incidents in which this was most evident concerned the entry into monastic life of some of the Annonciade's earliest members. Jeanne's elite status was clearly a factor in the acceptance of some of the women and young girls into the order. A governess from Tours, Macée Pourcelle, who had been approached to find suitable girls for Jeanne, warned that she might face resistance from girls' relatives.⁵³ Jeanne's confessor, Gilbert Nicolas, assured Poucelle that 'they would not refuse such a great princess who was expecting them'.⁵⁴ He appeared to be correct, for when Jeanne invited the infirm Catherine Gauvinelle, a third-order Franciscan to join the fledgling order, Gauvinelle declined on the grounds that she would not be able to endure the austerity. When Jeanne refused to receive her response, Gauvinelle at length accepted. As the chronicle explained 'the good girl dared not refuse such a princess twice'.⁵⁵

Jeanne also decided that her 14-year-old attendant, Françoise de Mouhet, would make an excellent postulant. Mouhet, however, refused to accept Jeanne's plans, and her response was recorded in the chronicle: 'Madam, if God had given me the will, I would not resist it. Do not be unhappy with me if God calls me to the world. I hope that He will give me the grace to make my salvation as if in religion.' Jeanne 'was stunned and the Reverend Father also that it was so difficult to convert her'.⁵⁶ While Jeanne insisted upon the merits of enclosed life, Mouhet resisted, explaining that 'her heart did not tend towards devotion, but to worldliness, seeing that she was an only daughter with a single brother. And having many goods, she wanted to experience the prosperities of the world. And Madame was most annoyed about it'.⁵⁷ Jeanne then directed Nicolas also speak with Mouhet, but the girl begged him not to importune her further, promising to serve Jeanne in the world as devotedly as in the convent.⁵⁸ The chronicle spared no detail of Mouhet's multiple refusals,

of her resistance to the severe pressures applied to her by Jeanne and Gabriel Nicolas, or of Jeanne's strongly emotional, hostile reactions to them.

Mouhet's resistance was, however, essential to the narrative of the chronicle. It demonstrated the miracle that was purported to have been worked upon Mouhet, which led to the transformation of her strong conviction to remain in secular life into acceptance of Jeanne's plans. The chronicle also included accounts of the anxieties of the girls' family members who sought out private meetings with the novices to persuade them to return to secular life. The Bodine family, for example, tried unsuccessfully to prevent at least one of their daughters from taking her final vow as a professed nun. Mouhet's brother came to see her to convince her of the great possession and worldly riches she might enjoy beyond the cloister, but the now fervent Mouhet rejected his arguments.⁵⁹ All these objections, however, amounted to nothing, for, as the chronicle made clear, Jeanne's cause was divinely inspired.

However, the chronicle's account also offered evidence that Jeanne made sure that familial intervention would not prevent her postulants from entering the order: 'the holy Lady had such great fear that someone would divert her that she hastened to accomplish her desire'.⁶⁰ Therefore, 'Madame made her [Mouhet] keep it secret from her companions and those of her family, so that they could not impede it'.⁶¹ Jeanne appears to have exerted a high degree of pressure on the women she targeted as candidates for her new order, and her social status was clearly noted as a persuasive factor in her favour. The vocal and repeated resistance of these young girls was not obscured from the nuns' narrative, but it was observed that social pressure from both Jeanne and her spiritual adviser was enacted upon the girls to achieve Jeanne's will. This was combined with other, rather manipulative acts, such as Jeanne's instruction that their professions should occur without informing the girls' families, which were also recorded in the chronicle. The chronicle characterized these cases according to the message it wanted to convey; that the profession of these reluctant postulants was part of a divine plan, of which Jeanne was a necessary conduit. Jeanne's persuasion was combined with divine inspiration in the girls to create their desire to enter contemplative life. These behaviours, however similar to those applied to Françoise de Bourdeille and Charlotte de Bourbon, were not interpreted as a form of violence against these women, for their outcome was not documented as one of sufferance.

Furthermore, other hagiographic texts demonstrate that Jeanne de France was not the only fervent spiritual leader to bring her high status to bear on the profession of others. Her contemporary, Louise de Savoie (1472–1503), granddaughter of Charles VII, also encouraged her ladies to follow her into monastic life at the austere reformed Clarisses in Orbe.⁶² Catherine de Saulx, one of Louise's former ladies of honour, became author of an account of her mistress's life in 1507.⁶³ Here Saulx recorded how she became a professed nun, inspired by Louise's fervour and prayers. Like Jeanne de France, it was not sufficient for Louise to enjoy a religious life herself, she was evidently

driven to persuade her female social inferiors to do likewise: 'for the true love that she had for her fellow man'.⁶⁴ Saulx reports how Louise:

often preached to her women to become Cordelières and had a marvellous desire for it, and often said to them – I do not know how you can stand to remain in the world and to be married, for you see the great tribulations and sorrows that there are . . . if you believe me you will keep yourself from that. And they responded – we do not want to be nuns, for God has never granted us that goodness to have desire and devotion for it. And to this she said to them – pray to God, and he will give you the will.⁶⁵

Yet, as with Jeanne de France, Saulx insists that Louise's attentions to them were such that she and other ladies of honour agreed also to become nuns. Indeed, speaking of her religious conversion, Saulx was convinced that the transformation was nothing short of miraculous: 'before it had not been her intention to become a nun . . . but this devoted Lady, who loved her so, attracted her to it by her pious prayers that she made to God about it'.⁶⁶ Although there is evidence of some initial resistance on the part of Saulx, Louise's continual encouragement to prayer, and her own prayer, acted to change Saulx's views. These behaviours are not documented as pressure, as a form of psychic violence upon her; instead, in the context of her hagiographic account, they are signs of Louise's spiritual power and divinely inspired holiness, given that these acts could effect such remarkable change in women resolved to secular life.

In these cases, the focus of the narratives constructed was to record the holy behaviours of women who would both eventually be considered saints in the Catholic Church. Their purpose was to build evidence that could contribute to this process and thus to highlight the positive spiritual outcome of their acts. As such, neither account narrated these behaviours as violence because, although the perpetrators were clearly shown to be forceful, determined, insistent and even manipulative in achieving their goals, the perceived outcome was not damage but spiritual enlightenment and release for the women concerned.

Conclusion

These cases depict specific modes of emotional expression as the tools by which violence of a particular kind was inflicted upon young girls. They demonstrate how young women in situations of care felt pressured to accept monastic life through subtle and less subtle emotional discourses by those in positions of responsibility over them. Significantly, many of the perpetrators identified by the victims were women – mothers, aunts, grandmothers, and ladies of the court. These were the very same women whom these girls had expected to care for them and to look to their best interests. The perceived abnegation of these familial responsibilities to them may have added to the sense of injury

that these girls experienced, and perhaps even gave their claims of wrongdoing an extra potency. The psychic and spiritual damage that ensued did not, however, end with their entry into monastic life, but some claimed that it remained or indeed worsened with every experience in that environment over many years.

As this study has demonstrated, women with social connections and powerful positions in the convents that they led were able to obtain their release from monastic life as a result of their recounting of the violent emotional influences that they suffered. For Françoise de Bourdeille, this occurred through official mechanisms within the Catholic Church, while for Charlotte de Bourbon, it arose through her ability to access financial and practical support to escape and to secure sympathetic hosts within the Protestant courts of Europe. In each case, key witnesses to their experiences accepted these as valid, interpreting the coercive actions and the resulting psychic and spiritual damage to the female victims as real and unacceptable. For other women, however, who did not have similar social power to change their circumstances, depictions of ostensibly similar behaviours were cast in quite a different light in the rare accounts that have survived. For these women, extreme pressure to ensure their entry into monastic life were not, and could not be, perceived as forms of violence, nor their documented refusal to accept this path be presented as legitimate resistance. Instead, accounts of such actions appeared in hagiographic texts to attest to their perpetrators' divinely inspired power to persuade others to their cause. The characterization of actions as violent, therefore, was influenced by context as well as perspective, and such actions would only be recorded where it could achieve a purpose for its narrators.⁶⁷ However, the fact that such records do provide some evidence of forceful, manipulative acts that rarely enhanced the spiritual claims of the protagonists strongly hints at a different, possible interpretation of these experiences, one recorded by women who depicted themselves as survivors of psychic violence and who would not be silenced.

Notes

- 1 On women's composition of texts detailing convent life at this era, see Susan Broomhall, *Women and Religion in Sixteenth-Century France*, Hounds-mills: Palgrave, 2006.
- 2 David Nash, 'Blasphemy and the Anti-civilizing Process', in Katherine D. Watson, (ed.), *Assaulting the Past: Violence and Civilization in Historical Context*, Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007, p. 63.
- 3 See Teresa Brennan, 'Social Pressure', *American Imago* 54, 3, 1997, 257–88.
- 4 Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe I. Bourgois, 'Introduction: Making Sense of Violence', in Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe I. Bourgois (eds), *Violence in War and Peace: An Anthology*, Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2003, p. 1.
- 5 Sally Engle Merry, *Gender Violence: A Cultural Perspective*, Malden, MA: Wiley & Sons, 2008, p. 22.
- 6 Jean Delumeau, *La Peur en Occident (XIVe – XVIIe siècles): une cité assiégée*, Paris: Fayard, 1978; William G. Naphy and Penny Roberts (eds), *Fear in Early Modern Society*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997.

- 7 Denis Crouzet, *Les Guerriers de Dieu: La violence au temps des troubles de religion (vers 1525-vers 1610)*, 2 vols, Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1990.
- 8 Alfred Barbier, 'Une Sœur de Brantôme, religieuse de l'abbaye de Sainte-Croix de Poitiers (1538–1567)', *Mémoires de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest* 16 (Series 2), 1893, p. 8.
- 9 Barbier, 'Une Sœur de Brantôme', p. 13.
- 10 Barbier, 'Une Sœur de Brantôme', p. 9: 'soubz la puissance de ses d. père et mère'. The original document is held at the Archives départementales de la Vienne, 2 H1, Liasse 3. Citations are given from the more accessible publication by Barbier, now available via the Bibliothèque nationale de France Gallica website.
- 11 Barbier, 'Une Sœur de Brantôme', p. 10: 'selon que l'on a accoustumé faire instruire damoiselles jeunes'.
- 12 Barbier, 'Une Sœur de Brantôme', p. 10: 'tous les quelz s'efforcèrent persuader à lad. demanderesse de prandre l'habit de lad. religion'. For dating of May 1541, see Barbier, 'Une Sœur de Brantôme', p. 14.
- 13 Barbier, 'Une Sœur de Brantôme', p. 10: 'A quoi resista par larmes et aultrement lad. demanderesse, laquelle ne vouloit se soubzmettre au joug de lad. religion'.
- 14 Barbier, 'Une Sœur de Brantôme', p. 10: 'tant par les menasses de ses des ayeules et mère par la grande autorité de lad. Dame Royne de Navarre et par l'importunité des aultres seigneurs et dames susditz, icelle demanderesse, contre son gré et vouloir auroit pris l'habit'.
- 15 Barbier, 'Une Sœur de Brantôme', pp. 10–11: 'Néantmoinz, par devant ses compagnes et sestesmoings, siens et parans et aultres personnes dontt lad. demanderesse ne avoit pas grande crainte, elle protestait tousjors que son intencion et vouloir ne estoit de demeurer en lad. religion, ne soy aculnement aastraindre aux vœux de règle d'icelle.'
- 16 Barbier, 'Une Sœur de Brantôme', p. 11: 'renfermée dedans led. Monastère, destitutés de conseils et d'amys en cestuy endroict, et au désespoir de n'en pouvoir aculnes nouvelles . . . pressée par son abbesse de faire profession aud. Monastère'.
- 17 Barbier, 'Une Sœur de Brantôme', p. 11: 'tourmentée de tant de sortes . . . contre son vœu et intencion'; 'ayant par elle esté prins et soufert . . . contre sa conscience'.
- 18 Barbier, 'Une Sœur de Brantôme', p. 11: 'La quelle chose . . . , lad. demanderesse qui lors estant sortie dud. Couvent de Sainte Croyx pensoit estre en liberté, auroit trouvé grandement fâcheuse et auroit appertement déclaré que elle ne vouloit plus demeurer en aucun monastère ne estre subjecte à aulcune règle de religion, fusse de Saint Benoist ou autre.'
- 19 Barbier, 'Une Sœur de Brantôme', p. 12: 'menassé lad. demanderesse de la remettre aud. monastère de Sainte Croyx, et illec la faire traitez plus estroitement que onques elle avoit esté'.
- 20 Barbier, 'Une Sœur de Brantôme', p. 12: 'contrainte en partie par les susd. menasses, d'autant que plutôt elle eut consenty toutes aultres choses que de retourner aud. monastère de Sainte Croyx contre la liberté de sa conscience'.
- 21 Barbier, 'Une Sœur de Brantôme', p. 12: 'protestation souventes fois par elle déclaré que si et quant la commodité se présenteroit à elle de pouvoir quicter lad. abbaye et vivre en sécularité, comme a esté tousjors sa seule et totale intencion, elle le feroit'.
- 22 Barbier, 'Une Sœur de Brantôme', p. 12: 'lad. abbaye et lad. religion par elle prins contre sa conscience luy causent plustôt une damnation que ung salut'.
- 23 Barbier, 'Une Sœur de Brantôme', p. 12: 'accomplir sa vraye intencion'.
- 24 Barbier, 'Une Sœur de Brantôme', p. 5.
- 25 Barbier, 'Une Sœur de Brantôme', p. 24: 'avons attandu la continuelle crainte, réclamations et protestations de la dicte demanderesse'.
- 26 Archives nationales (AN), J 772/11, *Acte de protestation de Charlotte de Bourbon, abbesse de Jouarre contre ses voeux* (25 August 1565). See also Jane Couchman,

- ‘Charlotte de Bourbon’s Correspondence: Using Words to Implement Emancipation’, in C.H. Winn and D. Kuizenga (eds), *Women Writers in Pre-revolutionary France: Strategies of Emancipation*, New York: Garland Publishing, 1997, pp. 101–15.
- 27 ‘... par menaces et de crainte de desobeyr ... inducite et persuadée contre son bon gré, voulloir et intencion, à faire profession ... ce qu’elle a plusieurs foys remontré et protesté qu’elle ne vouloyt estre Religieuse’, Yves Chaussy, J. Dupaqier, G. Goetz et al. (eds), *L’Abbaye royale Notre-Dame de Jouarre*, Paris: Bibliothèque d’histoire et d’archéologie chrétiennes, 1961, p. 158.
 - 28 Delaborde still provides one of the most thorough accounts of Charlotte’s life; see Jules Delaborde, *Charlotte de Bourbon, princesse d’Orange*, Paris: Fischbacher, 1888. Charlotte’s journey is detailed in AN, Trésor des Chartes, J 954, no. 33, *Procès-verbal d’enquête et audition de témoins relativement à la retraite de Dame Charlotte de Bourbon, Abbesse de Jouarre*.
 - 29 Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Manuscrits français (BNF, Ms. fr.), 3182, *Instruction originales du Président Barjot pour consulter l’affaire de Charlotte de Bourbon, princesse d’Orange, du 21 juillet 1578; Information secrete ... aux fins de trouver ... ceux qui ont suborné Mme Charlotte de Bourbon, abbesse de Juere; Mémoire touchant Madame la Princesse d’Orange sur la nullité de sa profession* and Bibliothèque nationale de France (BNF) Collection Clairambault 114, *Information de l’évasion de Charlotte de Bourbon, abbesse de Jouarre*.
 - 30 BNF, Collection Clairambault 114, f. 169r: ‘laquelle le faisoit importuner et solliciter destre Religieuse par plusieurs personnes lesquelles rapportant a mad. dame sa mere que sa fille ny vouloit entendre elle mesme luy envoyoit des lettres Rigoreuses plaines de menaces’.
 - 31 BNF, Collection Clairambault 114, f. 169v: ‘quelle nenose dire la centiesme partie’.
 - 32 BNF, Collection Clairambault 114, f. 169v: ‘quelle neust jamais envie destre religieuse et ayant fait profession, par force de mad. sa mere, Laquelle a la verité luy a tenu toutes les Rigueurs du monde pur la faire telle’.
 - 33 BNF, Collection Clairambault 114, f. 169v: ‘par force de mad. sa mere’.
 - 34 BNF, Collection Clairambault 114, f. 169v: ‘extremement offencee’, ‘infinie de Rudesses avec inductions et sollicitations grandes’.
 - 35 BNF, Collection Clairambault 114, f. 169v: ‘quelle na point sceu que mad. dame ait oncques de son bon gré voulu estre religieuse’.
 - 36 BNF, Collection Clairambault 114, f. 169v: ‘son habit quelle a entendu ly desplaire Infiniment tant pour lavoir prins trop jeune a contrecœur par force de sa mere laquelle a fait faire profession par des subtilites et forces estranges’.
 - 37 BNF, Collection Clairambault 114, f. 170r: ‘et neust jamais faite avec la contrainte de madame sa mere et inductions de sa part en lad. abbaye’.
 - 38 BNF, Collection Clairambault 114, f. 169v: ‘elle neust oncques le cuer de demeurer en cest charge, qualitté, et habit de religion’.
 - 39 BNF, Collection Clairambault 114, f. 169v: ‘que lapprehension quelle en eust ly donna une fieure qui la print et disoit a toutes les filles de lad. abbaye qui l’alloient veoir quelle ne vouloit estre professe et lad. maladie venoit crainte que lad. mere ne la traistast mal’.
 - 40 BNF, Collection Clairambault 114, f. 170r: ‘du murmure des Religieuses qui voyoient la manifeste contrainte et ly menées avec la force’.
 - 41 BNF, Collection Clairambault 114, f. 170r: ‘la menacant si elle ne faisoit lad. profession elle la ferait mener a frontevault’.
 - 42 BNF, Collection Clairambault 114, f. 169r: ‘plaines de menaces et de l’envoyer en fosse de Religion de frontevaulx’.

- 43 BNF, Collection Clairambault 114, f. 169r: 'crainte de quoy et d'eviter les rudesses, elle feist ce que sa mere voulut'.
- 44 BNF, Collection Clairambault 114, f. 170r: 'elle ploroit tellement quon ne sceut entendre un seul mot de sa profession'.
- 45 BNF, Collection Clairambault 114, f. 169r: 'elle estoit si craintive quelle nose jamais luy en parler crainte de lennuyer et fascher'.
- 46 BNF, Collection Clairambault 114, f. 169r: 'si elle navoit crainte que modn.s gnr son pere se fascha quelle auroit bientost eschangeé de voile'.
- 47 BNF, Collection Clairambault 114, f. 169r: 'bien la elle dit souvent a plusieurs qui lon cele a mond. Sgr de peur d'irriter'.
- 48 On convents' continuing connections to outside social networks, see Charmarie Blaisdell, 'Religion, Gender and Class: Nuns and Authority in Early Modern France', in Michael Wolfe (ed.), *Changing Identities in Early Modern France*, Durham, NC: Durham University Press, 1997, pp. 147–68; Joanne Baker, 'Female Monasticism and Family Strategy: The Guises and Saint Pierre de Reims', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 28, 4, 1997, 1091–1108; Joan Davies, 'The Montmorencys and the Abbey of Sainte Trinité, Caen: Politics, Profit and Reform', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 53, 4, 2002, 665–85; Susan Broomhall, 'Familial and Social Networks in the Later Sixteenth-century French Convent', Special number: *Early Modern Convent Voices: The World and the Cloister*, ed. Thomas M. Carr, *Studies on Early Modern France* 11, 2007, 59–74.
- 49 BNF, Collection Clairambault 114, f. 169r: 'jamais entendu que monseig. le duc de montpensier ayt onques force sad. fille mais au contraire marry contre sa deffunte femme de cequelle attaquoit estre contre son gré'.
- 50 P. Annaert, 'Femmes d'église et femmes de pouvoir aux origines de l'Annonciade de France', *Centre européen d'études bourguignonnes* 38, 1998, 187–206. Jean-François Bonnefoy, 'Les Intentions de la Bienheureuse Jeanne de Valois et l'Ordre de l'Annonciade', *Archivum franciscanum historicum* 31, 1938, 3–16.
- 51 Françoise Guyard, *La Chronique de l'Annonciade*, ed. by Jean-François Bonnefoy, Paris: Editions franciscaines, 1937, p. 48.
- 52 *La Chronique de l'Annonciade*, p. 300.
- 53 *La Chronique de l'Annonciade*, p. 100.
- 54 *La Chronique de l'Annonciade*, p. 101: 'qu'ils ne refusassent point [à] une si grande princesse, laquelle les attendoit.'
- 55 *La Chronique de l'Annonciade*, p. 165: 'La bonne fille n'ausa refuser deux fois une telle Princesse.'
- 56 *La Chronique de l'Annonciade*, p. 169: 'Madame, si Dieu m'en avoit donné la volonté, je ne voudrois pas y resister. Il vous plaira n'estre mal contente de moy si Dieu m'appelle a l'estat du monde.' 'Madame s'ebaysoit et le Reverend Pere aussy, comme il y a voit tant de difficulté a la convertir.'
- 57 *La Chronique de l'Annonciade*, pp. 168–9: 'son coeur ne tendoit point a devotion, mais a toute mondanité, voyant qu'elle estoit fille seulle avec un seul frere. Et ayant des biens beaucoup, vouloit scavoir que c'estoit des prosperités mondaines du monde. Et Madame en estoit si marrie'.
- 58 *La Chronique de l'Annonciade*, p. 170.
- 59 *La Chronique de l'Annonciade*, p. 173.
- 60 *La Chronique de l'Annonciade*, p. 172: 'Et la saincte Dame avoit si grand peur que quelqu'un la destournast qu'elle sa hasta de luy accomplir son desir.'
- 61 *La Chronique de l'Annonciade*, p. 172: 'Madame le fist tenir secret a ses compaignes et a ceulx de sa maison, affin qu'elles ne l'empeschassent point.'
- 62 A.M. Jeanneret, 'Notice sur l'origine et l'établissement du monastère de Sainte Claire d'Orbe et sur sa translation à Evian', in Catherine de Saulx, *Vie de Tres*

- Haulte, tres puissante et tres Illustre dame, Madame Loyse de Savoye*, Geneva: Jules Guillaume Fick, 1860, p. 18.
- 63 *Vie de . . . Madame Loyse de Savoye*, pp. 55–6.
- 64 *Vie de . . . Madame Loyse de Savoye*, p. 74: ‘por la vraie amor qu’elle auoit à son prochain’.
- 65 *Vie de . . . Madame Loyse de Savoye*, p. 74: ‘sovuentes fois preschoynt ses femmes d’estre Cordelieres & en auoit merueilleusement grand desir & leur disoit sovuent: – ie ne fais comme vous povuez desirer de demourer au monde & estre mariees; car vous veëz bein les grandes tribulations & doylevrs que on y at . . . si vous m’en cuidez vous vous garderez de tout cela. Et elles respondoyent: – nous n’auons vouloyr d’estre religieuses, car Dieu oncques ne nous fist tievle grance d’en auoir desir & devotion. Et adoncques elle leur disoyt: – priez Dieu, & il vous en baillera le vovloyr.’
- 66 *Vie de . . . Madame Loyse de Savoye*, p. 75: ‘les sainctes oraysons de la dicte Dame & les saincts merites luy impetrerent icelle grace; car par aduant ce n’estoyt pas son intention d’estre religievse, . . . mais ceste deuotte Dame, qui l’aimoyt movlt, l’attira à cela par les deuottes prieres qu’elle en fesoyt à Dieu’.
- 67 This is similar to the evidence provided by journals and *mémoire* accounts of religious violence where violence was typically articulated in contexts in which it could ensure a positive outcome for its narrator. See Susan Broomhall, ‘Reasons and Identities to Remember: Composing Personal Accounts of Religious Violence in Sixteenth-century France’, *French History* 27, 1, 2013, 1–20; Susan Broomhall, ‘Disturbing Memories: Narrating Experiences and Emotions of Distressing Events in the French Wars of Religion’, in Judith Pollmann, Erika Kuijpers, Johannes Müller, Jasper van der Steen (eds), *Memory before Modernity: Memory Cultures in Early Modern Europe*, Leiden: Brill, 2013, pp. 253–68.

6 Devotional violence and emotional governance in a seventeenth-century French female religious house

Sarah Ferber

Between 1618 and 1632, the prestigious thirteenth-century royal Cistercian Abbey for women at Maubuisson (near Pontoise, north-west of Paris) became a battleground over the use of penitential mortification.¹ The convent veered from being influenced by those who valued intense physical self-mortification and those who advocated more passive devotional practices. At Maubuisson, mortification became one of the chief sites of interpersonal politics over questions of governance, as a sequence of directors and external consultants passed through a veritable revolving door, in response to pressure from internal factions and external patrons. This essay will examine the place of the emotions in relation to the two divergent trajectories of Catholic spiritual revival evident in this case: those that emphasized the benefits of physical mortification, and those that emphasized a more interior mode of approach to God. In an era when the physical and emotional risks attendant on ritual mortification were well known, a dispute over their devotional value led to allegations, conversely, that a *failure* to adhere to regimes of physical mortification could cause emotional harm and invite diabolical attacks. Thus the emotions were at the centre of debate about what kind of devotional activities posed the greater risk of harm, the physical or the contemplative.

Physical violence as a form of personal devotion, notably in the act of self-flagellation, existed on a spectrum with relatively low-level ‘mortification’, such as (in one example here) eating chicory without vinegar.² Proponents of even extreme physical mortification in this period were unlikely to refer to what they did as ‘violent’.³ Violence was by definition a gratuitous trespass, externally imposed.⁴ Indeed, the word ‘violent’ is used in the main source for this essay only to describe the emotional effects of avoidance of mortification. Yet to beat oneself to the point of bleeding in pursuit of spiritual goals can, for those writing outside this theological tradition, really only be seen as an act of violence. But claims that psychological violence arose equally in this case because of indulgence in a more intellectual form of spiritual endeavour situate the story of Maubuisson as an important laboratory to study the tensions in the spiritual life of France in the wake of the Wars of Religion.

This present study will follow the lead of Barbara Diefendorf, whose 2004 monograph *From Penitence to Charity: Pious Women and the Catholic Reformation in France* established that penitential mortification or the ‘ascetic impulse’ was not merely another expression of a tradition common to late medieval and early modern Catholic history, but that, in an historically specific way for France in the wake of the Wars of Religion, it was the ‘very motor for Catholic revival’.⁵ Diefendorf historicized and localized self-mortification to show that intensive penitential practice was redirected into reform by the energies of the so-called *dévots*, members of the uncompromisingly anti-Huguenot Catholic elite which had been active in the French Wars of Religion. She shows that Catholic ‘revival was deeply rooted in the traumas of religious war and in the apocalyptic and penitential spirituality to which the wars gave birth’, as many Catholics desired to ‘appease the wrath of God, end heresy and save souls’.⁶ The promotion of penitence and the work of women to entrench Catholicism drove religious reform as surely as any more formal doctrine did.

Diefendorf finds that the spread of ascetic groups and asceticism in new religious houses occurred widely across the first third of the seventeenth century, but observes that this disposition had largely tapered off by the 1630s. After that, she argues, religious women became more oriented towards expressing their love of God through charitable works: ‘intense self-scrutiny and self-denial came to replace flagellation, excessive fasting and other dramatic behaviours in the practice of devout piety’.⁷ She qualifies her account of the ‘natural fading’ of asceticism and its ‘self-limiting’ aspects by noting that ‘incipient division among the *dévots* even before the Jansenist movement took shape’ led the decline to be ‘in some quarters accelerated by theological quarrels over the nature of true penitence and the virtue of contemplative retreat’.⁸ The story to be examined here is of one such quarrel, a crossroads moment that shows two competing attitudes to penitential mortification in tension.

Each side of the Maubuisson debate positioned the other as taking the ‘easy’ route to spiritual progress and each side saw the other as placing excessive emotional demands on adepts. In an inversion of more traditional discourse of concern for moderation in the use of physical mortification, the use of supposedly too little mortification led to accusations of dangerous emotional excess which harmed individuals, disrupted institutional order and could be traced ultimately to the work of the devil. To consider the ‘mortification wars’ at Maubuisson through the lens of the history of emotions will show how a dispute in one religious house reflected and refashioned the specific historical moment in which mortification was a significant if contested arena of Catholic reform. Individual emotional excess and alleged communal havoc wrought by seductive teachings of those who repudiated mortification made this dispute relevant to questions of both governance and communal order.

The politics of mortification, moreover, were played out not only in the privacy of a person’s cell or within the cloisters of a convent, but could reach the national stage. In this period, proponents at each end of the spectrum of

views on mortification drew the ire of authorities. Cardinal Richelieu saw to the arrest at different times of two of the central figures in the Maubuisson case, even though they held quite different views on self-mortification. Mother Magdelaine de Flers (c.1591–1660), who was Mistress of Novices of the Augustinian Hôtel-Dieu convent at Montdidier, rejected physical mortification and was linked to a group of mystical adepts known as the Picardy Illuminists. In 1629, Richelieu's 'grey eminence', his confessor Father Joseph Du Tremblay, arrested and interrogated de Flers in Paris, following an accusation of heresy originating with a rival religious order in Picardy.⁹ A panel of Sorbonne theologians exonerated her, but she had to stand down from her position. In 1638 Richelieu also imprisoned Father Jean Duvergier de Hauranne (1581–1643), the abbot Saint-Cyran, who had close ties with both Maubuisson and the Jansenist abbey of Port-Royal, which was known for its austereities. Saint-Cyran's role at Maubuisson was to undo the alleged damage caused by Mother de Flers. By the end of the seventeenth century both the 'pre-Quietism' of de Flers and the 'proto-Jansenism' of early Port-Royal in evidence at Maubuisson in this case, had become distinct heresies. Retracing some of the steps that led such ostensibly clear theological lines to be drawn takes us to debates about the place of mortification in Catholicism and its significance for the history of emotions.

Maubuisson in context: mortification and its discontents in early modern Catholicism

In late medieval and early modern Western Catholicism, governing the emotions through acts of self-mortification was one of the expectations of holy people, being one of the signal paths to a reputation for holiness. Mortification was about patrolling the link between sin and the emotions, notably feelings of pride and love of self. The Parisian holy lay woman Marie Du Drac (d. 1590) characterized the attitudes typical for this time, stating: 'human perfection consists of an entire mortification of all evil passions and all self-love and sensual love, with regard to both ourselves and to all other creatures in this world'.¹⁰ Vanity, self-love, immoderate love of other creatures and pride were in turn aligned with sensual behaviours, such as fondness for good food. Mortification was not always what moderns would see as violent, though the suffering of Christ figured strongly as a model, at times accompanied by a perceived need to expel demons or simply to punish errant flesh.¹¹

It is a perennial tension for Catholicism that physical or affective signs of individual holiness, such as ecstasies or raptures are open to ambiguity and disputation.¹² Moving too swiftly to a state of ecstasy without having carried out suitable mortifications, or, alternately, indulging in self-mortification to suspicious excess could be signs that the flesh – in prideful pursuit of a reputation for holiness – was serving its own ends. Self-mortification was by definition not self-mortification at all if, by inducing pride it became a perverse celebration of the flesh. An important schema for the interpretation of

self-mortification in individual cases was the discernment of spirits, a discourse in increasingly common use since the later middle ages. Discernment demanded that origins of all displays of holiness and all sentiments of religious development had to be subjected to scrutiny, to verify that they were not, in truth, the work of the devil. Discernment on the part of spiritual directors or reflexively on the part of the penitent was a way to identify and head off a desire for worldly attainment. Judgments of self and others could serve as a warning bell that sounded on detection of the emotion of pride, chief among the deadly sins.¹³

Rapture or ecstasy were understood to be a hoped-for reward for devotional assiduity. But Madame Barbe Acarie, the holy woman at the centre of *dévote* spirituality, believed that the ease with which her own raptures seized her was a bad sign, and that ‘it was necessary to proceed through “a long purgation and penitence” if one hoped to achieve spiritual heights’.¹⁴ Her example is typical of the view that for proponents of extreme mortification, to replace such acts with a simple quest for ecstatic trances was an error which misapprehended the meaning of ecstasy as a reward.

Excessive self-mortification could cause psychological, physical or moral harm and could cloud the process of discernment. St Teresa of Jesus saw excessive asceticism as the cause of melancholy, a result of the body’s weakness after too much pain.¹⁵ And as Alison Weber observed for the Spanish Carmelites under St Teresa, difficulties could arise in ‘judging ecstasy from without and of distinguishing divine communication from the effects of poor diet, self-inflicted pain and sensory deprivation’.¹⁶

Self-mortification was meant to be just one in a repertoire of devotional activities expected of all aspirants: even opponents of self-mortification recognized the need to depict themselves as believing in the merits of balanced use. Father Pierre Guérin, who had stood accused of illuminism along with Mother Magdelaine de Flers and others, did not reject mortification outright, but wrote cautiously in 1633 that it was ‘not enough, with no other rule’.¹⁷ In practice, however, when religious leaders had a chance to press their case for one devotional style or another in the little worlds of religious houses, they would do so. What they wrote would always be likely to underestimate their actual beliefs.

The key players at Maubuisson staked their respective claims across a period of 14 years and the incumbencies of several contesting religious leaders. Mother Marie-Angélique de Sainte-Magdelaine Arnauld (born Jacqueline Arnauld, and here referred to as Mother Angélique, 1591–1660), the famous Port-Royal reformer associated with the history of early Jansenism, was a major proponent of self-mortification. She held the position of abbess at Maubuisson between 1618 and 1623: her role both on-site at Maubuisson and then later from her base at Port-Royal des Champs is of central importance in the present study. A young priest, Dom Louis Quinet, was the spiritual director at Maubuisson between 1627 and 1630 who allegedly tried to draw the sisters away from acts of mortification to more inner spirituality and, in

so doing, away from obedience to the recently arrived superior, Mother Marie des Anges (Suireau, 1599–1658), who was in that role between 1627 and 1648. Mother Magdelaine de Flers was also a promoter of passive spirituality who came to Maubuisson for six months in 1632 from December 1631, as an adviser to make the nuns ‘more interior’, on the recommendation of the convent’s spiritual director, Dom Jean Catois. De Flers saw mortifications as unnecessary church-required paths to holiness. A key influence late in the history of these conflicts was the abbot Saint-Cyran, who came to the spiritual rescue of the sisters allegedly bedevilled by contact with Mother de Flers.

Another important figure is Madeleine Le Cerf, in religion Sister Sainte-Candide, a Maubuisson nun whose recollections form part of the later hagiographical writings about both Mother Angélique Arnauld and Mother Marie des Anges and provide the bulk of the evidence for this essay. The usual caveats apply, therefore, in relation to the use of such one-sided sources: it is only between the lines, for example, that one senses the dominant personality of Mother Marie des Anges, in particular, and the sometimes questionable loyalty to her on the part of Sister Candide. Moreover, there must remain some uncertainty about the level of mortification actually observed, whether more stringent but strategically underplayed or potentially trivial but overstated. In this light, the ‘violence’ at issue, whether physical or emotional, requires its own caveat, as its level and prevalence can never be accurately vouched for.

The incumbency of Mother Angélique (1618–23): mortification in service of reputation

Maubuisson was an ancient and significant French religious house which, late in the sixteenth century, became notorious as the home of Henri IV’s mistress, Gabrielle d’Estrées, whose sister Angélique d’Estrées, had been abbess since 1597. The future Mother Angélique (Arnauld) took her vows there, irregularly, as a nine-year-old in 1600.¹⁸ In 1618 Mother Angélique, by then already a successful reformer at the Port-Royal des Champs convent, was commissioned to go to the abbey to reform the house. Appointed by the Cistercian abbot Nicholas Boucherat, she went as part of a crown-sponsored attempt to counteract the house’s reputation for scandal and to institute the spirit of Catholic reform. Her arrival at the elite social hub of Maubuisson Abbey was unwelcome. After a series of literal skirmishes between the two abbesses, involving the use of soldiery in support of both sides, Mother Angélique Arnauld commenced a programme of reform that ultimately met with some success. The new abbess took with her three nuns from Port-Royal and obtained permission additionally to bring in a noviciate of up to 40 young women without dowry, whom she judged to be the most suitable kind of recruit for a serious attempt at reform.¹⁹ Thus, she created something of a community within a community, insisting on a more austere lifestyle for all the women, with ‘closure, silence and goods in common’.²⁰ Mother Angélique was a key background figure throughout the stories which follow, so her own reforming incumbency is noted here.

Mother Angélique's reform included what seem to have been relatively mild forms of self-mortification. Even with an 'extreme fervour and desire to revive the spirit of austerity', she 'always took care to mortify herself first', choosing the ugliest cell in the dormitory (near an open sewage trench), infested with toads and lizards.²¹ She required everyone to follow the rule about what could be eaten: it was bread soaked in bouillon, with added herbs in summer and cabbage in winter, and two eggs; in summer it was omelette and soup, with salads of bitter chicory without oil and a bit of salt. But Angélique herself went further; the chronicler Sister Candide remarked: 'it was stunning the ways she found to mortify herself in eating'.²² She and some of the nuns ate chicory without vinegar; she did without eggs that the others ate, eating only herbs with her potage; in winter when there were no herbs she ate leftover eggs collected up over several days. She also used the 'most vile cloth' for her and the newcomers' clothes and made sure nothing was done with it which tended to vanity or superfluity.²³ Candide does not mention self-flagellation. It is not clear why: when she writes of the term of office of Mother Marie des Anges, this was one of the forms of mortification to which she refers, and the biographer of Mother Angélique similarly observes that the Port-Royal abbess did not shrink from physical extremes, tolerating flagellation several times a week performed on herself and, on her request, by others on her, until her shoulders were flayed.²⁴ The long-time nuns at Maubuisson, we are told, had imagined 'frightful and savage' reforms but were surprised at how kind Angélique was to them.²⁵ Perhaps realizing she had done all she could, Mother Angélique returned to Port-Royal des Champs in 1623, taking with her 32 nuns from Maubuisson.²⁶

From 1623 to 1626 the abbess was Mother Charlotte de Soissons, whose time in office seems to have been unremarkable. After Soissons' death, Mother Angélique recommended to the abbey's governors one of her own protégées from Port-Royal des Champs, Mother Marie des Anges, who took up the role of abbess in 1627, remaining until 1648. Her lengthy incumbency is the subject of the main text on which the present essay is based.²⁷ None of the material available to us suggests that Marie des Anges's appointment was a popular one. Bringing with her the asceticism of Port-Royal des Champs, she became rapidly embroiled in factional disputes within the house in which the politics of mortification were inextricably caught up. These revolved initially around the new spiritual director, Dom Louis Quinet, who arrived in the same year as the new abbess and remained there for three years.²⁸ Quinet appears to have been a follower of the mystical *dévot* Capuchin Benoît de Canfield. Canfield (d. 1610) was the author of one of the best-selling and most controversial works of devotional piety of the era, the *Rule of Perfection*.²⁹ In brief, the Port-Royal-influenced nuns, who appear to have been in the minority at that stage, embraced self-mortification, while on the opposite side were practices of a more interior spirituality influenced by equally fashionable ideas, held by Canfield and others, of mystical union with God and interior dominance of the will. In the eyes of the Port-Royal-formed abbess, such passive devotion

reeked of laxity. Sister Candide saw Dom Quinet's spiritual direction as a source of profound emotional disruption to individual nuns and the order of the house.

Dom Louis Quinet and the perils of 'delicious devotion'

According to Candide, Dom Quinet (referred to as 'Guinet' in the account) was deficient on a number of fronts: he maintained a personal retinue of two armed priests who guarded him, brawled, and expected to be fed at the abbey; he gossiped and played favourites, appearing to have sexual interest in the young women; and he took excessive interest in his own dietary preferences.³⁰ She observed: 'He only took nourishment of the most delicate soups, fresh eggs every morning, good poultry and rabbits and other similar meat, almost never eating the common meat', and along with needing special remedies when ill, he ate 'delicacies, dried confections, nut confections, candied lemon and orange peel, conserves, pastes [pâtés or pastries?], syrups in his drinks, even when he was not sick.' She added: 'These delicacies were more surprising in that there appeared to be no need for them, being rather a wicked habit unsuited to a religious.'³¹

Two related problems stood out above all, however: Quinet insisted that Mother Marie not have any access to her charges that resembled the work of a spiritual director, and, relatedly, he promoted a brand of spirituality which, in the end, turned the nuns' minds. According to Candide Quinet believed that abbesses 'did not and could not have any authority whatsoever to know the interior of their girls' and in this way he 'rendered the abbesses practically idols: taking away from them spirit, eyes and hands – that is the knowledge of their community and their capacity to act in it'.³² By foregrounding this exclusivity, Candide positioned Mother Marie des Anges as unable to intervene directly in her nuns' direction and spiritual formation.

For his spirituality, Candide writes, Quinet 'never spoke of penance or mortification': 'One didn't speak of sins or the pains that they merit, but of verities of the theory of the essence of God . . . and things so elevated that they carried off the spirit of the girls'.³³ The first step in this 'easy' devotion, she observed, was to accept what he said was true.³⁴ The results were deleterious. One novice was 'troubled and agitated by his discourse', while another had a

curious and fervent spirit and evaporated herself with her spiritualities . . . She was almost always in ravishment and outside of herself. She was so transcendent she was unaware of every other thing and disdained the guidance of the mother. The sweetness of the devotion and [her own] violent desire to communicate to the other novices and postulants made her go into a swoon.³⁵

In this way Quinet's hoarding of authority was linked to the harmful affective states induced by his teachings, the nature of which, in turn, Candide linked

to his dietary self-indulgence, referring to his ‘very delicious’ devotion.³⁶ Quinet’s quest for exclusive authority and demand for obedience are positioned in this narrative as dictatorial, with his word effectively law, permitting him to live the good life, and rationalize avoidance of mortification by promoting his own brand of affective spirituality.

Sensing a threat to order and discipline, Mother Marie wanted to have Dom Quinet removed and sought the advice of her mentor, Mother Angélique. Angélique recommended that the best thing was to find a new vicar, and she suggested Dom Maugier, the abbot de la Charmoie, as the new male superior of the abbey.³⁷ He had Quinet removed immediately on his arrival, in 1630, and appointed a new director, Father Jean Rouet.³⁸ After eight months Mother Marie requested that he, too, be removed.³⁹ In consultation with Mother Angélique, Dom de la Charmoie identified a new director in Dom Jean Catois, whom Mother Marie des Anges at first found compatible. But she soon identified in him, too, a ‘furious passion to govern’ which unlike Quinet ‘did not stop at the spiritual, . . . but went to the temporal as well, wanting to be master of both’.⁴⁰ Mother Marie angered him when she failed to consult him before removing five of the office-bearers of the abbey, replacing them with nuns loyal to her. Thus were planted the seeds of further division.

The deposed office-bearers tried to get Dom de la Charmoie to give them their jobs back but when that did not work they sought the aid of Dom Catois, asking him to bring nuns in to help with the instruction of the novices and the young professed nuns.⁴¹ Catois made the case to Charmoie that the young nuns needed to be instructed as the conduct of the mother was ‘not interior and spiritual enough’.⁴² When the name of Mother Magdelaine de Flers was proposed, Mother Marie said she opposed the appointment because de Flers ‘had a great reputation of sanctity, and in the sublime ways of ecstasy, or ravishments and doctrine, totally marvellous, from which [Mother Marie] wanted distance only finding surety in the charity and simplicity of the gospel’.⁴³ In her account of the imminent arrival of de Flers, Sister Candide defended the spirituality of Mother Marie des Anges, by deliberately appropriating the kind of language used by alleged illuminists. Using key terms which evoked the internal renewal prioritized in illuminist spirituality, she referred to Mother Marie’s desire for the souls she governed to be ‘divested of the former man’, as well as to a claimed interest in ‘interior mortification’, but she added, notably, ‘the marks of mortification of Jesus Christ with which she herself was clothed’.⁴⁴ In this view, there was no need to bring a new spiritual advisor, as Mother Marie catered to all needs.

Nonetheless Abbot de la Charmoie went to visit Magdelaine de Flers at Montdidier and observed her over a period of eight days, ‘to better discern the spirit of these girls’: he even submitted himself to the spiritual instruction of de Flers.⁴⁵ He noted ‘surprising things’ about her, that ‘she spoke admirably of God, of his essence and his perfections, [that] she had great ravishments and [that] one day, when she was at prayer, he saw her levitate four feet above the ground. All of this made him believe that these were the effects

of the spirit of God'.⁴⁶ Charmoie appointed de Flers to be responsible for all Maubuisson's young professed nuns and for any others who wanted instruction. Dom Catois sent a carriage to Montdidier to fetch Mother de Flers and a companion, sister Antoinette Harengues.⁴⁷ Candide notes Mother Marie felt distant from the women, but we are told because of the respect she had for her superior, abbot Charmoie, and because abbot Saint-Cyran and Mother Angélique in turn held Charmoie to be a great servant of God, she submitted.

Just as Mother Marie saw Dom Catois as an even greater threat to her governance than her earlier rival Dom Quinet, the stakes became higher when abbot Charmoie appointed de Flers. No one mentioned the devil in relation to Dom Quinet's physically undemanding but emotionally damaging devotions, yet this charge came to be levelled at de Flers' similar repudiation of physical mortification in favour of affective and intellectual aspirations. In this way, the dual threat of emotional harm to the sisters from the absence of mortifications and the diminution of Mother Marie's authority moved towards a climax over the sojourn of Mother de Flers.

Magdelaine de Flers: devotional passivity and demonic pride

Mother Magdelaine de Flers was a leading figure in the little-documented group 'Picardy Illuminists' who, as noted above, were at various times interrogated and even imprisoned for their beliefs.⁴⁸ Their illuminism appears to have consisted of enthusiastic reading of influential mystical figures followed by instruction to parishioners and novices in contemplative religious activities, which aimed at inner union with God. 'Passivity' in devotions could have direct institutional implications for the church, promoting a minimum of clerical intervention, and wariness (for example) of the scrupulosity that could accompany confession. But it also entailed seeking to reach mystical states referred to by such terms as 'annihilation' and even 'deification', meaning union with God. Such views were in keeping with what Diefendorf refers to as the 'traditional division of mystical experience into the purgative, illuminative and unitive stages' which point to the adept finding themselves at one with God through the 'total annihilation of self-will'.⁴⁹ Enemies alleged that Illuminist networks extended beyond Picardy to Flanders and that they had 60,000 followers.⁵⁰ Relatively little remains to us of the writings of the group itself: Sister Candide stated that she wrote down what de Flers said to her, but she did not keep the papers, and many other manuscripts appear to have been burnt by an Oratorian priest, Jean Du Ferrier, who went to Montdidier in 1639 in an attempt to expunge the influence of de Flers.⁵¹

Given that Dom Quinet came from a similar tradition to that of de Flers, the novices and postulants (of whom Candide was one) are likely to have had some exposure to ideas of passive devotion. In the view of Candide, however, it was Mother de Flers who wrought the most emotional damage at the abbey of Maubuisson. Candide positioned herself as one of those who did not take

up de Flers' ideas readily but nonetheless noted that de Flers had identified her as a potential adept and admits she was herself curious about the new ideas. As her account unfolds, Candide chides those who did not realize that sometimes it is better not to ask at all, when simply to know poses a dire risk.⁵²

Sister Candide, at the start of her account of de Flers' time at Maubuisson, identifies Magdalaine de Flers as an evil possessed person, perhaps not much different from a witch. She noted that Mother Magdalaine, 'passed for a rare and miraculous person but . . . was in truth possessed by the demon and miserably fooled by this tenebrous ape'.⁵³ De Flers did not act like a textbook demoniac or witch, but Candide saw her devotional enthusiasm and the fear she induced in others as an opening to depict her as inhabited by the devil and doing his work.

According to Candide, de Flers scoffed at those who believe 'that it is necessary to go to God by mortification, penance and good works'. She believed that God had told her that in the end everyone would leave such illusions, which she maintained the church used to prevent the happiness of souls, and would enter into 'simple nudity' to enjoy God.⁵⁴ De Flers is also claimed to have said that if one is in union with God, it is acceptable to follow one's first thoughts, telling Candide that if she wanted to go naked in the church, she could do it in liberty.⁵⁵ With such challenges to contemplate, Candide remarked 'One only had to converse with mother Madeleine to recognize in her the character of the demon, which is a fraud and a liar, . . . [she] used perpetual detours and at the moment one reflected on a maxim that she had advanced, she gave it a subtle new twist so that it was hard to keep up with her'.⁵⁶ At four meetings that took place between de Flers, the abbess Marie des Anges, theologians and other suitable (*habiles*) people at Maubuisson, de Flers spoke 'like a chameleon . . . using double words that changed the colour of the principle she saw them condemning'.⁵⁷ De Flers also explicitly subverted the asceticism of Mother Marie, which included the use of flagellation. One sister went to de Flers complaining of the 'great repugnance' she had for disciplining herself, and one day when the community was doing this, Mother Magdeleine asked the nun: 'Do you have liberty not to go?' and when she said 'Yes, mother, I have liberty,' Mother Magdeleine said 'In that case, just don't go'.⁵⁸

As in her account of the luxury-loving Dom Quinet, Candide records emotional disruption arising as a result of de Flers' influence. One of the sisters supposedly stopped eating because she said 'it was too base and human'.⁵⁹ She went for 20 days without solid food and had to be made special consommés and essences. Candide observed that the very same 'sublime spirituality that prevented her from eating as people [normally] do didn't prevent her from always playing around, even when praying to God and from saying her office with many indecencies' which she justified saying with 'a lightness and pitiable evaporation: "I have liberty, my sister, you have nothing to say to me, I have liberty".'⁶⁰ Underlining the morally corrosive and behaviourally disruptive effect of de Flers' mysticism, Candide noted that some

of the nuns were in a ‘continual faint’, while others were in a jolly mood which made them ‘susceptible to all impressions’. Thus, Candide remarked, under de Flers ‘one saw the sisters all changed and the good order of the house turned upside down’.⁶¹

Mother de Flers also allegedly intimidated the abbess of Argensoles, who was visiting the abbey, by flying into a rage when the woman appeared to doubt her words. She went into a ‘violent transport of zeal or pride’, walking ‘with giant steps, for she was very big, with her arms outstretched, and her eyes rolling and sparkling, she cried . . . “oh love, someone is resisting you, everyone is resisting God”’. The abbess ran away and hid near the wall by a bed and then slid under the bed while de Flers continued to rage. To reinforce the perception of her being demonically possessed, Candide’s account states, ‘The terror that that imprinted on those whose saw it was proof that it was not the god of peace who possessed her.’⁶²

Most dramatically, the effect of de Flers’ purportedly antinomian instruction and forceful personality on Candide le Cerf herself is depicted as diabolical. De Flers supposedly promoted the experience of possession by the devil as a positive, telling Sister Candide that God conducted people to perfection by taking them through ‘frightful deserts, great temptations, and finally possession by the Devil’, saying ‘that one should not fear it because it was an ordinary conduct of God on chosen souls’.⁶³ Candide reports that one sister (probably herself) sensed one day a luminous presence. It inspired her with terrible movements of pride leading her to think ‘I will be similar to God’.⁶⁴ The agitation she felt at her own sinful presumption led her back to the simple light of Christian humility, as if a voice had said to her ‘Hey, who are you to elevate yourself like that?’⁶⁵ That divine advice reminded her of what was at stake, showing her that ‘the demon is always inseparable from pride’.⁶⁶ She then experienced something like demonic possession, feeling ‘agitation and oppression’ as the demon fought to keep her in its snare, when it realized that Christ was winning her back.⁶⁷

Mother Marie des Anges decided that ‘the demon reigned in these spiritualities’ and resolved to remove de Flers.⁶⁸ But the abbess’s male superiors were worried about de Flers’ reaction if they confronted her. Marie des Anges, however, recalled de Flers’ early encounters with Father Joseph Du Tremblay, and, apparently with his backing, contrived that de Flers be scared off with a lie, to the effect that someone was coming to seize and interrogate her. In the middle of the night de Flers was told that someone was coming for her in the morning, so she left early the next day.⁶⁹ As she left, she charged Candide not to say a word of what she had taught her. After this, the governing fathers called in the abbot Saint-Cyran – a figure closely aligned to Port-Royal – to bring the troubled nuns back from the influence of what he called ‘the depths of hell’.⁷⁰ The abbot also saw to it that an attempt to have Mother de Flers arrested and sent to Rome was scotched, to protect the reputation of Maubuission. It was reported that de Flers was nonetheless put more or less under house arrest at Montdidier for two years and made to tend plague victims.⁷¹

Conclusion

What are we able to conclude from these stories? It is probably impossible for us to determine in any objective way the extent of the emotional disturbance caused by a particular form of religious devotion, whether it be the intense self-mortification of Mother Angélique and Mother Marie or the solipsistic mysticism of Mother de Flers. Each had its origins in late medieval piety which sought, through diverse means, a closer proximity to God. In an institutional sense, however, each mode of devotional endeavour was manifestly identified in this case with a single figure of local authority, and the fact that Maubuisson was a leadership battleground can give us pause to consider the emotional toll on all the sisters, whose loyalties were constantly tested as each new power play unfolded. From a common sense point of view, therefore, it is possible to imagine that some of the nuns might have simply tried to ingratiate themselves with a stream of directors, while having no real grasp of or interest in the bewildering and diverse devotional modes presented to them. The sisters would have understood that in the climate of Maubuisson they were expected to have extreme and notable religious experiences, and it is likely that they tried to gain the approval of whoever was in charge, even at a physical or emotional cost to themselves. And just as we can almost feel the longing of the nun who looks at the delicious foods given to the young spiritual director, while she had to go without, we might also imagine that the charismatic Mother de Flers could indeed have displayed extravagant and intimidating behaviour or posed morally challenging paradoxes to young women ill-equipped to understand the theology behind them.

The spiritualities and views on mortification of Angélique Arnauld, Louis Quinet, Marie des Anges and Magdelaine de Flers were competing manifestations of the same religious revival which came to be represented as opposite in the specific context of this house's history. Intense mortification and passive devotion both helped to entrench Catholicism in France in the first 20 to 30 years of the seventeenth century, but how each type of practice was articulated in the complex religious politics of the era depended very largely on local circumstance. An institutional battle over the souls of nuns was one way in which the violence of the wars seems to have entered into peacetime spiritual currency. In a time of re-territorializing for Catholicism, the territory to be staked out began with the inner lives of individuals and the communal life of religious houses. Control of the emotional sphere was thus at a premium in a time of intense religious disputation: the emotions were not merely the fuel for the internal struggles of Catholic renewal, but also their prize.

Recent history of religion has gone to lengths to demonstrate that actions undertaken within a religious context must be seen as meaningfully religious and not merely as pretexts for grander, 'truly' political, ambitions. 'Putting religion back into the wars of religion', as Mack Holt described it, has rightly been a high priority for a generation of historians reclaiming as inherently meaningful the actions of individuals and institutions, not as tokens manoeuvred

cynically on a ‘real-political’ chessboard.⁷² To talk of Marie des Anges shoring up her own institutional authority might therefore seem to depart from this principle. But it does not: we see intensive political manoeuvring on the part of Marie des Anges, but this still cannot be said to have been done cynically: service to God was the highest goal and there is no evidence that she sought otherwise. The creature had to come second. In a sense, then, the story shows how change in Catholicism can advance micro-culture by micro-culture and patron by patron. It is literally impossible to tease out in the Maubuisson case the devotional questions from the politics of the abbey, which linked in turn to intrigues closer to the crown, which linked in turn to local intrigues in Picardy. Change in Catholicism is immensely complex and generalization about change over time can only be advanced with caution. Theological issues bear directly on practice, but are rarely if ever separable from the complexities of interpersonal and intra-institutional intrigue.

Notes

- 1 There is some doubt about the exact chronology. The best account seems to be that of Marie-Thérèse Gaudio-Paquet, who positions the start date as December 1631. *Education populaire féminine au XVIIe siècle: Pierre Guérin et les Filles de la Croix*, Thèse de doctorat de troisième cycle (s.l., n.d.) Université Charles de Gaulle, Lille III, 1979, non-paginated chronology. Louis Cognet’s date of 1632 appears to be based on the evidence in Anne-Marie de Flécelles de Brégy, *Modèle de foi, et de patience dans toute les traverses de la vie & dans les grandes persecutions; ou vie de la Mère Marie des Anges (Suireau) Abbesse de Maubuisson et de Port-Royal*, n.p.: Aux dépens de la Compagnie, 1754, pp. 236, 260). (Louis Cognet, *Crépuscule des mystiques*, Paris: Desclée, n.d., p. 42). See also Moshe Sluhovsky, *Believe Not Every Spirit: Possession, Mysticism, and Discernment in Early Modern Catholicism*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007, p. 146; and Henri Bremond, *Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux en France: depuis la fin des guerres de religion jusqu’à nos jours*, vol. 11, Paris: Armand Colin, 1968, pp. 103–56, p. 147. On this case see also, Jean Orcibal, *Les Origines du Jansénisme*, 5 vols, Paris: J. Vrin, 1947, vol. 2: pp. 412–14.
- 2 Even such a seemingly trivial act of gustatory self-denial needs to be understood in context, however: as the biographer of Mother Angélique Arnauld tells us, taste was the sense through which the first sin was committed. Angélique de Saint-Jean Arnauld d’Andilly, *Relations sur la vie de la Révérende Mère Angélique de Sainte-Magdelaine Arnauld, ou Recueil de la Mère Angélique de Saint-Jean Arnauld d’Andilly sur la vie de sa tante la Mère Marie-Angélique de Sainte-Magdelaine Arnauld, et sur la réforme des abbayes de Port-Royal, Maubuisson et autres faite par cette Sainte Abbesse* [Port-Royal (Paris), 1673], n.p., 1737, p. 209.
- 3 Saint-Jean Arnauld d’Andilly, *Relations*, p. 69.
- 4 Rape, for example, is referred to as a violence. Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 170.
- 5 Barbara B. Diefendorf, *From Penitence to Charity: Pious Women and the Catholic Reformation in France*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 242.
- 6 Diefendorf, *From Penitence to Charity*, p. 242.
- 7 Diefendorf, *From Penitence to Charity*, p. 243.
- 8 Diefendorf, *From Penitence to Charity*, pp. 13, 8, 169, 13.
- 9 Gaudio-Paquet, *Education populaire*, non-paginated chronology.

- 10 Diefendorf, *From Penitence to Charity*, p. 86.
- 11 Patrick Vandermeersch, ‘Self-flagellation in the Early Modern Era’, in Jan Frans van Dijkhuizen and Karl A. E. Enenkel (eds), *The Sense of Suffering: Constructions of Physical Pain in Early Modern Culture*, Leiden: Brill, 2009, pp. 253–66.
- 12 See the introduction to Anne Jacobson Schutte, *Aspiring Saints: Pretense of Holiness, Inquisition, and Gender in the Republic of Venice, 1618–1750*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003.
- 13 Nancy Caciola and Moshe Sluhovsky, ‘Spiritual Physiologies: The Discernment of Spirits in Medieval and Early Modern Europe’, *Preternature: Critical and Historical Studies on the Prenatural* 1, 1, 2012, 1–48; Sluhovsky, *Believe Not Every Spirit*. And mortification could also be interpersonal, what we would call bullying, in pursuit of the reform of others. At Maubuisson, Mother Marie des Anges achieved the mortification of a nun who was too taken up with her own coiffure by pouncing, scissors concealed in hand, while the nun was at her mirror, cutting the long hair off. Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, pp. 178–9.
- 14 Diefendorf, *From Penitence to Charity*, p. 91.
- 15 Alison Weber, *Teresa of Avila and the Rhetoric of Femininity*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996, p. 140.
- 16 Weber, *Teresa of Avila and the Rhetoric of Femininity*, p. 40.
- 17 The Guérin quote is found in Jules Corblet, *Origines royennes de l'institut des Filles-de-la-Croix, d'après des documents inédits*, Paris: J. -B. Dumoulin, 1869, p. 18.
- 18 This was technically too young: the change of her name on the necessary papers led the move to pass undetected. Brian E. Strayer, *Suffering Saints: Jansensists and Convulsionnaires in France, 1640–1799*, Eastbourne, UK: Sussex Academic Press, 2008, p. 77.
- 19 Strayer, *Suffering Saints*, p. 80; Saint-Jean Arnauld d'Andilly, *Relations*, p. 112.
- 20 Strayer, *Suffering Saints*, p. 80.
- 21 Saint-Jean Arnauld d'Andilly, *Relations*, p. 119: ‘extrême ferveur & desir, de voir revivre l'esprit d'austérité’; p. 120: ‘elle avoit une attention toute particulière à se mortifier toute la premiere’.
- 22 Saint-Jean Arnauld d'Andilly, *Relations*, p. 121.
- 23 Saint-Jean Arnauld d'Andilly, *Relations*, p. 122: ‘plus viles étoffe’.
- 24 Saint-Jean Arnauld d'Andilly, *Relations*, pp. 201–2.
- 25 Saint-Jean Arnauld d'Andilly, *Relations*, p. 104.
- 26 Strayer, *Suffering Saints*, p. 81.
- 27 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*. See also Sluhovsky, *Believe Not Every Spirit*, which gives an account of this case, pp. 144–7.
- 28 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 212.
- 29 Diefendorf, *From Penitence to Charity*, pp. 84–5.
- 30 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, pp. 212; 196; 218–19.
- 31 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, pp. 218–19: ‘Il n'estoit nourri que d'excellens bouillons, œufs frais tout les matins, bons poulets, lapins, chapons, & toute autre viande semblable, ne mangeant presque jamais de viande commune’; ‘delicatesses, confitures seches, noix confites, écorce de citron & d'Orange, conserves, pastes, Syrops batus dans son bruvage hors du tems de sa maladie. Ces delicatesses estoient plus surprenantes, en ce que l'on n'y voyoit nulle nécessité, mais une mauvaise accoutumance peu convenable à un Religieux.’
- 32 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 195: ‘que les Abbesses n'avoient & ne pouvoient avoir nulle autorité de connôître de l'interieur des filles, quelque desir que les filles mêmes eussent de le leur communiquer ne pouvant avoir grace pour conduire . . . Ainsi il rendoit les Abbesses presque des idoles: leur ostant l'esprit, les yeux & les mains, c'est à dire, la connoissance de leur Communauté, & le pouvoir d'agir en rien.’

- 33 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 203: ‘Il ne parloit jamais de penitence ni de mortification’; p. 201: ‘On n’y parloit point de la crainte des jugemens de Dieu, de ses pechez, des peines qu’ils meritent, mais des veritez de theorie sur l’essence de Dieu, . . . & choses si élevées qu’elles emportoient l’esprit des filles.’
- 34 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 201.
- 35 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, pp. 197–8: ‘se trouva l’esprit fort troublé & agité par ses discours’; p. 200: ‘elle se plaisoit tellement dans ces agreables spiritualitez, qu’elle en estoit presque toujours en ravisement, & hors d’elle même. Elle meprisoit toute autre chose, tant elle etoit transcendante, & elle dedaignoit la conduite de la Mere . . . La suavité de sa devotion, & le désir violent de la communiquer aux autres Novices & postulantes, la faisoit tomber en pâmoison’.
- 36 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 201: ‘devotion fort delicieuse’.
- 37 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 214.
- 38 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 220.
- 39 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 221.
- 40 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 223: ‘une passion furieuse de gouverner’; pp. 223–4: ‘mais son ambition ne se bornoit pas au Spirituel . . . elle s’estendoit au temporel, voulant également estre maître de tous les deux’.
- 41 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 234.
- 42 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 235: ‘n’étoit pas assez interieure & spirituelle’.
- 43 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 235: ‘l’une estoit en grande reputation de sainteté, & dans les voyes sublimes d’extase, de ravisement & de doctrine, toute merveilleuse, de quoi la M. avoit de l’éloignement, ne trouvant de sureté que dans la charité & la simplicité de l’Evangile’.
- 44 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 237: ‘mortification interieure’; p. 238: ‘que les ames se depouillassent du viel home . . . & qu’elles travaillassent continuellement à se revêtir du nouveau en portant toujours les marques de mortification de Jesus Christ, dont elle même étoit toute revêtue’.
- 45 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 236: ‘pour mieux discerner l’esprit de ces filles’.
- 46 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 236: ‘Il y remarqua des choses surprenantes, elle parloit admirablement de Dieu, de son essence, de ses perfections; elle avoit de grands ravissemens, & un jour, pendant qu’elle étoit en oraison, il l’a vit elevee de terre quatre pieds. Tout cela lui fit croire que c’étoit des effets de l’esprit de Dieu.’
- 47 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 237.
- 48 On the local and national politics bearing on this group, see especially the rigorous Gaudio-Paquet, *Education populaire, passim*. See also: Corblet, *Origines royaunes de l’institut des Filles-de-la-Croix*, pp. 8–20. See also: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Manuscrits français (BNF, Ms. fr.), 17296 [André Du Saussay], ‘Remontrances sur faictes au Roy par le Cure de St Leu Saint Gilles a Paris sure la secte des Illuminez’ ff. 12r–19r.
- 49 Diefendorf, *From Penitence to Charity*, p. 84. Among the authors whose works they used were writings of the mystics Tauler and Ruysbroeck, and the saints Catherine of Genoa, Teresa of Avila, Jean de la Croix, Luis de Granada and, almost certainly, Father Benoît de Canfield. See, for example, Abbé Du Ferrier, *Memoires*, BNF, Ms. fr., 20945, f. 189r.
- 50 Vittorio Siri, *Memorie recondite dal’anno 1601 sino al 1640, di Vittorio Siri*, Paris: S. Cramoisy, 1677–9.
- 51 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 240. See, for example, Pierre Guérin, *La Saincte économie de la famille de Jésus*, Paris: M. Durand, 1633; on the manuscripts, see Abbé du Ferrier, *Memoires*, BNF, Ms. fr., 20945, f. 189r.
- 52 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 239.
- 53 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, pp. 238–9: ‘qui passoit pour une personne rare et miraculeuse, mais qui estoit en verité possedée du demon & miserablement trompée par ce singe de tenebres.’ ‘Ape’ refers to traditional designation of the devil as the ape of God.

- 54 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 244: ‘aller à Dieu par la mortification, la penitence, les bonnes œuvres’; ‘simple nudité’. The metaphor of nudity was quite commonly used in such spiritual practices as part of a quest to resemble Adam before the fall, but it left an obvious opening for literalist interpretation (Sluhovsky, *Believe Not Every Spirit*, p. 146).
- 55 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 248.
- 56 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 251: ‘Il ne faloit que converser avec la M. Magdelaine pour y reconnoître le caractere du demon, qui est d'estre fourbe & menteur [elle] . . . usoit de détours perpetuels; & du moment qu'elle voioit qu'on refléchissait sur un principe ou une maxime qu'elle avoit avancée, elle lui donnoit si subtilement un tour different, que l'esprit avoit peine à suivre un si rapide changement.’
- 57 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 251: ‘[elle faisait] comme le Cameleon . . . avec paroles doubles, qui changeoit de couleur le principe qu'elle voyoit qu'ils condamnoient.’
- 58 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 249: ‘grande repugnance’; ““Avez vous liberté de n'y point aller?”, “Oui, ma mere, j'ay liberté.” “O bien, repartit la M. Magdelaine, n'allez donc point.”
- 59 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 249: ‘trop basse et trop humaine’.
- 60 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, pp. 249–50: ‘sa sublime spiritualité, qui l'empêchoit de se nourrir comme les hommes, ne l'empêchoit pas de badiner toujours, même en priant Dieu, & de dire son office avec beaucoup d'indécences quand on l'en avertissoit charitablement, elle en estoit quite pour repondre avec une légereté & une evaporation pitoiable: “J'ay liberté, ma Sœur, vous n'avez rien à me dire, j'ai liberté”.’
- 61 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 250: ‘de continualles pâmoisons’; ‘susceptibles de toute impression’; ‘on voioit les soeurs toutes changées et le bon ordre de la maison toute renversé’.
- 62 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 242: ‘un transport violent de zèle ou d'orgueil (je laisse à le qualifier) elle se mit à marcher à pas de geant: car elle étoit fort grande les bras etendus, avec des yeux roulans & étincelans; & elle croioit en marchant de la sorte: “O amour, on te resiste, tout le monde resiste à Dieu.” Mais la, terreur que cela imprima dans les personnes qui la virent étoit une preuve que ce n'estoit pas le Dieu de la paix qui la possedoit.’
- 63 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 244: ‘deserts effroyables, par de grandes tentations, & enfin par la possession du demon’; ‘on ne devoit point du tout la craindre; parceque c'estoit une conduite ordinaire de Dieu sur les ames choisies’.
- 64 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 253: ‘je serai semblable à Dieu’.
- 65 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 253: ‘He, qui estes vous pour vous elever comme vous faites?’
- 66 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 254: ‘le demon est toujours inseparable de l'orgueil’.
- 67 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 254: ‘agitation & oppression’.
- 68 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 255: ‘le demon regnoit dans ces spiritualitez’.
- 69 Gaudio-Paquet, *Education populaire*, p. 448; Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 256; See also: Cognet, *Crépuscule des mystiques*, p. 42.
- 70 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 250: ‘du fond de l'enfer’.
- 71 Brégy, *Modèle de foi*, p. 258.
- 72 Mack P. Holt, ‘Putting Religion Back into the Wars of Religion’, *French Historical Studies* 18, 2, 1993, 524–51.

7 Violence in medical treatment in early modern Europe

Robert Weston

It is not usual to pair violence and medicine, however, during the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries medical practitioners employed violent forms of treatment, both in response to emotionally founded ailments and to those of a more generally encountered nature. This chapter explores verbal, physical and psychological acts of violence imposed on individuals' bodies and minds and examines the incidence of such violence and the emotions such acts evoked, by patients, between 'professionals', and in the community at large, found in contemporary texts and letters, the work of physicians, surgeons, patients and their families. It also considers whether there is a change in the extent to which violence was employed as a medical treatment over the period. If one emotion emerges consistently, it is fear, not only as a consequence of the threat of violence but also as an adjunct to treatment.

'Emotion' was a term that only gained widespread use in the nineteenth century, particularly in a medical context. The term employed to describe patients' emotions was 'passion'. Aside from its theological use, the term passion in the early modern period was perceived by medical practitioners as an agitated state of mind or spirit, positive or negative, which was engendered by some external event. In the context of this chapter that event was the use of, or threat of, violence. In this essay the word emotion is employed where contemporaneously the word passion would have been used. From the patients' standpoint they were internal sensations that could be expressed as tears or fury. In the early modern period violence was conceived as being forcible, cruel, injurious or to acting impetuously, little different to today's understanding.¹ As Manu Kothari and Lopa Mehta have commented: 'the way to iatrogenic (doctor-made) hell is paved with professedly good therapeutic intentions'.² If this is true of modern medicine was it not as valid in the early modern period. What is perhaps different is what was then deemed acceptable as opposed to what is now acceptable in a medical context.

The medical stricture 'First do no harm', in Latin, *primum non nocere*, is commonly said to be in the Hippocratic *Aphorisms*, though in fact this attribution has little foundation.³ Nonetheless, it is a notion that seems quite at odds with the use of violent measures by medical practitioners. In what ways did early modern medical practitioners violate their patients? Guy Williams

termed the eighteenth century ‘the Age of Agony’, and described various aspects of medical practice which were distressing experiences for patients.⁴ Operations for the removal of stones and amputations are obvious examples from surgery, but additionally, internal treatments prescribed by physicians were at times so violent to the body that death could ensue, as will be exemplified later. Surgery was a fearful undertaking for the patient to contemplate; as Lisa Silverman has remarked, ‘to read surgical texts is to read a catalogue of human misery’.⁵ Lyn Bennett has described how physicians in the seventeenth century utilized pain, or the threat of pain, to keep patients compliant with what they saw as their superior knowledge.⁶ On the other hand, Brockliss and Jones have contended that ‘during the eighteenth century most traditional operations could be performed relatively quickly and safely’.⁷ However, if the actions of the medical practitioners were performed with good intent, that is, to cure or save the lives of their patients, did that constitute violation in their eyes?

Inevitably this impinges on the question of medical ethics.⁸ From a broader standpoint, William Reddy pondered whether ‘It is . . . a valid question to ask, in any specific case, what kinds of suffering may be legitimately inflicted (by whom, on whom) and what kinds are illegitimate.’⁹ In a historical context, Reddy’s question can be rephrased as, did medical practitioners and the public at large accept the use of violence in order to improve individual health? It will be shown that the legitimacy of some medical practices was challenged between practitioners and among their patients. Physicians and surgeons were aware that some of their treatments involved risk to the patient. If the options were take a risk, or endure excruciating pain, even death, then provided that the practitioner pointed out the risks, leaving the choice to the patient, it can be argued that they were acting ethically. Strong emotions were certainly evoked by some procedures involved in early modern healthcare. The no-harm dictum was not always followed in practice, even if it was in spirit. The great French surgeon Pierre Dionis (1643–1715) commented that ‘[O]f the great number of operations that you see described in the literature, there are many that one rejects because they are too cruel’.¹⁰

The concept that disease could be the result of sin had a long tradition, linked to religion. When syphilis first struck Western Europe its cause was attributed to man’s misconduct in the sight of God. Although medication was to become the main form of treatment for syphilis, in 1498, the Spanish physician Francisco López de Villalobos (*c.*1473–*c.*1549) wrote, ‘the only satisfactory therapy for such a stubborn ailment was flogging, jail, cold and starvation’.¹¹ Whether or not he practised his rhetoric is not known.

Under the knife

Many surgical operations involved extreme pain and risk in a period when there were no anaesthetics and minimal hygiene. The prospect of having to submit to surgery inevitably led to anxiety, fear, and one can reasonably say,

dread. That is not to suggest that practitioners were unaware of these emotional responses. Samuel Pepys (1633–1703) recorded on 16 November 1663 that his wife Elizabeth was in great fear at the prospect of undergoing surgery.¹² She had for many years suffered from an abscess, which was now three inches long, in her vulva.¹³ Not only that, but she would have no one present except Pepys himself, causing him to write: ‘which my heart I doubt will not serve for me to see done, and yet she will not have any body else to see it done, no, not her own mayds, and so I must do it, poor wretch’. When it came to the operation the next day the surgeon, Mr Hollyyard, decided not to cut as she ‘[was] so fearful’. Pepys was much relieved and noted ‘I confess I should have been troubled to have had my wife cut before my face, I could not have borne to have seen it’.¹⁴ Instead Hollyard applied a fomentation, and a month later advised Pepys that ‘it will never come to anything, though it may be it may ooze now and then a little.’ The distress that occurred in and around surgical procedures is obvious, though not frequently documented.

The subject of midwifery is too large to be considered in detail, notwithstanding it could result in violence being perpetrated on the mother and the child. Indeed, perhaps the most extreme instance, the caesarean operation, was described by the renowned physician and man-midwife, Sir Fielding Ould (1710–89), as a ‘detestable, barbarous, illegal Piece of Inhumanity’.¹⁵ Clearly Sir Fielding was expressing his disgust over the procedure. Even in those circumstances where inaction would have led to the death of mother and child, he wrote, ‘I do not know that we have the Authority to destroy the Mother, though it might save the Child. This deplorable dilemma should certainly be cleared up by the Divines.’¹⁶ His frustration is evident. According to Jacques Gélis, families frequently objected to the caesarean operation, particularly if the mother was already dead: ‘The idea of opening up a dead body with cold steel was repellent and was seemed by many like an act of sacrilege’.¹⁷ In his 1704 treatise on this operation, of which he had much experience, surgeon Jean Ruleau (*fl.* eighteenth century) commented that ‘All things being arranged, and the woman has put in order her conscience and asked of God the benediction for the operation, one will commence’.¹⁸ The operation was undertaken increasingly over the eighteenth century and increasingly perceived as justified (at least by physicians and surgeons) when the alternative was the inevitable death of mother and child.

Emotions and health

At least by the eighteenth century, recognition was being given to the significant influence that emotions had in the causation and progress of disease.¹⁹ The English physician and Fellow of the Royal Society, William Falconer (1744–1824), set out what he saw as the various passions and how they affected human wellness and illness. He detailed how the emotions were involved in the cause and progress of some 18 specific disorders, as varied as chlorosis and apoplexy. For example, he contended that apoplexy could be

caused by violent passions of the mind, either anger or fear.²⁰ He also contended that ‘Grief in excess has imitated the violent effects of anger, and terminated in phrenitis, apoplexy, mania or suicide.’²¹ Moreover, evoking violent passions was considered to be a form of medical treatment. Discussing treatment of the ‘Falling of the Womb’ in 1656, the London physician Richard Bunworth (fl. seventeenth century) proclaimed:

Able physicians report that some women have been cured of this distemper by fear only. Let the Patient be persuaded that the bearing down or swelling must be seared with a hot iron, and let an iron be put onto the fire, and other such preparations made in the sight of the Patient, that she may really think that she must be immediately cauterized; the apprehension and fear of this will without doubt, cause the Womb to shrink up, and return to its proper place.²²

Falconer referred to Herman Boerhaave (1668–1738) as having used such a method when dealing with a group of individuals who started successively to have seizures after one of their number had suffered such an event, ‘He therefore directed actual cauteries to be prepared, and kept hot, in readiness to be applied to the person who should next be affected. The consequence was, that afterwards not one person was seized.’²³

Physicians began to write about the role played by emotions both as responses to illness and as a force that could be evoked to induce beneficial effects. Physicians were prepared to scare their patients in the belief that induced emotions could have a physiological effect for the better. The use of fear will be examined further below in considering the treatment of the insane.

Inoculation as violence

Throughout the early modern period epidemics caused fear among the population at large. A mere diagnosis could invoke fear. The Dutch physician Paul Barbette (1620–66?) described how in 1655, the expressions of a patient and his wife ‘turned to terror’ the moment he declared the man’s bubo was pestilential.²⁴ The great plague of 1665 had not been lost from the collective memory when the disease broke out in France in 1720 with considerable loss of life.²⁵ While no cure for plague was to be found in the early modern period, a possible treatment for arguably the second most significant communicable disease, smallpox, emerged in the eighteenth century – inoculation.

The deliberate infection of healthy individuals with smallpox, particularly children was a procedure termed variolation or inoculation and was most commonly performed by surgeons, albeit under the direction of a physician. The earliest European record on the subject appeared in the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London* in 1713 in the form of an account of the use of the procedure used in Turkey, by the Oxford and Padua trained Dr Emanuel Timonius (fl. eighteenth century).²⁶ Timonius wrote that

inoculation had been practised for over 40 years. The procedure started to be adopted in the West shortly afterwards and quickly became controversial.

This prophylactic procedure, intended to prevent the patient catching ‘natural’ smallpox, was considered by some observers, physicians, surgeons and among the general population in the eighteenth century, as an act of violence perpetrated by the medical profession. Performed with good intent perhaps, the procedure was contentious and aroused emotions on the part of medical practitioners, patients’ parents, and probably patients themselves. In 1722 the London surgeon Legard Sparham (?–1756) published a work condemning it, in which he compared it with poisoning. For instance, he wrote ‘The instilling of Poison into a wound being always accounted the most destructive of any’;²⁷ of the patients, he wrote ‘It would be the highest Piece of Rashness and Cruelty to give up our Children, Sacrifices to a fond Delusion of avoiding an illness’.²⁸ It was the subject of seemingly endless comment in many literary formats.²⁹

Voltaire condemned the adoption of inoculation by the English: ‘The English are Fools and Madmen. Fools because they give their Children the Smallpox to prevent their catching it; Mad-men, because they wantonly communicate a certain and dreadful Distemper to their Children, merely to prevent an uncertain Evil.’³⁰ The controversy was engaged with by an anonymous author published in London writing in 1728 on the emotive issue of suicide, which, at the time was a criminal offence. As an appendix to the book was a discussion which presented inoculation as falling within the same category.³¹ The arguments set out in this particular text were constructed around a hypothetical case, but nonetheless one which presented the ethical dimension of the procedure in emotive terms.

The author’s argument ran roughly as follows: a mother was contemplating whether or not to have her dearly-loved daughter inoculated against smallpox. On the one hand it offered the prospect of preventing the child from being infected by a disease that would probably kill her, or, at least, leave her seriously affected for the rest of her life.³² On the other hand, there was the possibility that the girl would as a result of the procedure have a full-blown infection of smallpox, with identical outcomes to catching the disease ‘from nature’. The dilemma that the mother confronted was an emotionally charged ‘catch 22’. If the child died, was the mother directly responsible for this sad outcome? As it was effectively self-inflicted, would it prevent the girl from entering heaven? Would the mother on her own death be confronted with a charge of murder when she reached the pearly gates? The author asserted:

[T]he Practice of *Inoculation* is utterly unjustifiable by the Rules and Laws of Physick. For skilful and honest Physicians never presume to tamper with Life, but when there is no hope of recovery; and then desperate cases may lawfully admit of desperate remedies. But never since Physick or Physicians were heard of has it ever been known before, to inflict a Mortal Disease upon a Healthy Person. No; that is God’s Prerogative.³³

He quotes his fictitious mother as follows:

I am press'd upon by the importunity of friends, by the common practice of the times, by the general good success of that Practice, and by the natural and earnest desire I have of seeing my daughter past the Danger of the *small pox*, to have her *inoculated* at this time: And what can I say, or how shall I act in this case? If I defer the Operation, I must still live on in perpetual fear my self, and expose my child every day to the common Infection. Is it not lawful and prudent to use the most likely means to preserve her life; at least to secure her from one of the most contagious and most fatal of all Distempers? . . . Physicians assure me, scarce One in Forty dies in this way. But suppose my Child should be that one. I can't but have such a Thought, and tremble too at the Thought of it. Tis no impossible Case; it has been the sad case of many already, and may be mine too, if I make this Experiment. And should that become fatal, alas! What would become of me? Whither, oh whither shall I cause my shame to go? How can I ever forgive myself? How shall I ever enjoy my self more. What! set my hand to the taking away the Life of my dearest Child, in whom my own life is bound up? 'Tis true, what I do, is to preserve her life; but if it prove otherwise in the Event, where can I lay the blame, but upon my own Rashness? Howe can I excuse my self from Blood-guiltiness? How can I excuse my self from unnaturalness before Men? How can I answer it to my own conscience, to my own reason, to my own Affections? I can't plead ignorance, since I knew beforehand, the Experiment has been fatal to many.³⁴

The text continues in a similarly fearful vein. This may have been hypothetical, but the risks were real; and the sort of emotions described can reasonably be expected to have been evoked.

Aside from arguments against inoculation on religious grounds, were the risks justified? If the procedure failed by virtue of injury or death, would not the emotional consequences be likely to mirror the concerns expressed above. The law clearly did not regard such practice as an offense, even if death was the consequence. At the time smallpox was rampant in Europe. The Bills of Mortality showed that in London alone, between 1701 and 1720, recorded deaths from smallpox averaged 1579 per annum.³⁵ Reliable figures for the death rate among infected persons are unavailable, but have been estimated at around 14 per cent.³⁶ Small wonder the use of the technique was contested from its introduction until it was superseded by Jenner's alternative procedure using cowpox.

Inoculation had its supporters; Sir Hans Sloane (1660–1753), for instance, physician to the English royal family, was one. In 1736 he wrote a paper on the topic in which he concluded: 'Upon the whole it is wonderful, that this operation which seems so plainly for the public good, should, through dread of other distempers being inculcated with it, and other unreasonable prejudices,

be stopped from procuring it.³⁷ Sloane claimed that in the over 200 cases with which he had been involved, only one patient had died, a far cry from the infection levels indicated above.³⁸ Sloane described the operation as involving making a slight shallow incision in the skin of the arms about an inch long; ‘but great care should be had not to go thro’ the skin’.³⁹ This aspect of the procedure at least did not seem to be regarded as violent.

Some idea can be gained of how vociferous the emotions could be that were aroused by opponents to inoculation from events in Boston Massachusetts in a 1721 smallpox epidemic. Those in favour of inoculation, and those against it, engaged in vicious pamphlet and newspaper clashes.⁴⁰ Admittedly in this town, with a population of around 11,000 there were political and religious factors at play.⁴¹ As one opponent wrote, ‘Deliberately “to make one’s self sick”, even for the sake of avoiding a worse attack of the same disease was thought to be a sin against God – a tempting of his Providence if not directly “seeking to” the Devil.’⁴² On 24 August that year, Cotton Mather (1663–1728), one of the strong advocates of inoculation in Boston, wrote in his diary ‘The Town has become almost a Hell upon Earth, a City full of Lies, and Murders, and Blasphemies, as far as Wishes and Speeches can render it so; Satan seems to take a strange Possession of it’.⁴³ Perhaps the most violent act came when a lighted hand-grenade was thrown through the window of Cotton Mather’s house.⁴⁴ Mather was no stranger to fatal disease and the emotions that it could generate.⁴⁵ Writing on the outbreak of smallpox he commented, ‘I have had a strong Distress on my Mind, that it will bring on my poor family, a Calamity, which is now going to be inflicted’.⁴⁶ Epidemic diseases raised fear among all communities.⁴⁷ Inoculation, seen as a breakthrough by its supporters and a dastardly violation by its opponents, was arguably the most divisive new treatment introduced into medicine in the early modern period.

Treating the insane

The treatment of the insane involved the perpetration of what was perceived by some at least to be violence, the cruel treatment of patients, perpetrated in the name of medicine. Whether incarcerated, either at home or in an institution, the insane were on occasions subjected to medically authorized treatments including burning with caustic substances and even red-hot irons, and the forcing of patients to take powerful purges.⁴⁸ How did physicians reconcile such violence with the notion of doing no harm? It was based on the theory that in illness, there was humoral material to be rid from the body. If mild methods were to no avail, harsher means were justified. It should perhaps be added that these punitive methods derived from a tradition that mental disease was due to sin and that punishment was a rational consequence.⁴⁹

Thomas Willis (1621–75) one of England’s leading seventeenth-century physicians addressed the question of mania in *De Anima Brutorum* (1672). He made clear his views on the use of violence in the treatment of the insane when he wrote:

The first indicator, to wit, curing, requires threats, bonds, or lashes, just as much as he needs physic. Let the madman, having been put in a house adapted for this purpose, be treated by a physician, then by skilled servants in such a way that he can always be restrained in his duty and manner and habits in whatever fashion, thus certainly either by warnings, reproaching, or by repeated inflicting of punishments. And even for healing maniacs, nothing is more effective or necessary than that they dread certain (as it were) tortures, and that they feel cowed. By this means, the animal spirit, having been to some extent curbed and compelled, is forced to give up its conceit and beastliness; and thence later is becomes milder, little by little, and is restored to its proper order. This is why the mad are sometimes cured faster and more reliably in the hovel, than with drugs or medicaments.⁵⁰

Willis was clearly following established practice in the management of the insane. Violence was exacted as an accepted form of punishment in law, which brings to the fore the essential point, that this, like the ‘punishment’ exacted by a physician was founded on authority. Just as a magistrate or judge had power over a criminal, the physician had power over his insane patient. The extent to which that authority, and its corollary power extended to sane patients, is another matter.⁵¹

In 1715 the renowned Dutch physician Herman Boerhaave (1638–1738) claimed that an appropriate treatment for insanity was to take the patient to the sea and submerge them until nearly drowned.⁵² Much later in the century William Cullen also expressed the view that this was an effective treatment. Cullen wrote of maniacs, that they are irascible, that they produce angry emotions that lead to actions pushed with impetuosity and violence, which when interrupted or restrained leads to violent anger and violence against the person near them. He noted further that this violence was often directed against dearest relatives and former friends.⁵³ When patients became violent, he considered restraint inevitable and advocated the use of the straightjacket.⁵⁴ He also supported the use of fear in treating the insane:

Fear being a passion which diminishes excitement . . . [maniacs] being more susceptible of fear than might be expected, it appears to me to have been commonly useful. In most cases it has appeared to be necessary to employ a very constant impression of fear; and therefore to inspire them with awe and dread of some particular persons especially of those who are constantly near them.⁵⁵

He then argued in favour of causing the patient to be in ‘awe and dread’ of them but that sometimes it was necessary to resort to ‘stripes and blows, even strokes and blows to the head’.⁵⁶ Although he warned that in some cases this could become ‘wanton barbarity’; however, he failed to indicate at what level imposed violence became wanton barbarity. Also missing in the literature is

whether or not violent forms of treatment could instead cause illness rather than produce beneficial effects. For example, if fear was employed could this not result in apoplexy?

When examining the reported emotional behaviour of the insane, what cannot be established is the extent to which the behaviour was the product of the illness or was a result of violent treatment. By the end of the eighteenth century some of the more extreme violent treatments were being opposed.⁵⁷ Physician Phillippe Pinel (1745–1826) as a result of his experience in charge of the Bicêtre hospital in Paris sought to soften the manner in which the insane were treated. He wrote that one might ‘intimidate the insane but never allow any act of violence [against them]’. Violence in his view was not simply physical, but included excessive use of empirical medication.⁵⁸

Over time it appears that violent treatment of the insane shifted from being justified as a punishment for sin, to being justified as a method of obtaining a cure. It is unlikely that from the patient’s or the physician’s point of view this shift changed the power relationship on which it was founded or the emotions evoked.

The use of noxious therapeutics

Finally, there was the prescription by physicians of substances of a noxious nature. Some were prescribed to induce fear. Falconer described the ingestion of live spiders as a treatment for fevers which, he conceded, he could not justify on a rational medical basis. He suggested that the effect might perhaps be due to ‘stimulating the passions to an extent that they strengthened the system to the extent that it overcame the debility of the patient’.⁵⁹ In this case perhaps he had in mind disgust, an emotion that he related to anger.⁶⁰

Many of the methods of treating a wide range of ailments were aimed at evacuating what were deemed to be unwholesome or excessive humours. Once again, the intent was perceived to be valid, but the methods could be seen by contemporaries to be of a violent nature. The common practice of bleeding patients to remove an excess of blood was at times perceived by patients to be taken to extremes. A woman suffering from pleurisy complained in a 1736 letter to Boerhaave, that over four days her doctors had drawn 60 ounces of blood from her.⁶¹ Small wonder she was feeling distressed as a result.⁶²

Almost anything is poisonous, it depends on how much and in what manner a substance is taken. In medicine it depends on the separation between what constitutes a toxic dose and a therapeutic dose. In the early modern period, dosages were almost entirely empirically based. Paracelsus (1493–1541) is credited with making the statement, ‘All things are poison, and nothing is without poison; only the dose permits something not to be poisonous.’⁶³ Falconer advocated the use of large doses of purgatives at the first application because it would have such an effect on the memory that subsequent doses could be much smaller.⁶⁴ That a traumatic experience would be embedded in memory and that the threat of its recurrence would evoke an emotional

response is hardly surprising. That this could reflect in drug efficacy was also consistent with Cullen's views on pathology.⁶⁵

When ipecacuanha was introduced from the Americas in 1638, physicians and apothecaries alike had little idea of the appropriate dosages to employ. As a consequence of a significant number of deaths, its use ceased until reintroduced later in the century.⁶⁶ No prescribed substance was more disputed than antimony in its various forms. Hailed as a great medicament by its advocates, damned as an infernal poison by its detractors, the use of antimonial medicines saw what has been described as a 'war' between the two sides.⁶⁷ While this conflict was fought mainly in France and Germany, in 1611 the Royal Academy of Medicine in London issued a certificate condemning as dangerous to life any medicine containing antimony in any form.⁶⁸ This, and similar bans, were of little avail as antimonials continued to be used throughout the early modern period and across Europe. The profession was divided on the subject, and what to some was acceptable practice, by others was deemed dangerous, and by extension violent. As the protagonists were fervent in promoting their opposing arguments they were emotionally involved. Thus the renowned Parisian physician Guy Patin (1601–72) who vehemently opposed the use of antimony attacked its use in July 1666 in a letter to a fellow physician stating, 'These doctors say that a poison is never a poison in the hands of a good physician. They speak against their own experience because most of them have killed their wives, their children and their friends.'⁶⁹

The eighteenth century was a period when physicians took to experimenting with a variety of substances on a wider scale to try to better understand their effects.⁷⁰ One such was the Viennese Court doctor, Anton von Störck (1731–1803), who took to testing plants regarded as poisonous.⁷¹ His paper included a subtitle which referred to 'safe and efficacious remedies in the cure of obstinate diseases'.⁷² He wrote that the plants involved were 'called poisonous [yet] promised much'.⁷³ Specifically he noted '[Thorn-apple is altogether disused in Physick, and described by Authors, as highly noxious to man and beast]',⁷⁴ of Henbane 'most authors forbid the internal use of it',⁷⁵ and of Monkshood 'this plant has hitherto been reckoned amongst the rankest poisons'.⁷⁶ Like many other experimenting physicians, von Störck initially tried out such materials on himself and animals. His trials with thorn-apple demonstrated his approach. This plant was known to cause madness and loss of memory. He reasoned that perhaps if it caused normal people to incline to madness, it might make mad people normal. He proceeded to try out his 'remedy' on five insane persons. By way of example, his first case was a 12-year-old girl who he described as 'sullen and refractory and neither by fair means nor foul could be brought to her duties'.⁷⁷ The girl '[a]nswered confusedly when asked any question, and what words she uttered, she could not perfectly articulate'.⁷⁸ After treating her with his thorn-apple preparation for two months, he claimed: '[S]he began to reason extremely well, and said her morning and evening prayers (which before she could not) with a clear and distinct voice, gained a good memory, and gradually recovered

her understanding.⁷⁹ This, and his other four cases, justified in his view the use of thorn-apple to cure mania.

There was a continual aspiration that if the universal panacea might not be discovered, at least disease-specific remedies might be. If in the search for new remedies the patient became the subject of experiment, did this constitute violence? There is no evidence of obtaining a patient's 'informed consent' as would be the case today. Had consent been sought from a patient, this might simply have induced fear rather than hope, which was presumably what the physician was offering.

Conclusion

In summary, the early modern medical practitioner on occasions employed physical and mental methods of a violent nature. These could result in emotional responses such as fear, anger and guilt. Physicians and surgeons saw the benefits as warranting any potential risks, even if pain was inflicted, when it was necessary to restore the health of the sick. Nonetheless, some of the procedures employed proved to be highly contentious, both between practitioners and in the wider community, resulting in emotionally charged disputation.

The Hippocratic injunction of not harming a patient was understood. Falconer for instance quoted from Aretaeus of Cappadocia, the Greek physician of the first century AD, and the fifth-century Roman physician Caelius Aurelianus, both of whom considered caring for the feelings of patients central to their approach to treatment.⁸⁰ It is apparent, however, that for many physicians of the period, physical and mental assaults on a patient could be morally vindicated. That the means could be justified by the end was a proposition put by the Greek Sophocles and the Roman Ovid, and which, the early modern physician must have been aware of, given his classical education.

That is not to say that the early modern physicians and surgeons were immune to the emotional distress they may have caused their patients, or those around them. David Harley has cited the seventeenth-century physician John Tylston as losing sleep over his dangerously sick patients.⁸¹ Störck cautioned that when using poisonous plant extracts on humans, the physician should commence

with the smallest dose and then gradually increase it. If the least bad effect should happen from the use of such a remedy, it is directly to be laid aside. But if nothing untoward happens, the dose is to be increased with a slow and prudent hand, till the desired effect is observed.⁸²

The French surgeon Henri-François Le Dran (1685–1750) was asked to remove scar tissue from an eight-year-old; he declined as the child would 'suffer from the operation which will be long'.⁸³

Although sometimes contested, the use of violence by medical practitioners appears to have been generally acceptable, despite the fact that, as a whole, the veracity of medical theory and soundness of practice, was increasingly questioned as the nineteenth century approached. If less violent treatments were being countenanced for mania as the eighteenth century progressed, there is no evidence to suggest this was the case with other disorders. The deliberate prophylactic infection of healthy individuals with a cruel disease, smallpox, divided medical opinion and was contested in the public arena.

To return to William Reddy's question, 'What kinds of suffering can legitimately be applied, by whom on whom?', Störck noted,

It is a troublesome thing to be afflicted with diseases; but the sick easily bear that trouble while there is any hope of a cure. But while they find no relief, after the use of many medicines but suffer rather worse, the disorder often becomes more cruel than death itself. For the sick, who are afflicted with such continued misery, hourly they pray for an end to their lives.⁸⁴

While surgery was withheld if it was considered too traumatic for the patient, it is evident that, for the most part, medical practitioners considered it legitimate to inflict suffering when they believed it was for the betterment of their patients.

Notes

- 1 For examples see *Dictionnaires d'autrefois: French dictionaries of the 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th centuries*, www.artfl-project.uchicago.edu/content/dictionnaires-dautrefois (accessed 7 Oct 2014). Robert Cawdrey, *Robert Cawdrey's Table Alphabetical*, (1604), Toronto: Web Development Group, University of Toronto, 1997, www.library.utoronto.ca/utel/ret/cawdrey/cawdrey0.html (accessed 7 October 2014). Samuel Johnson, *Dictionary of the English Language*, 3rd edn, Dublin: Thomas Ewing, 1768.
- 2 Manu L. Kothari and and Lopa A. Mehta 'Violence in Modern Medicine', in Ashis Nandy (ed.), *Science, Hegemony and Violence: A Requiem to Modernity*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988, available at: www.archive.unu.edu/unupress/unupbooks/uu05se/uu05se00.htm (accessed 17 Nov 2014).
- 3 This is not strictly what Hippocrates wrote. In the *Epidemics*, he declaimed, in translation: 'The physician must be able to tell the antecedents, know the present, and foretell the future – must mediate these things, and have two special objects in view with regard to disease, namely, to do good or to do no harm.' Cedric Smith, 'Origin and Uses of *Primum Non Nocere* – Above All, Do No Harm!', *The Journal of Clinical Pharmacology* 45, 4, 2005, 371–7.
- 4 Guy Williams, *The Age of Agony: The Art of Healing c.1700–1800*, Chicago: Academy Chicago Publishers, 1986.
- 5 Lisa Silverman, *Tortured Subjects, Pain, Truth and the Body in Early Modern France*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001, p. 135.
- 6 Lynn Bennett, *Treating Patients with Fear in 17th-Century Medical Practice*, Inter-Disciplinary. Net, 2nd Global Conference, Prague, 2012, www.inter-disciplinary.net/probing-the-boundaries/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/bennettppaper.pdf (accessed 17 Aug 2013).

- 7 Laurence Brockliss and Colin Jones, *The Medical World of Early Modern France*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 555.
- 8 For a history of this subject see Heather MacDougal and G. Ross Langley, ‘Medical Ethics: Past, Present and Future’, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, 2013, www.royalconference.ca/portal/page/portal/rc/resources/bioethics/primers/medical_ethics (accessed 30 Aug 2013).
- 9 Jan Plamper, ‘The History of Emotions: An Interview with William Reddy, Barbara Rosenwein, and Peter Stearns’, *History and Theory* 49, 2010, p. 241.
- 10 Pierre Dionis, *Cours d'opération de chirurgie démonstrées au jardin royale*, Paris: Chez d'Houry, 1740, p. 61.
- 11 Francisco López de Villalobos, *Sumario de la medicina. Con un tratado sobre las pestíferas būuas*, Salamanca: Antonio de Barreda, 1498. Quoted in John Longhurst, *Luther's Ghost in Spain (1517–1546)*, Lawrence, KS: Coronado Press, 1964, p. 85.
- 12 Samuel Pepys, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys M.A.F.R.S., (complete)*, ed. Henry B. Wheatley, London: George Bell and Sons and Cambridge: Deighton Bell and Co., 1893, entry of 16 November 1663. Project Gutenberg’s *Diary of Samuel Pepys, Complete*, by Samuel Pepys, www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_file=3341446 (accessed 17 Aug 2013).
- 13 Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England, 1500–1800*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995, p. 44.
- 14 Pepys, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, entry of 17 November 1663.
- 15 Sir Fielding Ould, *A Treatise of Midwifery in Three Parts*, Dublin: O. Nelson and C. Connor, 1742, p. 199.
- 16 Ould, *A Treatise of Midwifery*, p. 203.
- 17 Jacques Gélis, *History of Childbirth*, trans. Rosemary Morris, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1991, pp. 236–7.
- 18 Jean Ruleau, *Traité de l'opération césarienne et des accouchements difficiles et laborieux*, Paris: J. Lefebvre, 1704, p. 83: ‘Toutes choses estant bien disposées, & la femme ayant mis ordre à sa conscience, & demandé à Dieu la Benediction pour l’Operation, on commencera.’
- 19 According to Barbara Rosenwein, ‘the very idea of “emotions” as a category is a fairly recent construction, though terms such as “passions” meant much (but not entirely) the same thing as “emotions” do today’, in Plamper, ‘The History of Emotions: An Interview’, p. 253.
- 20 William Falconer, *A Dissertation on the Influence of Passions on Disorders of the Body*, London: C. Dilly, 1788, p. 56.
- 21 Falconer, *A Dissertation on the Influence of Passions*, p. xiv.
- 22 Richard Bunworth, *The Doctresse: A Plain and Easie Method, of Curing those Diseases which are Peculiar to Women*, London: Nicolas Bourne, 1656, p. 37.
- 23 Falconer, *A Dissertation on the Influence of Passions*, p. 67.
- 24 Paul Barbette, *The Chirurgical and Anatomical Works of Paul Barbette M.D., Together with a Treatise of the Plague*, London: n.p., 1672, ‘Treatise of the Plague’, p. 40.
- 25 See for instance, Pepys, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, entry of 31 August 1665: ‘this month ends, with great sadness upon the public through the greatness of the plague, everywhere through the Kingdom almost. Every day sadder and sadder news of its increase’. The 1720–22 plague in Marseilles was the last significant European incidence of this disease.
- 26 *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London* 29, 338–350, 1714, pp. 72–8. Timonius’s letter was read to the Royal Society by John Woodward, F.R.S., M.D. (1665–1728).

- 27 Legard Sparham, *Reasons Against the Practice of Inoculating the Smallpox. As also a Brief Account of the Operation of this Poison, Infused after this Manner into a Wound*, London: J. Peel, 1722, p. 10–11.
- 28 Sparham, *Reasons Against the Practice of Inoculating*, p. 10.
- 29 See for example Brockliss and Jones, *The Medical World of Early Modern France*, pp. 471–3.
- 30 Voltaire, *Letters Concerning the English Nation by Mr De Voltaire*, A New Edition, London: n.p., 1778, p. 63.
- 31 Anon., *Duelling, the Effects of Cowardice and Athiesm. To which are Added Some Reflections on the Modern Practice of Inoculation*, London: n.p., 1728, pp. 74–83.
- 32 Smallpox survivors were frequently disfigured by pock-marks, and the disease often left victims blind.
- 33 Anon., *Duelling*, pp. 74–5.
- 34 Anon., *Duelling*, pp. 81–2.
- 35 Calculated from John Gaunt's data cited in Charles Chreighton, *A History of Epidemics in Great Britain*, 2 vols, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1884; Rpt. London: Frank Cass & Co., 1965, vol. 2, p. 461.
- 36 For a review of the derivation of this number see Daniel Bernoulli, *An Attempt at a New Analysis of the Mortality Caused by Smallpox and of the Advantages of Inoculation to Prevent it*, Paris: n.p., 1776. Reviewed by Sally Blower, *Reviews in Medical Virology* 14, 2004, 275–88.
- 37 Sir Hans Sloane and Thomas Birch, 'An Account of Inoculation by Sir Hans Sloane, Bart., given to Mr. Ranby to be published Anno 1736, Communicated by Thomas Birch, D.D., Secret. R.S.', *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London* (1755–56), p. 520.
- 38 Sloan and Birch, 'An Account of Inoculation by Sir Hans Sloane', p. 520.
- 39 Sloan and Birch, 'An Account of Inoculation by Sir Hans Sloane', pp. 519–20.
- 40 Increase Mather, *Several Reasons Proving that Inoculation or Transplanting the Small Pox, is a Lawful Practice, and that it has been Blessed by God for the Saving of many a Life*, Cleveland: printed for private distribution, 1921, RC183.5.A2 M43, 1921. Houghton Library, Harvard University, www.nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:FHCL:HOUGH:1272788 (accessed 2 Sept 2013). For a selection of extracts of the Boston letters and pamphlets see: www.nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/becomingamer/ideas/text7/smallpoxvaccination.pdf (accessed 7 Sept 2013).
- 41 Mather, *Several Reasons*, p. 17.
- 42 Mather, *Several Reasons*, p. 14.
- 43 Mather, *Several Reasons*, p. 29. Cotton Mather was the son of Increase Mather (1630–1723).
- 44 Mather, *Several Reasons*, p. 22.
- 45 In 1713 Cotton Mather lost three children and his wife in a week during an outbreak of measles. Quoted by Williams, *The Age of Agony*, pp. 78–9.
- 46 Williams, *The Age of Agony*, pp. 78–9.
- 47 As Lyn Bennett has pointed out, during outbreaks of the Plague in the seventeenth century, physicians considered fear as likely to cause the death of a patient as the disease itself. Bennett, *Treating Patients with Fear*, pp. 7–8.
- 48 Anne Digby, 'Changes in the Asylum: The Case of York, 1777–1815', *The Economic History Review* 36, 1983, pp. 218–39.
- 49 To at least the end of the eighteenth century French mental institutions operated by religious houses maintained the appropriateness of vigorous, even painful, treatment. See Edward Jarvis, *Insanity and Insane Asylums*, Louiseville: Prentice and Weissinger, 1841, p. 3.
- 50 Thomas Willis, *De anima brutorum quae hominis vitalis ac sensitiva est, exercitationes duae prior physiologica d'jusdem naturam, partes, potentias &*

- affectiones tradit: altera pathologica morbos qui ipsam, & sedem ejus primariam, nempe cerebrum & nervosum genus afficiunt, explicat, corunque therapeias instituit/studio Thomae Willis . . . , Oxonii: E Theatro Sheldoniano, impensis Ric. Davis, 1672, p. 497.* This is a literal translation – I acknowledge the help of Dr Lara O’Sullivan in interpreting this Latin text.
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- 53 William Cullen, *First Lines of the Practice of Physic*, 3 vols, Worcester, MA: n.p., 1710–1790, vol. 3 (1790), p. 193.
- 54 Cullen, *First Lines of the Practice of Physic*, vol. 3, pp. 196–7.
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- 57 See François Doublet and Jean Colombier, *Instructions sur la manière du gouverner les insensés et de travailler à leur guérison dans les Asyles qui leur sont destinés*, Paris: l’Imprimerie Royale, 1785.
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- 59 Falconer, *A Dissertation on the Influence of Passions*, pp. 23–4.
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- 61 Herman Boerhaave, *Boerhaave’s Medical Correspondence: Containing the Various Symptoms of Chronical Distempers*, London: n.p., 1745, p. 139. In his response on her condition, Boerhaave made no comment on this blood-letting.
- 62 It takes 20–59 days for a male to recover from the removal of 550 ml (approx. 19 fl.oz.) of blood. T. Pottgiesser, W. Specker, M. Umhau, H.H. Dickhuth, K. Roecker, Y.O Schumacher, ‘Recovery of Hemoglobin Mass after Blood Donation’, *Transfusion* 48, 7, 2008, pp. 1390–7.
- 63 William C. Krieger, ‘Forward on Paracelsus-Dose Responses’, in *Handbook of Pesticide Toxicology*, ed. Robert L. Krieger and William C. Krieger, 2 vols, San Diego: Academic Press, 2011, vol. 1, p. xxx.
- 64 Falconer, *A Dissertation on the Influence of Passions*, pp. 73–4. For Falconer’s explanation of the emotions influencing drug efficacy, see p. 20 n.
- 65 Cullen was the first to use the word placebo in a medical sense, and at the time it meant using a reduced level of a substance as well as an inert substance as it is used today. See C.E. Kerr, I. Milne, T.J. Kapchuk, ‘William Cullen and a Missing Mind-body Link in the Early History of Placebos’, *JLL Bulletin: Commentaries on the History of Treatment Evaluation* (2007), www.jameslindlibrary.org (accessed 31 Aug 2013).
- 66 Brockliss and Jones, *The Medical World of Early Modern France*, p. 622.
- 67 Ian McCullum, *The Use of Antimony in Medicine*, Edinburgh: The Pentland Press, 1999, pp. 18–24.
- 68 McCullum, *The Use of Antimony in Medicine*, p. 24.
- 69 Guy Patin, *Lettres choisies de feu Mr. Guy Patin: dans lesquelles sont contenues plusieurs particularités historiques sur la vie et la mort des scavans de ce siècle, sur leurs écrits et plusieurs autres choses curieuses depuis l'an 1645 jusqu' en 1672: Lettres choisies de feu Mr. Guy Patin*, 3 vols, Cologne: Chez Pierre du Laurens, 1691, vol. 1, p. 224: ‘Ces Messieurs dissent qu’ù poison n’est point poison dans la main d’un bon Médecin. Ils parlent contre leur propre expérience: Car le plûpart d’entre eux en ont tué leurs femmes, leurs enfans & leur amis.’
- 70 See for example Ernest Ackernecht, *Therapeutics from the Primitives to the Twentieth Century*, New York: Hafner Press, 1973.
- 71 Anton von Störck was physician to the Austrian empress Maria Theresia.

- 72 Anton von Störck, *An Essay on the Internal Use of Thorn-Apple, Henbane and Monks-Hood* (Translated from the original Latin, printed in Vienna 1762), London: n.p., 1763.
- 73 Störck, *An Essay on the Internal Use of Thorn-Apple*, p. iii.
- 74 Störck, *An Essay on the Internal Use of Thorn-Apple*, p. 1.
- 75 Störck, *An Essay on the Internal Use of Thorn-Apple*, p. 11.
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- 78 Störck, *An Essay on the Internal Use of Thorn-Apple*, pp. 4–5.
- 79 Störck, *An Essay on the Internal Use of Thorn-Apple*, pp. 4–5.
- 80 Falconer, *A Dissertation on the Influence of Passions*, pp. 42–5.
- 81 David Harley, ‘The Good Physician and the Godly Doctor: The Exemplary Life of John Tylston of Chester (1663–99)’, *Seventeenth Century* 9, 1, 1994, p. 103.
- 82 Störck, *An Essay on the Internal Use of Thorn-Apple*, p. 46.
- 83 Henri-François Le Dran, *Consultations sur la plupart des maladies qui sont du ressort de la chirurgie*, Paris: n.p., 1765, pp. 43–4.
- 84 Störck, *An Essay on the Internal Use of Thorn-Apple*, Preface.

Part 3

Textual affect and effect

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8 Violent language in early fifteenth-century Italy

The emotions of invectives

Andrea Rizzi¹

Almost 600 years ago, Poggio Bracciolini (1380–1459) stung his fellow scholar and bitter enemy Francesco Filelfo (1398–1481) with the following venom:

You stinking billy-goat, you horned monster, you malevolent vituperator, father of lies and author of chaos . . . May Divine vengeance destroy you as an enemy of virtue, a parricide who tries to ruin wives and decency by mendacity, slanders, and most foul, false imputations. If you must be so scornfully arrogant, write your satires against those who debauch your wife. Vomit the putrescence of your stomach.²

This is one of the many vitriolic invectives hurled by Italian humanists³ at their competitors well before Martin Luther, Desiderius Erasmus and Thomas More penned their theological and Protestant vituperations.⁴ One of the most influential texts on humanist culture is Lorenzo Valla's *Elegantiae* (1435–44), which came out of a bitter exchange with Bracciolini. Intellectuals and leaders used violent words, enacted on minds and with the intent of damaging the reputation of their opponents. Their extremely crude attacks and ‘robust’ language⁵ have confounded scholars who have generally shied away from these texts.⁶ The humanists who wrote these viperous words have been accused of arrogance, lack of ethical stance, and absolute vulgarity. Fortunately, modern editions of a small but significant sample of these Latin texts reveal that behind strong words were important intellectual disputes garnished with eloquent references to classical texts. However, these few editions of invectives have focused on the content of the dispute and context,⁷ while their scurrilous and emotional language remains largely uncharted. And yet it is the violent language and emotions that were meant to stir strong reactions in the victims and audiences. In this chapter I use ‘emotions’ in the sense described by Eric Shouse: emotions are a social and cultural construct, feelings are personal and biographical, and affects are pre-personal, uncontrollable and non-conscious.⁸ As cultural constructs, written texts from the distant past such as these elaborate Neo-Latin rewritings of the ancient Roman vituperations and satire

– reveal socially and culturally fabricated emotions, through which lived emotions are filtered.

Did these invectives really hurt their victims and were they intended to entertain their audiences? Were these texts really violent? It is practically impossible for us today to tell what personal and lived feelings were stirred by these literary invectives: embarrassment or anger, sadness or elation. In these Latin texts (as in ancient Roman invectives), a victim is subjected to blind, realistic or hyperbolic accusations such as incest and sexual misconduct with both men and women.⁹ Similarly, it is also difficult to assess whether the language used in these literary texts was effectively seen as violent as it appears to be today. Here I follow John Carter Wood's view that 'violence is a phenomenon in the eye of the beholder, a historically defined notion dependent not only on physically aggressive acts but also views of justice, attitudes towards cruelty and notions of public and private space, among other things'.¹⁰ It is, however, possible to understand the emotional qualities of a message delivered through a written text by studying the social and cultural system of insult.¹¹ Extrapolating from Shouse's argument that literary texts convey affective resonances that are 'independent of content and meaning',¹² then studying humanist invectives beyond their literary system might shed light on their ability to evoke lived emotions and involve a broader spectrum of society that understood and participated in the social performance of insult.

The literary sophistication of these Latin invectives could only be appreciated by the restricted circle of Latin humanists, but the emotions elicited by these texts could (and probably were meant to) reach beyond this group. The emotional effect of this seemingly violent language is the focus of this chapter. Early fifteenth-century humanists adopted the poisonous language of classical sources such as Catullus, Ovid, Martial and Pliny.¹³ In particular, Cicero's forensic oratory provided a powerful lexicon for verbal assault and character assassination: the key feature of the ancient invective was the manipulation of the audience's emotions and not just the strength and validity of the argument.¹⁴ That humanists adopted and reinvented classical models and culture is hardly surprising given their interest in reviving classical Latin. What has not been considered by scholarship – and this is the central argument of this chapter – is that humanists also exploited a strong vernacular culture of insult and mockery that characterized late medieval and early modern Italian, Spanish and French communities.¹⁵ Social historians have shown that all levels of society understood and practised the 'game of insult', which had strict rules based on gender, social status and socio-political context.¹⁶ The performance of verbal and written insult encompassed a wide range of genres that were often mixed with one another: slur, curse, scorn, hyperbolic jokes, derisive sermons, satirical poems, epigrams, scathing epistles, incendiary letters, comic dialogues, and so on. They all contained elements of invective.

The authors of these inflammatory texts walked a fine line between game and defamation, reality and hyperbole, which only the addressees could grasp fully.¹⁷ These connections between verbal and literary insults established a

complicity between the early modern Italian learned elite (the humanists) and the wider community (the literate and non-literate audiences). The strong language used in the texts under examination here was mostly adapted from literary sources and therefore validated by classical and authoritative texts: nothing like the vernacular swearing and cursing that took place on the street. And yet, as I show in this chapter, the Latin lexicon of invective did connect with the violent verbal abuse that was so commonly heard in the streets of early modern cities.

I argue here that it is possible to answer the questions about the emotional potential and violent nature of the invectives only by bringing together scholarship on early modern literary invectives and the social history of insult. When studied comparatively and within a socio-historical framework, literary texts can illuminate the emotional values and codes of their receiving community. By connecting literary and social histories of insult it is possible to understand the similarities between literary and verbal slander and qualify the type of violence unleashed by these humanist texts. This connection between page and social context has already been suggested by Judith Butler: to understand which words wound, one needs to locate the utterance within a ‘total speech situation’, which refers to the ritualization of linguistic injury and a sphere of practice that goes beyond the moment of utterance or the written page.¹⁸ As I contend in this chapter, the written forms of humanist insults were meant to both wound the victim and entertain the audience as well as broadcast the intellectual and linguistic prowess of their maker: thus showing that the language performance underscoring the humanist invective was also a social performance that could be understood (and enjoyed) by a wider audience.

After a brief discussion of the nature and performativity of fifteenth-century humanist invectives and the culture of insult that characterized early modern societies, the discussion will turn to the bitter dispute between two fifteenth-century humanists, Antonio da Rho (c.1395–1447) and Antonio Beccadelli (nicknamed ‘Panormita’ because he was from Palermo, 1394–1471): their feud erupted circa 1429 while both were working for the Milanese court and continued at least until 1433. I will show how these two scholars latched onto their society’s culture of insult and perilously blurred the confines between conventional and intentional attack, Latin and vernacular, orality and literature, personal and collective emotions.¹⁹ Whether in Latin or vernacular, the game of insult had a similar lexicon that allowed both Latinate and little-Latinate audiences to partake in these performances of insult. Ultimately, the humanists considered here played with fire: they used classical sources to revive the ancient art of insult and vulgar poetry and tried to gain consensus among their peers and citizens: but by doing so they found themselves enmeshed in the strong vernacular culture of slur and mockery from which they were so keen to distinguish themselves. Humanists wrote insults to wound their rivals and to demonstrate their skill and dexterity in the performance of language: and, in the tradition of social performance, they also strove to make their audience laugh along with them. What they did not realize was that they could invoke

mirth in more people than they wished to – as a letter by Filippo Tifernate implies²⁰ – and run the risk of being laughed at by the wrong, vernacular crowd.

What is a humanist invective? Between crudeness and sophistication

The few studies of fifteenth-century Latin invectives stumble upon the same problem: how to define and describe humanist invective.²¹ Marc Laureys shows how difficult it is to circumscribe the humanist invectives. The first problem is that ‘*invectiva*’ is used interchangeably with other terms including letter, speech, apologue, defence and sermon.²² There are also cases in which prose and verse are mixed within the same text, as in the case of Bracciolini’s *Orationes* against Valla.

Broadly speaking, humanist invectives are Latin prose or verse of various length – from one page to several – in which a rival is attacked and insulted on the written page. An invective can be an unprovoked assault or a vehement response to an opponent’s slur. The Latin term *invectiva* gained currency during the fourth and fifth centuries CE, when scholiasts and grammarians used this word to describe epideictic and contumelious orations. Cicero was for humanists and early modern orators the undisputed father of these invectives. Cicero’s oration *Against Verrem* has been known for centuries and informed Petrarch’s own production of invectives.

The key sources of inspiration for these neo-Latin texts are the polemic and forensic orations by Cicero and the apocryphal orations attributed to Sallust and Cicero. But there are also strong connections with the early Christian invectives by Jerome, who was the first to write invectives not as a deliberative but as a literary practice.²³ Jerome created a new, epistolary form of invective that drew its lexicon from the Imprecatory Psalms and resorted ‘to the Christian practice of cursing or anathematizing heretics and opponents’.²⁴ Jerome’s strong language against Jovinian, Vigilantius, Helvidius, Rufinus and others was so scurrilous that some humanists thought that Jerome had lost his self-control.

The incendiary prose continued to be used, although it was revamped by Petrarch in his numerous invectives,²⁵ and then elaborated further by fifteenth-century intellectuals such as Leonardo Bruni, Antonio Loschi, Coluccio Salutati, Lorenzo Valla and Bartolomeo Fonzio among others. The verse satire and invective were emulated by Panormita in his *Hermaphrodite*, Francesco Filelfo in his *Satyrae* and Poggio Bracciolini in his *Facetiae*.

In 1417, the discovery of another oration by Cicero, *Against Piso*, fuelled the interest and production of invectives throughout the Italian Renaissance. A recent study shows that humanist invectives grew exponentially after the first two decades of the fifteenth century.²⁶ Invectives were the ground on which budding scholars would train their linguistic and rhetorical proficiency. But they also offered great opportunity for stinging opponents and asserting superiority. Bracciolini’s attack on Filelfo – with which this chapter opened – exemplifies the rhetorical aggression used in these texts.

Invectives emphasize passionate discussions over literary, linguistic or philosophical matters. The most famous exchange of invectives is that between Lorenzo Valla and Poggio Bracciolini (1452–3) concerning Latin proficiency and the *raison d'être* of the humanist movement. Another humanist, George of Trebisond (1395–c.1472), recounts that the exchange between the two scholars was so passionate that Bracciolini even considered employing an assassin to eliminate his opponent. But other Latin works such as Panormita's *Hermaphrodite*, Filelfo's *Satyrae* and Bracciolini's *Facetiae* can also be described as invectives, for these texts also contain slanderous attacks and mockery.

Humanist invectives are the expression of various ancient literary productions: pastoral poems (Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius and Martialis), verse satire (Horace), comedy (Plautus) and epideictic oratory (Cicero). Vittorio Rossi and Claudio Griggio have suggested a further influence in the thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century Florentine vernacular invectives; Dante's *Comedy* was a key model.²⁷ Antonio Lanza expands on this connection by pointing towards the strong Florentine tradition of burlesque, satirical and slanderous writings in the vernacular at the turn of the fifteenth century.²⁸

This connection with vernacular invectives and popular literary traditions of mockery and 'game of insult' exposes an incongruous dimension of humanist invective. As I will argue in the next part, fifteenth-century humanists sought to engage with the classical tradition of oratorical defamation and satire by practising verbal aggression, invoking strong emotions (*pathos*), and evoking the obscene lexicon of ancient Rome: yet by doing this they found themselves sharing the culture of insult (*vituperatio*) used by the vernacular comic poetry of fifteenth-century Tuscan poets such as Giovanni Matteo di Meglio, Luigi Pulci (1432–84) and Burchiello (1404–49).²⁹ As the fourth part of this chapter will show, the more humanists tried to emulate the invectives and satires of their classical models, the more they aligned themselves with the culture of verbal slur and mockery that echoed through the streets of early modern Italian cities. Let us now turn to the culture of vilification that is the backdrop for the Latin invectives of early modern Italy.

Cultures of vilification

In the 1440s, Lorenzo Damiani from Pisa insulted a Piero di Pardino in a wrathful vernacular sonnet. The opening of this poem sets the tone: 'Smelly swine, nasty coward, envious, unjust, mindless ingrate, ugly, wretched, base, and worth nothing.'³⁰ Poetry of malediction circulated widely among literati and often reached vernacular audiences. The vitriolic sonnets in vernacular by Giovanni Matteo di Meglio (1445–9) and Burchiello (1440s) contain some of the most violent literary attacks against friends, enemies and old women.³¹ A barber and a thief, Burchiello did not hesitate to attack humanists. In a sonnet against Poggio Bracciolini, Burchiello refers to his target with a nickname, 'Bambalione': 'I don't think I've made any mistakes, but if I have, I will stand

corrected before the learned Poggio Bambalione.³² Burchiello is following the malicious pen of another humanist of his time, Francesco Filelfo, who in turn exploited the gossip and verbal accusations that floated around Florence and attacked Bracciolini as being a friend of (and therefore similar to) Niccoli: ‘Partridges are lustful animals . . . Messer Leonardo Bruni used to call Niccolò Niccoli of Pistoia and Poggio *Bambalione* from Terranova Old Partridges.’³³ This example shows how invectives fed on gossip and involved a web of social agents (for example, friends, neighbours, fellow authors). Rumours spread through oral, vernacular and Latin slur, and the socio-cultural networks used by humanists and the social humanists, as recently described by Brian Maxson.³⁴ Evidence of the circulation of humanist invective beyond the social and cultural elite is minimal, but Maxson’s discussion of the dissemination of Latin humanism across a broad range of members of the early modern Florentine society is encouraging. An important piece of evidence for how these invectives circulated and were enjoyed by the wider community comes from Filippo Tifernate, a young grammar teacher from Ferrara: in 1452 he wrote a letter describing how Bracciolini’s venomous invective against Filelfo was read publicly in Ferrara and made the audience cheer and laugh wildly: ‘I have obtained a copy of Poggio’s invective against Valla from Porcellio; what can I say: there has been so much clapping, cheering and laughing, that no one had ever had so much fun before.’³⁵ This letter shows that while the humanists’ rivals were subjected to these injurious words (and were forced to respond along the same lines), there was an audience of literates and semi-literates who enjoyed these texts as a highly entertaining game of mockery. As we shall see below, the lexicon of the injurious Latin used by humanists was accessible also to a non-Latinate audience who possessed a knowledge of vernacular comic-realistic poetry, thus allowing a wider community to cheer and laugh along.

Early modern Italian communities were also receptive to hearing and reading insults. Trevor Dean, Guido Ruggiero, Elizabeth Horodowich and Peter Burke – among others – have shown that early modern Italian public and semi-public spaces echoed with affronts that could potentially undermine codes of civic language and coexistence.³⁶ Violent language was often feared by institutions, especially when vilification challenged their authority and power. Renaissance Venice was particularly concerned about offences against its government and elite, for instance, insulting the Doge was punished by cutting off the offender’s tongue.³⁷ As ‘an act of communication directed against another individual, group, or institution’,³⁸ insult had the potential to breed dissent and upheaval. At the same time, the performance of violent language was also a game in which the world could be turned upside down for a moment, allowing the poor to be rich and the subdued to be in charge.³⁹ Importantly, this game had to be allowed and accepted by all parties involved: as a fourteenth-century jurist explains, a punishable insult takes place only when it comes as a surprise and there is no agreement about how the insult should be understood or responded to.⁴⁰

Medieval and early Renaissance court cases reveal that verbal injury was extremely common in early modern Italian cities. Trevor Dean's work on gender and insult in late medieval Bologna shows that mock or ritual insults coexisted with defamatory slur. Insults against high rank members of the community took the form of threats and revenge. Insults filled the streets of medieval and early modern cities and very often these were so hyperbolic that they were clearly recognized by the community as a game of mockery.

Crossing boundaries, sharing emotions

Despite the fact that insults were commonly punished in urban environments, attacking underclasses or fellow humanists with slanderous, codified, literate and Latinate words was not seen as punishable. And yet the vehemence of personal attacks suggests that at least some of these barbs must have hurt: Florentine humanist Niccolò Niccoli (1364–1437) was ridiculed by fellow scholars for not being married and for having a relationship with his maid, Benvenuta. In 1413 Guarino Guarino, one of the most successful intellectuals and teachers of fifteenth-century Italy, added fuel to the mockery:

It does not surprise that, once free from my control, he did not become slave of sex, gluttony, anger, fame, arrogance, envy and several other corruptions of the soul . . . ; no, he became slave of this ignorant woman and her judgement. . . I am retelling well-known facts that are shared around the neighbourhood with much hilarity, mockery and contempt.⁴¹

As with verbal injury in the streets, the risk of going too far with literary scurrility and mockery was omnipresent. Panormita's *Hermaphrodite* (1425–6) attracted almost unanimous contempt from fellow humanists and rulers, including an embarrassed Cosimo de' Medici (1389–1464), to whom the poem is dedicated. In his *Philippic against Antonio Panormita*, Franciscan Antonio da Rho scolds Panormita:

But I do not want you to think, my Candido [i.e. Pier Candido Decembrio], that I am going to tarry long in his scum and slime. Why? No, not because I fear that he can somehow pollute or disfigure me or that I can engage directly in his swinish way of life, but rather because I recoil instinctively from a debauched and filthy person like him.⁴²

This excerpt – addressed to fellow humanist Pier Candido Decembrio (1399–1477) but also indirectly to the Milanese court and beyond – represents the culmination of a conflict that raged for almost a year and saw the toing and froing of scurrilous poems (some of which are anonymous).⁴³ Echoes of this attack against a rival's reputation can be seen in an anonymous poem of 72 lines (*Prostitutes of Pavia*), in which Panormita is mocked by all the prostitutes and pimps of Pavia, and which tells the city of Milan to welcome Panormita as 'a very well-hung Hermaphrodite who wiggles his ass like a

woman'.⁴⁴ This was followed by another anonymous poem in which Joan of Arc writes to the Senators of Milan complaining that Milan has sent her Antonio da Rho, 'this stupid, filthy, demonic, monstrous priest masked as a human'.⁴⁵ Regardless of who penned these anonymous invectives, such poems show that the personal struggle between da Rho, Panormita, and competing intellectuals was not limited to their circle of Latinate friends. Short, poetic texts accompanied the exchange between the two humanists and were copied, read, and disseminated at court. The invectives called for laughter and derision from a whole community: da Rho tells us that Panormita's *Oration of the Imagery of the Sun* (probably delivered in June 1432 for the anniversary of Filippo Maria Visconti's rule) was delivered publicly in the Duomo of Milan and everyone 'made sport, smiled, and joked about it. Everyone immediately began to make him a laughing stock, and he was hissed off stage for his ignorance'.⁴⁶

The acerbic altercation between Antonio da Rho and Panormita reveals two important features of humanist agon: on the one hand the invectives are highly literary, cloaked with Latin sources and models that make the invective appear non-intentional; on the other hand these literary invectives weave a highly accessible obscene lexicon of vituperation that would have drawn in both the learned community of Latin scholars and a non-Latinate audience.

In order to demonstrate this I shall examine Panormita's *Hermaphrodite* in greater depth.⁴⁷ This text shows that mastery of classical Latin authenticated scurrility and violent insults. As a literary effort, the *Hermaphrodite* owes much to Martial's epigrams, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Catullus's poems. The work is a collection of epigrams containing several attacks against detractors and hypocrites: some of the targets are Mattia Lupi of San Gimignano (I, 1 and 10–11, and 16–17), Antonio Roselli (I, 19) and an unidentified Oddo (I, 20 and II, 11). Particularly interesting is Panormita's attack against the latter: he rebuffs Oddo's accusation that he lacked chastity because of his lascivious poetry. If this is so, Panormita argues, then he is in good company, as Latin poets such as Martial, Marsus and Pedo also wrote similar poems.⁴⁸ Panormita dispatches his critic by telling him to 'believe what you like with the crowd, Oddo'.⁴⁹ Even if we are not familiar with this character, Oddo must have existed, as with all other figures mentioned in these Latin epigrams.

Panormita's provocative and haughty verses contain the seeds of invective: they involve real people such as Leon Battista Alberti and Mattia Lupi in the literary world of classical satire and obscene poetry. Everything is allowed because this is a learned game that follows the wit and language of the ancients. Panormita is at pains to impress upon the dedicatee of his work, Cosimo de' Medici, that the ultimate purpose of this text is to 'follow with me the men who live forever'.⁵⁰ This text was aimed to rouse laughter (*cachinnos*) from anyone (*cuique*), even if he or she is sad or unyielding (*rigido*), and it contains trifles that will be reproached by ignoramus and appreciated by the learned. Similarly, in the preface to his *Facetiae*, Bracciolini makes it very clear that the intended readership for this learned joke book is not just the humanist community but also the vernacular and rustic:

I wish indeed to be read also by humanists with a facetious inclination as Lucilius was by the Cosentines and Tarentines, but if [the readers] will be more rustic readers I do not deny them the right to feel what they want, so long as they do not blame the author, who wrote these things for the elevation of his spirit and the exercise of his natural disposition.⁵¹

In this collection of saucy, witty and often plainly obscene anecdotes – which also include a few invectives, for instance against Francesco Filelfo – Bracciolini enmeshes classical Latin with bawdy situations and language from everyday life. Bracciolini's *facetia* on the painter who took revenge on the friars who wasted his time pondering for a whole day the iconography of Saint Francis tells of the painter retaliating by painting the Saint playing the *fistula* (a pastoral wind instrument) or depicting him hanging by the neck.⁵² Patricia Simons has argued *fistula* here refers simultaneously to the phallus (a common trope in vernacular authors such as Burchiello and Aretino), the painful pipelike ulcer ('*fistola*' in vernacular) that afflicted so many horse riders, and the post mortem erection of hanged men ('impiccare' often referred to penile sodomic penetration).⁵³ This allusion to several well-known vernacular expressions shows how a Latin term could be underpinned by a rich vernacular lexicon and slur. In some cases, humanists stretch the boundaries of classical Latin: as Holt Parker has indicated,⁵⁴ Panormita's poems share some of the tone and material of the vernacular comic-realistic poets: Luigi Pulci, Bernardo Bellincioni (1452–92) and Burchiello. These vernacular authors 'were not afraid to visit the rougher parts of town: the market, the tavern, the brothel'⁵⁵ and translate the violent language of the street into verse.

This is where Panormita's work became unacceptable to most of his fellow scholars and patrons, to the extent that he was forced to recant his work by writing to Cosimo de' Medici himself in 1435, 10 years after his *Hermaphrodite* came out.⁵⁶ Panormita treads the fine line of indulging in the classical world of pungent satire and uncompromisingly crude sexual imagery, while at the same time paying lip service to the vernacular tradition of the comic-realistic poetry of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Italy. Between 1428 and 1432 Burchiello and Leon Battista Alberti engaged in a playful and aggressive exchange of vernacular poems and, similarly, Luigi Pulci and Matteo Franco fired poisonous and vernacular barbs at each other between 1473 and 1476. In this vernacular poetry, the same sophisticated play with words, obscene lexicon, and precarious balance between literature and anti-literature is performed. The same game of insults and elicitation of emotions happened in both vernacular and Latin and involved broad and diverse readers and audiences.

The crisis with Panormita's *Hermaphrodite*, I argue, is that the transposition of the ancient satire and epigram resembles too closely the vernacular poetry and the verbal slander that could be heard and read on the streets of Florence and other Italian cities. It elicited collective emotions such as laughter that damaged the reputability of the cultural elite. The learned and idealized world

of classical Latin enlivened by the humanists is in the *Hermaphrodite* blurred and enmeshed with the Florentine sonnets describing the same lowly characters, the same infamous brothels, the stinky markets, and the insults that were being hurled around the piazzas. Paradoxically, the highly classical Latin language employed by Panormita in his invectives ultimately sounds the closest to the Florentine vernacular he seeks to proudly deny and to which he hopes to be superior.⁵⁷ Take for instance the last verse of poem XXXVII from book two of the *Hermaphrodite*. The explicit Latin used here follows Martial's 85th epigram loosely:⁵⁸ 'quamatum vis futues et futuere, liber!' ('you will fuck and be fucked as much as you want, book'). Fifteenth-century non-Latinate readers would have immediately understood the content of this verse, as they would have also grasped the gist of the anonymous 1429 poem in which the prostitutes of Pavia write to Milan about Panormita. Take for example the following passage: 'Dic tales socios qualem iam diximus illum:/sic merda est ano quam bene iuncta suo' ('You may say his friends are just like I said he is: they stick like shit perfectly to his arsehole').⁵⁹ These examples are lexically and semantically close to early modern Italian vernaculars and allow therefore non-Latinate audiences to follow and react to the sexual references. The result is that the wider audience could enjoy the game of insult played out in the Latin text without the invective losing its rhetorical aggression destined for the victim. The strong censorship Panormita's juvenile exercise in Latin satire encountered may therefore be explained in terms of a blurring of the boundaries between Latin and vernacular cultures and languages. Yet Panormita's work exposes a similar zest for the obscene⁶⁰ and the invective that was shared across the social strata of fifteenth-century Italy.

Conclusion

Around 1435 Panormita eventually retracted his juvenile literary effort in the attempt to save his career and adapt to the changed political circumstances in Florence and Milan. In the dedication to Cosimo de' Medici, Panormita had scolded the illiterates, noting that the 'lazy crowd fails to notice' that the greatest authors of antiquity also wrote obscene jokes: the illiterates 'have no care to look to the ancients'.⁶¹ Ten years later, however, in his recantation, Panormita is forced to admit that he had tried to elevate his reputation by competing with the ancients ('by seeing if I could smash the temple of the goddess Vesta').⁶² Instead, the scabrous poetry of Catullus and his followers (Pliny, Martial and Ovid) became in his hands a close version of the hyperbolic and comic-realistic poetry in vernacular that could be appreciated and followed by the illiterate. Whether it be anger or laughter, the emotions stirred by the game of insult and the invective generated a 'fluid interchange of material between social agents and contexts'⁶³ and effectively broke down the social and cultural barriers between elites and populace. The venomous word games played out in the humanist invectives elicited different emotional responses from a wide range of social groups. The humanists' quest for consensus and affirmation

led them to use rhetorical aggression to both damage and entertain. Violence in these texts is to be seen therefore as ‘at once grim and gruesome and yet theatrical and spectacular’.⁶⁴ Learned humanists understood the linguistic performance and competitiveness that underscored the invectives’ rhetorical aggression. From the limited but significant evidence discussed in this chapter, it seems that a wider audience appreciated the game of insults and its accessible and transferable lexicon. Whether Latin or vernacular, the language’s emotional lexicon used for the invectives was comprehensible to different social groups and went far beyond the intellectual elite of the time.⁶⁵ Perhaps this is what scandalized Panormita’s fellow humanists.

Notes

- 1 I wish to thank Susan Broomhall for her invitation to contribute to this volume and the Australian Research Council for supporting my research as a Future Fellow. I am also grateful to Nicholas Eckstein, Yasmin Haskell, Elizabeth Horodowich, Timothy McCall, Giovanni Tarantino and Christina Dyson for their useful comments. Finally, I am grateful to Johannes Helmuth for sharing with me his recent research on humanist invectives.
- 2 George Austin Test, *Satire: Spirit and Art*, Tampa: University of South Florida Press, 1991, p. 109.
- 3 On fifteenth-century Italian humanism there is a vast literature. Most scholars agree that humanist authors were the most proficient Latin scholars who used their knowledge of classical culture to obtain distinguished political and cultural roles. Recently, this interpretation has been expanded to include non-professional, semi-Latinate readers of Latin. See Brian Maxson, *The Humanist World of Renaissance Florence*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014, pp. 11–25.
- 4 On Luther and Erasmus’s invectives see Constance M. Furey, ‘Invective and Discernment on Martin Luther, D. Erasmus, and Thomas More’, *Harvard Theological Review* 98, 2005, 469–88.
- 5 I refer here to Vittorio Rossi’s short but enlightening discussion of humanist invectives in his ‘Il Quattrocento’, *Storia Letteraria d’Italia*, Milan: Vallardi, 1933, pp. 99–101.
- 6 See Lucia Cesarini Martinelli, ‘Note sulla Polemica Poggio-Valla e sulla fortuna delle *Elegantiae*’, *Interpres* 3, 1980, 29–79.
- 7 See Martinelli, ‘Note’; Salvatore I. Camporeale, *Lorenzo Valla. Umanesimo e Teologia*, Florence: Istituto Nazionale di Studi sul Rinascimento, 1972, which contains an edition of Valla’s *Apologus* against Bracciolini; Bartolomeo Facio, *Invective in Laurentium Valla*, ed. Ennio I. Rao, Naples: SEN, 1978; Lorenzo Valla, *Antidotum in Facium*, ed. Mariangela Regolosi, Padua: Antenore, 1981; David Rutherford, *The Early Renaissance Invective and Controversies of Antonio da Rho*, Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 2005; Francesco Filelfo, *Satyrae I (Decadi I–V)*, ed. Silvia Fiaschi, Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2005; Antonio Lanza, *Polemiche e berte letterarie nella Firenze del primo Rinascimento (1375–1449)*, Rome: Bulzoni, 1989; John Monfasani, ‘In Praise of Ognibene and Blame of Guarino: Andronicus Contoblanca’s Invective Against Niccolò Botano and the Citizens of Brescia’, *Bibliothèque d’Humanisme et Renaissance* 52, 2, 1990, 309–21, and Poggio Bracciolini, *Facezie*, ed. Marcello Ciccuto, Milan: Rizzoli, 1984. Several invectives are embedded in many collections of letters by humanists such as Bruni, Filelfo and Guarini.

- 8 See Ruth Leys, 'The Turn to Affect: A Critique', *Critical Inquiry* 37, 3, 2011, 434–72, p. 442. See also the semi-constructionist approach summarized by William Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of the Emotions*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 35–47.
- 9 Arena, 'Roman Oratorical', p. 157.
- 10 John Carter Wood, 'Conceptualizing Cultures of Violence and Cultural Change', in Stuart Carroll (ed.), *Cultures of Violence: Interpersonal Violence in Historical Perspective*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 85.
- 11 See Peter Burke and Roy Porter (eds), *The Social History of Language*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987 and Peter Burke, 'The Art of Insult in Early Modern Italy', *Culture and History* 2, 1987, 68–79.
- 12 Eric Shouse, 'Feeling, Emotion, Affect', *M/C Journal* 8, 2005; quote taken from Leys, 'The Turn to Affect', p. 435.
- 13 See Rutherford, *The Early Renaissance Invective*, for the use of these sources in Antonio da Rho and Panormita's exchange of invectives.
- 14 Valentina Arena, 'Roman Oratorical Invective', pp. 150–1. See also Brian A. Krostenko, *Cicero, Catullus, and the Language of Social Performance*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.
- 15 For France see Lazar Sainéan, *Les sources de l'argot ancien*, 2 vols, Paris: Champion, 1912. For Spain see Frère Claude de Bronseval, *Peregrinatio hispanica: voyage de Dom Edme de Saulieu, abbé de Clairvaux, en Espagne et au Portugal, 1531–1533*, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1970. I have found these last two sources from Trevor Dean's study of insults in Bologna. See note 16 below.
- 16 See Guido Ruggiero, *Violence in Early Renaissance Venice*, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1980; Burke and Porter (eds), *The Social History of Language*; Lauro Martines, *Strong Words: Writing and Social Strain in the Italian Renaissance*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2003; Trevor Dean, 'Gender and Insult in an Italian City: Bologna in the Later Middle Ages', *Social History* 29, 2, 2004, 217–31; Elizabeth Horodowich, *Language and Statecraft in Early Modern Venice*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008; and Johannes Helmrath, 'Streitkultur. Die Invective bei den italienischen Humanisten', in Uwe Baumann, Marc Laureys and Winfried Schmitz (eds), *Die Kunst des Streitens. Inszenierung, Formen und Funktionen öffentlichen Streits in historischer Perspektive*, Bonn: Bonn University Press, 2010, pp. 261–93.
- 17 Claudio Griggio, 'La Tradizione dell'invettiva dal Petrarca al Poliziano', in *Bufere e molli aurette. Polemiche letterarie dallo Stilnovo alla 'Voce'*, Milan: Edizioni Angelo Guerini, 1996, pp. 38–9.
- 18 Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech. A Politics of the Performative*, New York and London: Routledge, 1997, pp. 2–3.
- 19 On collective emotions see Christian von Scheve and Mikko Salmela, *Collective Emotions*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014, especially pp. xv–xvi.
- 20 See the discussion of this letter below.
- 21 Humanist invectives have received relatively scant attention. On Petrarch's adaptation of the classical *vituperatio* and demonstrative rhetoric see Francesco Bausi, *Petrarca antimoderno* and *Francesco Petrarca Invectives*, ed. David Marsh, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003. On the invective as a complex and multi-form genre see Agnès Morini (ed.), *L'invective: histoire, formes, stratégies: actes du colloque international des 24 et 25 novembre 2005, Saint-Etienne*, Saint-Etienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Etienne, 2006; Robert Eisenhauer, *Archeologies of Invective*, New York: Peter Lang, 2007; Marc Laureys, 'Per una storia dell'invettiva umanistica', *Studi Umanistici Piceni* 23, 2003, 9–30; Pier Giorgio Ricci, 'La tradizione dell'invettiva tra il medioevo e l'umanesimo', in Pier Giorgio Ricci, *Miscellanea petrarchesca*, ed. Monica Berté, Rome: Edizioni

- di Storia e Letteratura, 1999, pp. 189–200; Martinelli, ‘Note’; Martin Charles Davies, ‘An Emperor without Clothes? Niccolò Niccoli under Attack’, in Ann Moffatt (ed.), *Maistor. Classical, Byzantine and Renaissance Studies for Robert Browning*, Canberra: The Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1984, pp. 269–308. On violent language and patronage see Martines, *Strong Words*.
- 22 Laureys, *Per una storia*, pp. 14–15.
 - 23 Rutherford, *The Early Renaissance Invective*, pp. 20–2.
 - 24 Rutherford, *The Early Renaissance Invective*, p. 21.
 - 25 See Bausi, *Petrarca antimoderno*.
 - 26 Guido De Blasi and Amedeo De Vincentiis, ‘Un’età di invettive’, in Amedeo De Vincentiis (ed.), *Atlante della letteratura italiana*, Turin: Einaudi, 2010, I, pp. 356–63.
 - 27 See Rossi, *Il Quattrocento*, and Griggio, ‘La Tradizione dell’invettiva’. On Dante’s use of invectives see Arianna Punzi, “‘Animos movere’: La lingua delle invettive nella *Commedia*”, *Critica del testo* 14, 2, 2011, 11–42.
 - 28 Lanza, *Polemiche*.
 - 29 Paolo Orvieto and Lucia Brestolini, *La poesia comico-realistica: dalle origini al Cinquecento*, Rome: Carocci, 2000.
 - 30 ‘Porco putente pessimo poltrone,/invido iniquo ingrato iscognoscente/e brutto e tristo e ville e da niente’ (quote and translation taken from Martines, *Strong Words*, p. 184).
 - 31 On di Meglio see Giovan Matteo di Meglio, *Rime*, ed. Giuseppe Brincat, Florence: Olschki, 1977. On Burchiello see Lanza, *Polemiche*, pp. 337–400.
 - 32 ‘Non credo aver errato;/se pur ho errato, sto a correzione/del litterato Poggio Bambalione’ (taken from Lanza, *Polemiche*, p. 372). The translation is mine. The nickname is derived from Cicero’s second *Philippica* in which the author makes fun of Marc Anthony’s father-in-law by nicknaming him ‘Bambalionis’.
 - 33 Lanza, *Polemiche*, p. 148; translation and italics are mine.
 - 34 Maxson, *The Humanist World*.
 - 35 Helmuth, ‘Streitkultur’, pp. 273–4. See also Camporeale, *Lorenzo Valla*, pp. 397–9.
 - 36 See note 16.
 - 37 Horodowich, *Language*, pp. 91–124.
 - 38 Peter Burke, *The Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Italy. Essays on Perception and Communication*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, p. 96.
 - 39 Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Hélène Iswolsky, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984, pp. 164–5.
 - 40 Dean, ‘Gender and Insult’.
 - 41 Text from Guarino da Verona, *Epistolario*, ed. Remigio Sabbadini, Venice: Regia Deputazione Veneta di Storia Patria, 1915 (reprinted 1959), p. 42: ‘Nec vero mirandum est ut me liberum ignoret qui se mancipium esse nesciat non dico libidinum, ventris, iracundiae, inanis gloriae, arrogantiae, invidiae ceterarumque animi turpitudinum . . . ; sed nequissimae ancillae et sordidissimae mulierculae. . . Nota renarro, quae in tota sunt vicinia cum risu ioco et contemplatione fabulamenta.’
 - 42 Rutherford, *The Early Renaissance Invective*, pp. 55–7: ‘Nolo tamen putas, mi Candide, me faecibus sordidisque suis diutius immoraturum. Quid hoc est? Non equidem quo sperem olim quasi nouus pugil pro maledictis iterum responsurus insurgere, aut quo timeam ex illo pollui aut deturpari me quoquo pacto posse, seu in mores illius suillos ulla e regione commigrare, uerum potius quod ab huiuscemodi corruptissimo inquinatissimoque hominum genere meapte natura longe abhorream.’
 - 43 See Rutherford, *The Early Renaissance Invective*, pp. 30–1.

- 44 Rutherford, *The Early Renaissance Invective*, p. 31. The description of Panormita as a hermaphrodite is a clear reference to his controversial collection of Latin epigrams called *Hermaphrodite*. See note 44 and discussion below.
- 45 Rutherford, *The Early Renaissance Invective*, pp. 31 and 270: ‘Dicite io, Patres, quae nam haec sententia uestra est,/ecquis honos in me, tu, turpe ad me mittere monstrum,/Raudensem et uere humana sub imagine monstrum?’
- 46 Rutherford, *The Early Renaissance Invective*, pp. 134–5: ‘Vidistine . . . quae ludificationes, qui risus, qui ioci applausu omnium habiti sint? Ludibrio statim prae ignoratione philosophiae astrologiaeque et in sibilum omnibus haberit coepit.’
- 47 See Antonio Beccadelli, *The Hermaphrodite*, ed. and trans. Holt Parker, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010, and Michael Rocke, *Forbidden Friends*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, pp. 43–4.
- 48 See Beccadelli, *Hermaphrodite*, pp. 26–7.
- 49 Beccadelli, *Hermaphrodite*, pp. 26–7: ‘Et tu cum vulgo crede quid, Hode, velis.’
- 50 Beccadelli, *Hermaphrodite*, pp. 33 and 129.
- 51 Eisenhauer, *Archeologies*, p. 15: ‘A facetis enim et humanis, sicut Lucilius a Cosentinis et Tarentinis legi cupio. Quod si rusticiores erunt, non recuso quin sentiant quod volunt, modo scriptorem ne culpent, qui a levationem animi haec et ad ingenii exercitum scripsi.’
- 52 See Poggio Bracciolini, *Facezie*, ed. Marcello Ciccuto, Milan: Rizzoli, 1983, pp. 273–5.
- 53 Patricia Simons, ‘Visual Humor in a Tale by Poggio Bracciolini: Another View’, *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 28, 3, 2009, pp. 1–3.
- 54 Beccadelli, *Hermaphrodite*, pp. xxiv–xxv.
- 55 Beccadelli, *Hermaphrodite*, p. xxv. On Burchiello see note 25. See also Orvieto and Brestolini, *La poesia*. On Rustico di Filippi see Sylvain Trousselard, ‘Le *Vituperium* comme forme inversée de la *Lauda* chez Centen de La Chitarra d’Arezzo et Rustico Filippi’, in Agnès Morini, *L’invective*, pp. 21–36.
- 56 This *recantatio* is published in the Beccadelli, *Hermaphrodite*, pp. 124–7.
- 57 See Beccadelli, *Hermaphrodite*, pp. 110–11.
- 58 ‘Sidere percussa est subito tibi, Zoile, lingua,/Dum lingis. Certe, Zoile, nunc futues’ (Martial, *Epigrammata*, ed. Jacobus Borovskij, Leipzig: Teubner 1976).
- 59 Beccadelli, *Hermaphrodite*, pp. 152–3.
- 60 See Horodowich, *Language*, p. 208.
- 61 Beccadelli, *Hermaphrodite*, pp. 6–7.
- 62 On this defence see also Eugene O’Connor, ‘Panormita’s Reply to His Critics: The *Hermaphroditus* and the Literary Defense’, *Renaissance Quarterly* 50, 4, 1997, 985–1010.
- 63 Ian Ruffell ‘Beyond Satire: Horace, Popular Invective and the Segregation of Literature’, *Journal of Roman Studies* 93, 2003, 35–65, p. 52.
- 64 Austin Sarat, Carleen R. Basler and Thomas L. Dumm (eds), *Performances of Violence*, Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011, p. 2.
- 65 On the concept of emotional lexicon and the practices that follow from it see the discussion in Reddy, *Navigation*, pp. 36–7.

9 Nostradamus and the *res mirabilia*

Between nature's intelligence and the Word of God

Denis Crouzet

The prophetic universe of the centuries of Nostradamus is fully prodigious¹ and, in this paroxysm of *res mirabilia*, the human being is of course at the heart of the visionary field. Nostradamus insists on an emotional fact: human sin is an absolute, and he inventories and details atrocious expressions of it, with increasingly horrific examples, in a sort of catalogue of evil encompassing parricides, matricides, tyrant-led massacres, murders of the innocent and the weak. But this universe is not only prodigious because human beings tear one another apart, it is also because it seems paved with teratological events. The evocation of violence to come aims thus to evoke anxiety in the mind of the reader, through the effect of a dark vision of the future, inciting anxiety, fear, terror and guilt. Such emotions are 'produced' by a prophetic writing which generates an inner turmoil completely beholden to this fantasy of evil aggression. The objective of the study that follows is to demonstrate how this relation between violence and emotion stems from a dialectic conceptualization. The violence that Nostradamus's discourse sees proliferated in the world leaves no possibility of a future that is not destructive and evil, symbolizing the detachment of human beings from God, their capitulation to their passions and their failure to remember the divine commandments. His work attains such an intensity not only to terrify, but also because it must guide readers, once anxiety has been aroused in them, to try to sublimate this state by regaining affective control; that is, when they realize that there is nothing more certain in the world than the faith and confidence that they must place in the mercy of God, they will be able to leave the sphere of sin envisioned in the prophetic quatrains. Thus it is emotions, paradoxically, that place the reader on the path to conversion and to their own negation. The emotions triggered by violence must direct readers towards a spiritual experience of total sublimation to God. These emotions must be overturned, leading human creatures away from the anguish that attaches them to the earthly world, and towards their surrender to God, encouraging them to think of nothing other than preparing for their salvation through love for the Saviour. From violence to anxiety, and from anxiety to love and serenity, emotion within Nostradamus's discourse thus must be analyzed in terms of a mystical experience.

Monsters and wonders appear as the centuries progress. Nostradamus thus warns that, on a sandy shore, after a dreadful flood, a sea monster from other seas will be found (5.88).² In Seville, there will be interconnected events; in the first wonder, a ‘true flame’ (*vraye flamme*) will devour the lady who will want to burn the innocent. Then, in the second wonder, an army will be inflamed before the assault, after which a ‘monster in beef’ (*monstre en bœuf*) will be seen in Seville (6.19). There is the same split, a sort of significant intensification, first in Nantes: the rainbow will appear over the city by night. This will be the sign of much rain. The second wonder says that in Saxony a monster will be born of a bear and a sow, without allowing us to understand the significance of such an unnatural union to a naval event, in the Persian Gulf, a great fleet will plunge to the bottom of the sea (6.44). The same binary structure is present in the quatrain which predicts that the ‘great cow’ (*magna vaqua*) will cause great trouble in Ravenna, when the men come led by ‘fifteen’ (*quinze*) who were previously hidden on the island of Fornase. At the same time, when in Rome two double-headed monsters are born, there will be ‘blood, fire, flood, the greatest ones in space’ (*sang, feu, déluge, les plus grands à l'espase*) (9.3). Comets and droughts may go hand in hand (2.84): from Campania to Tuscany, in Siena and Florence, not a drop of rain will fall throughout the no doubt symbolic period of six months and nine days. Then a comet – ‘a strange tongue’ (*une estrange langue*) – will overrun Dalmatia, devastating the entire land. There will also be a bearded star which will appear in the North, not far from Cancer in June, and a great Roman will die, doubtless the Pope, the night after (6.6). Then there is added the vision of a meteorite fallen from the sky (6.97): at 45 degrees the sky will burn. Fire will approach the great new city, probably Naples (*Nea-Polis*). In an instant, a flame will leap up when one will want to have proof of the Normans. In another configuration, a monster with two heads and three arms will announce that a ‘great city’ (*Grande cité*) – doubtless Rome – will be devastated by water (5.86).

The risk faced in reading such prodigious accounts is failing to understand what has to be understood, to misjudge the content of the divine message of signs on earth or in the sky as Nostradamus paints it in his elliptical and emotional language.³ A quatrain underlines this notion, stating that there should be no mistaking that the meaning of the *Présages* is less a divination of the future, than teachings of the divine Almighty producing emotions and anguish in the reader’s mind.⁴ Thus, when a solar eclipse will allow a monster to be seen in full daylight (3.34), people will interpret it, according to Nostradamus, other than they should. They will fail to grasp the hidden meaning of this relationship between the temporary disappearance and the sudden teratological appearance. As a result, they will not be prepared, by having stocked up as they should have, against the high price which will inevitably have to be paid. A high price, perhaps synonymous with that which has to be paid for having ignored divine will, for having lived without the holy light. And they shall suffer for it. The meaning of the *Présages-Prophéties* is here, in these teratological quatrains, patent: the astrophile aims to warn his

readers to be aware of a complex language, with its prescribed grammar and lexicon, and above all to decipher the implications and necessary connections.⁵ What must be conclusively understood is that Nostradamus is conducting a philology of nature through its extraordinary emotional expressions.⁶

In this context, his wonder-centred philology must be placed in the perspective of the wonders of *Orus Apollo, fils de Osiris, roy de Aegipte, niliacque, Des notes hieroglyphiques, livre deux, mis en rithme par epigrammes, Œuvre de incredible et admirable erudition et antiquité*, translated in 1541 by Nostradamus.⁷ This is a philology, he writes, of ‘secret cases’ (*cas secretz*), or wonders existing in nature about which the Egyptian priests were the first to theorize a coded system and inventory. Nostradamus writes to Jeanne d’Albret that numerous questions arise which human understanding cannot explain: why does the angry elephant remain still and calm when in the company of a sheep, or become frightened upon simply hearing the sound of a piglet? Why does the wild bull act tame when tied to a fig tree? Why do bats that build nests in rocks die when they inhale the scent of ivy wood? Nature’s wisdom is a science unto itself, knowledge that calls upon a philology which may allow us to understand the divine intent permeating it.

In this way, Nostradamus wants to demonstrate that nature has a soul, an intelligence of its own, and this intelligence is the will of God, which seems to be written there and magnified in an original intent. The hieroglyphs of the ancient Egyptians, therefore, transcribe this intelligence which appears in signs in their ‘wondrous’ cases. There are genuine revelations in these wonders, of which every element created is a fragment of a *prisca theologia*. Thus the Egyptians saw in the basilisk covered ‘by its tail wrapped around its body so tightly,’ the sign of eternity, the *aevum*.⁸ The principle of eternity is thus expressed in the circle formed by the tiny, coiled up reptile and if it is so expressed, it is because God wanted to give humans a sign of that which He promises those souls faithful to Him. The eagle, a fertile bird with a long life, signified the existence of God in being the ‘image of the sovereign sun’, for he surpasses all other birds in flying higher to contemplate the sun, and for his ‘burning eyes which like rays do pierce the skies’.⁹

There is therefore a link between philology and theology that the ancient Egyptians established in order to classify, decipher and express divine mysteries. Thus we note that, in the *Présages*, Nostradamus’s attention to the wonders coming from the sky, the earth or the seas can be explained: the wonders are hieroglyphics. They do not stop at decreeing the wrath of God, they act as a means, for humans, to anticipate divine wisdom, which in turn reveals the divine will to teach. A teacher who, inexorably, hopes to lead to the evangelical Word, to His son. The 943 quatrains are not to be read as prophecies of events to come, but as terrifying teachings of divine wisdom, the means put at people’s disposal to access that wisdom.

There are wonders from the sky, associated with signs on earth (1.64), with men who will imagine seeing the sun at night, when they will see the ‘half-pig man’ (*pourceau demy homme*). This is an allusion to *Prodigiorum libellus*,

by Julius Obsequens, translated in 1552 by Conrad Lycosthenes.¹⁰ In 163 BC the vision of the sun at night, in Capua and Pisaure, was coupled with the birth of a half-pig man. Nostradamus, however, links several prodigious periods to formulate his prophecy, since Julius Obsequens makes reference to Aminterne in 134 BC, when the sun appeared in the middle of the night, for some time, and a cow spoke, while at night in the Capitole, a bird's cry was like that of a man: all of which corresponds to the last decasyllable of the quatrain 'the brute beasts will be heard to speak'.¹¹ It should be noted that the prodigious signs open here a period in which humans will live in reverse: listening to those who speak no reason, allowing themselves to be seduced by other beings obeying their sensuality. The wonders themselves give structure to the prophecy because they are based on frightening inversion: the sun appears at night, humans are animalized, and the sky is full of songs and battles that normally take place on earth.

What Nostradamus is offering his reader in this quatrain is a prompt to awaken to the knowledge that the time has come or will come when a lie will take over the minds of human beings and lead them to listen to illusion-makers. This is a notice paraphrasing biblical warnings and implying that Nostradamus's writings function like a kind of puzzle which must awaken the reader to the Word of God and help him to understand that the supernatural in nature is a language of God, a divine message that can help human beings to move towards God's Word, probably an echo of the warnings issued by the prophets in the Old Testament. In fact, perhaps it is the first epistle of Corinthians (4, 5) that can lead us to the hermeneutic eventuality of the quatrain: 'So then, do not judge anything before the time. Wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the motives of hearts. Then each will receive recognition from God.' The teaching is to not fall prey to the illusions peddled by seducers. Only God is the source of the Truth because God is the origin of everything, God is 'everything', and ignoring God as the only source of salvation means damnation.

Nostradamus also describes a lunar eclipse (1.84). The moon will be obscured in 'deep gloom' (*profondes tenebres*), while his 'brother' (*frère*), the sun, will become 'bright red in color' (*de couleur ferrugine*). The wonder signifies, at first look, a crime to be committed, in the coincidence between the hidden star and the 'great one' (*le grand*), which shall be hidden for a long time 'in the shadows' (*soubz les tenebres*) then plunge the blade in 'the bloody wound' (*la plaie sanguine*). Everything happens just as if Nostradamus was playing, beyond the literal meaning of the quatrain, a semantic game inspired by the Acts of the Apostles (2, 19–22):

And I will perform wonders in the sky above
and miraculous signs on the earth below,
blood and fire and clouds of smoke.

The sun will be changed to darkness
and the moon to blood

before the great and glorious day of the Lord comes.

And then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.¹²

In this quatrain, the motif of inversion is present, for it is the moon that is changed to darkness and the sun bloody, but the important point is for Nostradamus to announce that the prodigious period coincides with a manifestation of the divine Almighty, with an eschatological period during which bloody violence will appear but which we must not fear. At this time, Christians must continually call to God.

Equivalent language is found in quatrain 2.23, which also concerns the sky. Birds shall at first be chased by another bird in the area around a palace. The prince, although warned and the enemy repelled beyond the river, will be hit by a feathered arrow. As Pierre Brind'amour writes, ‘the bird of prey swooping down on its victim foreshadows the arrow which falls upon the prince’, ‘the dart upheld by the bird’ (*le trait d'oiseau soustenu*).¹³ Here again Nostradamus builds a collage from information provided by Julius Obsequens relating that, under the reign of Tarquin the Elder, in 244 BC, the palace attic housed nesting eagles: vultures suddenly swooped down on the eaglets and tore them to pieces; this was seen as the prophecy of an imminent disaster, all the more so since war broke out with the Rutuli and Ardea was besieged. Nostradamus added the event concerning the death of the prince who failed to heed the warnings, in keeping with the identification of the bird with the ‘dart of the bird’ (*trait d'oyseau*). This is a motif that is repeated in 2.75: the voice of a ‘rare’ or strange bird will either be heard in the chimney (Brind'amour) or on a balcony (*le canon du respiral estage*): this will announce that the bushel of wheat shall rise so high that starving men will turn into cannibals. A link can be seen between the bird, living therefore far from the sky which is his natural habitat, and people overcome by famine and thus turning into what they are not, non-human. Again the wonder announces a horrible inversion in human order, the effect of a bird which may symbolize a false prophet (*'avis'* = augur), and intending to warn people of this frightening destiny. Nostradamus, in this way, assumes the role of one addressing the inhabitants of the world, the non-believers, so that they will understand that, from their single-minded worldly preoccupations, they are permanently at risk of losing God and thus become firmly convinced of the wisdom of God. For there is a parodic dimension that must not be overlooked. Everything proceeds as if Nostradamus was playing a significant game based on Ezekiel (32, 4): ‘I will leave you on the ground, I will fling you on the open field, I will allow all the birds of the sky to settle on you, and I will permit all the wild animals to gorge themselves on you.’ Is not the bird the symbol of the sin of humans?

Here, the motif of punishment is primordial. The *res mirabilia* play a part in the communication of God’s terrifying wrath, such wrath as Christians cannot afford to mistake. This wrath is intended to test them, and in reality it must be interpreted as calling them to recognize being God’s chosen people.

Moving from the sky to the sea with this in mind, the quatrains seem shadowed by the Book of Job (37, 1–13), in a kind of paraphrasing intended to teach Christians about the Almighty power of the heavenly and thus place them on the road to penitence. Revealing wonders from the sky and earth, is this not for Nostradamus like revealing this God who moves souls by demonstrating that he performs miracles?

God thunders with his voice in marvelous ways;
he does great things beyond our understanding.
For to the snow he says, ‘Fall to earth!’
and to the torrential rains, ‘Pour down!’
. . . Whether it is for punishment He carries out His will,
or whether it is for mercy,
Pay attention to this, Job!
Stand still and consider the wonders God works.

The most torrid heat of the sun, in the prodigious context formulated by a Nostradamus who above all else wishes to speak of the ‘wonders of God’, ‘sublime in its force’, may again play a part when it renders the water so hot that it will half-cook the fish around Negroponte, the island of Euboea (2.3). The inhabitants will come to consume the fish when the supplies in Rhodes and Genoa run out. Or, at least, because they choose not to wait any longer. Nostradamus follows prodigious logic here in once again finding inspiration in Julius Obsequens: for under the consuls Marcus Emilius and Lucius Aurelius, in 628 BC, while Etna was erupting, the sea started to boil near the island of Lipari and ships burned. In many places along the shore, dead fish in great numbers washed up, which the inhabitants then ate. Many of them died as a result. If we reflect on this correlation, a question arises: are these people who eat half-cooked fish without awaiting emergency food supplies a metaphor? Are they dead because they were dead to God, meaning that they did not continue to believe in the promise of salvation and seized imperfect food because it was immediately available, *hic et nunc*, the food of an incomplete faith, a symbol of which was the boiled fish from the sea? And underlying that, the image of a nourishing God from whom we can receive full salvation in praying without presumption, without succumbing to the lying nature of the world? In Psalms 59, 12–13 the sin of the mouth is significantly the word of impious lips, the word of those who are ‘victims of their pride’ and who God will not pardon. For the evangelical, the Word of God should be eaten ‘raw’, in an antinomic spiritual mastication of the previously ingested word, that which the clergy appropriated and dispensed to the faithful. Would it not be necessary to authenticate the prophetic sense, necessitating that we distinguish in the quatrains the processes of modelling a parable intended to draw the reader to an evangelical perspective? Should we not see here a metaphor on the impatience of men who are nourished on temptations of life on earth and who are not patient enough to access the food preparing them for eternity, the Word of God? And who is subject to God’s punishment?

In light of this, what should we think of the quatrain recounting that out of the Adriatic sea, in the Crustamin – perhaps the river ‘Conca’, a horrible fish whose head is human and the tail aquatic will be taken from the water with a hook (3.21)? What can this hideous hybrid, this marine monster, mean in a quatrain which, at first look, stops at the simple description of the prodigious event? What does the fact that the monster is taken from the sea depths by a simple hook mean? It is the hook itself that merits attention. If we focus on the prophet Habakkuk, it is not without interest to read an address to the Lord, who was punishing his people by the oppression of the Chaldeans (1, 13–17):

So why do you put up with such treacherous people? Why do you say nothing when the wicked devour those more righteous than they are? You treat people like fish in the sea, like reptiles that have no ruler! He pulls them all up with a fishhook; he hauls them in with his throw net; catches them in his dragnet. That is why he is full of joy and jubilation. That is why he offers sacrifices to his throw net and burns incense to his dragnet; for thanks to them his portion is great and his food delicious. Will he not therefore stop emptying his throw net, ruthlessly bleeding nations?

The Hebrew people are, in the ‘vision in which Habakkuk the prophet saw the sentence’, as if taken by a hook and squeezed in their net by the Chaldeans, ‘an impetuous and ferocious people’, like fish by a fisherman (Habakkuk 1, 13–17). God delivered them, in taking away their protection and His love, into the hands of their enemies, and appears to have stopped being their King. Could not the half-man half-fish monster be this captive people, subject to evil tricks by the punishment of God? Can we not surmise a biblical subtext that would induce the reader to address God with penitence, proclaiming his distress over the suffering endured, over the violence felt in not being able to freely live his faith?

Nostradamus then turns his attention on several occasions to strange births, beginning with that of a child who appeared in this world with ‘two teeth in his throat’ in the middle of a group of men deported ‘to the islands’. The teeth symbolize here the act of eating and, because they were planted in the mouth of the newborn too soon, they are, in the quatrain, the prophecy of a terrible famine during which people will die of hunger, with trees that will be ‘grazed upon’ (2.7). Impatience always implies calamity. But, it is added, for the surviving deportees, a new king will proclaim a pardon. In some way, it could be a quatrain once again metamorphosing the teaching that the most trying hardship must be patiently endured, in the sense that hope must be kept alive. Death will invade the islands, but in the end the calamity shall cease with the pardon of the government, who will commute the sentence. From which can be read, in the form of another kind of semantics of the prodigious, the theme of a pardon coming in an extreme period of suffering, of punishments and ordeals, and of emotion and anguish. A pardon which comes to those who persevere and do not lose hope, even if the famine can be an allegory of the

difficulty of fully inhabiting one's faith, and even if the dead may conjure up persecutions. And perhaps the wonder of the magic birth allows Nostradamus to say that God is everything to those who submit to his complete mercy. Could this be one of the keys to the prophetic factory? In this case, the production of a text intended to assist the reader to hold on to his faith in hope, towards and against all tribulations, including this hunger, which as elsewhere can be the hunger for God, for his Word? Does this not lead us to deduce that the child incarnates original sin, his teeth being those which, full of an asp's venom, symbolize the sin of lying, holding people back and stopping them from knowing God? But what the astrophile seeks to point out is that at the very heart of this isolation, this insularity of death and punishment, there is hope and a providence which can, at any moment, put an end to the misery. For, as Nostradamus writes, God 'is in everything'. Divine punishment is the sign hidden behind the signs, to the extent that it tries humans and, if they remain steadfast and faithful in face of hardship, divine mercy will be theirs. It follows that the nostradamic universe – dark, sombre – could be but a tool intended to open the imaginary to its opposite: consummate hope.

More explicitly, prodigious apprehension may be translated by a series of wonders more directly suggesting the involvement of the Church in the heavenly warning, for example in quatrain 2.32, which begins by conjuring up a shower of milk, blood and frogs in Dalmatia. As Julius Obsequens observed,¹⁴ it indicates a prophecy of God's anger, with the war and the plague 'near Treglia' (*prés de Balenne*) and a great distress in Slavonia. Nostradamus is especially correlating this panic to the birth of a monster near and within Ravenna, which must suggest to the reader the hermaphrodite monster appearing on 6 March 1512, whose body was a description of sin in both Italy and the Church, a divine warning intended to draw awareness of what sort of vice people were living in, revelling in:¹⁵ pride by the horn on the forehead, fickleness by the wings on the back, selfishness by the absence of arms, greed by the leg sporting a claw, attachment to earthly things by the eye on the knee looking down, the other knee covered in fish scales and ending in a webbed foot, two genitals signifying the extent of lust, including sodomy. But at the same time, on the chest of this teratological body, in addition to the crescent of the moon, a cross and a Y were etched, signifying what must guide the Christians in their desire to obtain God's forgiveness, participation in the martyrdom of the Redemption and following the 'divine power', the Y being the first letter of the tetragram.

Nostradamus stigmatizes human refusal to take into consideration the great holy Word, the blindness and deafness in which sinning humanity revels. It must be noted that he does not, therefore, make prophecies, but says what people are, repeats it infinitely, in multiple configurations, to eventually succeed, through the force of repetition, in awakening his readers to divine law. There is a kind of litany in the hieroglyphic writing of his quatrains, leading from anguish to prayer.

The great risk, in these quatrains, is therefore that people ignore the warnings that God is sending them, and mistake the meaning of this hieroglyphic language which comes and goes in nature: they must receive the message with blindness or terror.

Let us resume with a little story in which the hero is a dog. When Nostradamus writes that the domestic animal will come and speak to people with great efforts and leaps; this will be to warn against the dangers of an imminent storm. And because no attention will have been paid to this dog gifted with a premonitory sense, the lightning will prove terribly ‘harmful’ (*maléfique*) for a virgin (*vierge*) who will be lifted up from the earth and ‘suspended in the air’ (*suspendue en l’air*) (3.44). The dog symbolizes fidelity and therefore faith. Ignoring the calls of faith, failing to recognize that it is a free gift, is to ignore God’s omnipotence and open oneself to His terrifying justice. Here, how can we fail to think of the evangelical reasoning which runs through Chapter V of the 1542 edition of *Gargantua*: those drunk on God (*Les propos des bienyvres*), of whom Rabelais writes that their thirst is what makes them believe in God’s power of creation? This thirst for God, synonymous with faith in free salvation which must be inextinguishable, is compared to the path of one who is chasing a dog:

‘Appetite comes from eating,’ said Hangest, bishop of Le Mans. ‘Thirst subsides after drinking. – A remedy for thirst? – It is the opposite of that used for dog bites: if you always run after a dog, he will never bite you. Always drink before you get thirsty and thirst will never torment you.¹⁶

In the Author’s Prologue, Rabelais goes further in identifying the dog with the one who goes beyond appearances, and who ventures into the complexities of Christ’s philosophy.

Like the example of this dog, it is advisable to exhibit, lightness in pursuit but boldness in attack, the discernment to inhale, feel and appreciate these *beaux livres de haute grasse* by careful reading and assiduous reflection, to break off the bone and suck out the very substance (meaning what I understand from these Pythagorean symbols) with a firm hope of becoming informed and virtuous from such reading.¹⁷

And so, there is no doubt that these evangelical quatrains should be read in a Rabelaisian manner, in the way of Erasmus. Christ was a ‘marvelous Silenus’ (*merveilleux Silène*), according to Erasmus:

it is from this perspective that the saint prophet contemplated him when he described Him by saying ‘He did not have any appearance or beauty. We saw him and he had no face; we lost him, he was despised like the last of men’ and a host of other things which followed this sentence.¹⁸

Silenus suggests a type of madness of reality, for he who may only arouse mockery, indifference and contempt is he who has the greatest wealth, the greatest Truth in him. Therein lies the hypothesis that Nostradamus's dog who, although an animal lacking powers of reason or language, is a Silenus on the model of Christ. Ignoring him like the virgin who exposed herself to lightning, is to refuse the Truth, to deny oneself to undertake the very act of Christ-like madness which consists of accepting that what is insane could be the truth. What we must imagine is that the quatrains may have been conceived in this particular manner and that their language could well be of this nature, concealing what is most precious and vital.

One of the last quatrains (10.71) is the vision of a great freezing of the sea taking place on the earth and in the air when one will come to venerate Thursday, the 'Jovis dies', the day of God, it may be said. That which thus will never be, will have never been seen so far? And from the four corners of the world, all peoples will come to honour it.

This quatrain poses several problems. Why is the wonder of the great freezing linked to Thursday becoming the important worship day? Nostradamus is doubtlessly proceeding here by using the cold as a call to eternal praise for the heavenly greatness, as in the Book of Daniel, the call to prayer: 'Frost and chill, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever! Ice and snow, bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever!' (Daniel 3, 69–70). Symbolically, the great glaciation could be the wonder which would precede veneration by worship on Holy Thursday, the day of the last supper with Christ and his disciples, the day when Christ delivers his body and blood to his disciples so that they will be able to take nourishment from it, so that they can still make their own flesh from it, making their flesh the flesh of Christ by swallowing what is given in the form of bread. Venerating Thursday is thus to venerate Christ in anticipation of the sacrifice made on the Cross: 'Take and eat, this is my body'. On Thursdays, the faithful honour Christ in his acceptance of his Passion, but before the passion takes place. The Eucharist ceremony is important in that it introduces the believer to Christ's very sacrifice, placing him within the event itself, that of the sacrificial act freely assumed by Christ for Redemption. The host promised to the faithful gains him entry into the body of Christ at the beginning of His Passion.

Nostradamus meant to convey the same message over and over: the time of *dies Jovis* has come or may come at the same time as humanity takes its distance from God and thus, around the body of Christ adored by the truly faithful, a great eschatological hope will build. The wonder is not there where the writing decrees it: it is in this return of Christ living, in the worship which will be given over to the Eucharist, a pivotal moment, as Thierry Wanegffelen has noted, in evangelical devotion.¹⁹ What will be seen will be the Invisible, God reigning in men's hearts. Thus the hypothesis corresponding to the analyses of Thierry Wanegffelen calling the position of the '*nichodémites*' or '*temporiseurs*' of 1530–50 a 'refused choice' (*choix refusé*): a 'non-denominational' type of faith based on the adoration of the mystery of the crucifixion at the time of the

Elevation, on the certainty of the impurity of people facing heavenly All-Purity: ‘so appear the two elements which unite Eucharistic devotion and affirmation of salvation by grace alone’. Quatrain 1.17 must therefore be considered:

For forty years the rainbow will not be seen.
 For forty years it will be seen every day:
 The dry earth will grow more parched,
 and there will be great floods when it is seen.²⁰

In prose: The rainbow will not appear for 40 years, then it will be seen every day for 40 years. The dry earth will grow more parched during the first 40 years, but the great floods will appear when the rainbow reappears.

The rainbow is in biblical terms the link between heaven and earth; it appears suddenly in recalling the covenant with God, for example, in the book of Genesis: ‘When the rainbow is in the clouds, I will notice it and remember the perpetual covenant between God and all living creatures of all kinds that are on the earth’ (Genesis 9, 16). When it does not appear, it is because humans have broken off from God and God has grown silent. Nostradamus undertakes a significant inversion, identical to previously examples: while the rainbow suddenly appears after the Flood and comes to seal the covenant forever after stopping the 40 days and nights of rain, its absence defines here God’s 40 days and nights of silence and withdrawal, which is 40 years of drought, a kind of death of the living. The return of God, however, is proven by the presence of the rainbow for 40 years and by beneficial torrential rain. Nostradamus is playing here with paradoxical writing, while employing biblical symbolism. He recalls the number 40, which expresses on the one hand the time of the hardship and thus penitence – the 40 days and nights of Moses’s penitence on Mount Sinai in thick clouds so that the Lord would spare the life of his people (Deuteronomy 9, 25), the 40 days in the desert when Jesus, after his baptism, prayed and fasted with the wild animals while resisting the temptations of Satan (Mark 1, 12–13). But the figure 40 also signifies the protection given: these are ‘about 40 years’ in which, after the flight from Egypt, God surrounds his people by ‘wonders and miraculous signs . . . in the wilderness’ (Acts 7, 36); 40 days after Easter, there is the Ascension, the moment when Christ rises to Heaven, the time for the faithful to accept the Revelation, for their transformation by acceptance of Christ. Thus, the heart is purified, and the gift of faith made. After His Resurrection, Christ appears for 40 days to his disciples, until the moment of his Ascension.

Rabelais may assist us in understanding this singular quatrain, paraphrasing the Word of God in such a way that makes the liquid element no longer a sign of hardship but of joy, union and faith. Nostradamus and Rabelais, in different writings, proceed to allegorize the Christian life as they witnessed it being lived at that time. It should be recalled, following Edwin Duval, that the birth of Pantagruel, ‘King of Dipsodes, son of the great Giant Gargantua’ (*roy des dipsodes filz du grant geant Gargantua*), takes place at the end of a great

drought exceeding even that which Yahweh, implored by Ely, brought about for three years on earth.²¹ The giants were thirsty.

This drought of the giant's universe, recalling that of 1532, conveys a world which is thirsty for the Word of God which it does not receive. The absence of the rainbow in the quatrain of Nostradamus elicits this absence of the Truth hidden from Christians, a humanity without hope of salvation because what could bind it to God, allow it to quench its thirst for God, does not appear. Thus the signs and wonders announcing the birth of Pantagruel follow: the earth, overheated, begins to form beads of 'enormous sweat', an allusion to a prophecy of the sibyl Erythrea announcing the coming of a king of the heavens. There is the birth of the one whose father calls him Pantagruel, ruler of the thirsty. Edwin Duval revealed the parallels between the birth of the giant and that of Christ, who will save people from their sins. For from the womb of his mother Badebec, while midwives awaited the birth of a child, came 68 salt-carrier mules, nine dromedaries weighed down with ham and smoked beef tongue, seven camels carrying little needles, 25 carts of leeks, garlic and onions which are 'spurs to wine' (*aiguillons de vin*), a play on words likening the end of thirst with divine '*aiguillons*'. It is the end of the drought, the return to times of profusion of food and drink, for the birth of Pantagruel is an allegory of the return of Christ, of the Word of Truth. Even if Gargantua laments over the death of Badebec, and cries like a child, he still calls for drink: 'Let us drink, oh, let us leave all melancholy behind us! Bring out the best, rinse the glasses'.²²

From Rabelais to Nostradamus, the theme of the drought from which a diluvial abundance flows emphasizes the shift of the world from a hunger for God to the presence of the food of the Gospel, and Nostradamus likely wished to speak of this faith he had inside, secreted within his soul, faith in the fullness of the presence of the living Christ, of the joy of knowing himself washed of sin by the grace of God.²³

From anguish to joy; emotions are at the heart of Nostradamus' astrology.

Notes

- 1 See Yvonne Bellenger, 'Nostradamus prophète ou poète', in Marie-Thérèse Jones-Davis (ed.), *Devins et charlatans au temps de la Renaissance*, Paris: Institut de recherches sur les civilisations de l'Occident moderne, Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1979, pp.83–100, p. 94; Jean Dupèbe, 'Nostradamus humaniste?', in Michel Chomarat, Jean Dupèbe and Gilles Polizzi (eds), *Nostradamus ou le savoir transmis*, Lyon: M. Chomarat, 1997, p. 29–44; Pierre Brind'amour, *Nostradamus astrophile. Les astres et l'astrologie dans la vie et l'œuvre de Nostradamus*, Ottawa: Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1993, and Pierre Brind'amour, *Nostradamus, les premières centuries ou Prophéties*, Geneva: Droz, 1996; Chantal Liaroutzos, 'Les prophéties de Nostradamus: suivez le guide', *Bulletin de l'Association d'études sur l'humanisme, la réforme et la Renaissance* 23, 1, 1986, p. 35–40.

- 2 All references are issued from Michel Nostradamus, *Les Prophéties*, Lyon, 1568, ed. Michel Chomarat, Lyon: Ed. M. Chomarat, 2000.
- 3 Claude-Gilbert Dubois, ‘L’invention prédictive dans les Prophéties de Nostradamus’, in Richard Caron, Joscelyn Godwin, Wouter Hanegraaff and Jean-Louis Vieillard-Baron (eds), *Ésotérismes, gnoses et imaginaire symbolique: mélanges offerts à Antoine Faivre*, Leuven: Peeters, 2001, pp. 547–57.
- 4 For examples of over-interpretation, see Roger Prévost, *Nostradamus. Le mythe et la réalité. Un historien au temps des astrologues*, Paris: R. Laffont, 1999, and Jean-Paul Clébert, *Nostradamus mode d’emploi. La clé des Prophéties*, Paris: J.-C. Lattès, 1981. For an example of pseudo-astrological misinterpretation, Patrice Guinard, *Nostradamus ou l’éclat des empires*, Paris: n.p., 2011.
- 5 Jean Céard, *La nature et les prodiges, l’insolite au XVIe siècle, en France*, Geneva: Droz, 1977.
- 6 Anna Carlstaedt, *La poésie oraculaire de Nostradamus*, Paris: n.p., 2005.
- 7 Robert Aulotte, ‘D’Egypte en France par l’Italie: Horapollon au XVIe siècle’, in *Mélanges à la mémoire de Franco Simone. France et Italie dans la culture européenne*, vol. 1, Geneva: Slatkine, 1980, pp. 555–71; Pierre Béhar, *Les langues occultes de la Renaissance. Essai sur la crise intellectuelle de l’Europe au XVIe siècle*, Paris: Editions Desjonquères 1996; Claude-Françoise Brunon, ‘Signe, figure, langage: Les *Hieroglyphica* d’Horapollon’, in Yves Giraud (ed.), *L’emblème à la Renaissance*, Paris: SEDES, 1982, pp. 29–47.
- 8 ‘de sa cueue/Trestout son corps en rond d’une venue’. Nostradamus, *Interprétation des Hieroglyphes de Horapollo*, ed. Pierre Roullet, Raphèle-lès-Arles: M. Petit, 1993, p. 35.
- 9 ‘yeulx intendz aux rayons sus les cieulx’. Nostradamus, *Interprétation des Hieroglyphes*, ed. Pierre Roullet, p. 36.
- 10 Julius Obsequens, *Iulii Obsequentis Prodigiorum liber, ab urbe condita usque ad Augustum Caesarem, cuius tantum extabat Fragmentum, nunc demum Historiarum beneficio, per Conradum Lycosthenem Rubeaquensem, integrati suae restitutus*. Basilae, ex off. Ioannis Oporinii, Anno Salutis humanae, M.D.LII. Mense Martio, in-8°.
- 11 ‘Et bestes brutes a parler lon oira’. Nostradamus, *Les Prophéties*, 1.64.
- 12 ‘Je ferai paraître des prodiges en haut dans le ciel et des miracles en bas sur la terre, Du sang, du feu, et une vapeur de fumée; Le soleil se changera en ténèbres, Et la lune en sang, Avant l’arrivée du jour du Seigneur, De ce jour grand et glorieux. Alors quiconque invoquera le nom du Seigneur sera sauvé’. Nostradamus, *Les Prophéties*, 2. 19–22.
- 13 Nostradamus, *Les premières centuries ou Prophéties* (édition Macé Bonhomme de 1555). *Edition et commentaires de l’Epître à César et des 353 premiers quatrains*, ed. Pierre Brind’Amour, Genève, Droz, 1996, p. 225 (2.23); Gilles Polizzi, ‘L’énigme au XVIe siècle, Orientations bibliographiques’, *Bulletin de l’Association d’étude sur l’humanisme, la réforme et la renaissance* 59, 1, 2004, 63–72.
- 14 Obsequens, *Iulii Obsequentis Prodigiorum*. Basilae, ex off. Ioannis Oporinii, Anno Salutis humanae, M.D.LII. Mense Martio.
- 15 Andrea Martignoni, “Era nato un monstro, cossa horrendissima”. Monstres et térorologie à Venise dans les *Diari de Marino Sanudo (1493–1533)*’, *Revue historique* 1, 2004, 49–80. See *Les avertissemens es trois estats du monde selon la signification de ung monstre ne l’an mille. V.ce[n]s et XII. Par lequels on pourra prendre avis a soy regir a tousioursmais, a Valence*, Jehan Belon, 1513.
- 16 ‘L’appétit vient en mangeant, disait Hangest, évêque du Mans; la soif, elle, s’en va en buvant. – Un remède contre la soif? – C’est le contraire de celui qu’on emploie

- contre les morsures des chiens: courez toujours après le chien, jamais il ne vous mordra. Buvez toujours avant la soif et jamais elle ne vous tourmenter'. François Rabelais, *Gargantua*. Edition critique sur le texte de l'édition publiée en 1535 à Lyon par François Juste, ed. Gérard Defaux, Paris: Le Livre de Poche, 1994, Chapter 5, pp. 119–27.
- 17 'A l'exemple de ce chien, il vous convient d'avoir, légers à la poursuite et hardis à l'attaque, le discernement de humer, sentir et apprécier ces beaux livres de haute graisse; puis, par une lecture attentive et une réflexion assidue, rompre l'os et sucer la substantifique moelle (c'est-à-dire ce que je comprends par ces symboles pythagoriques) avec le ferme espoir de devenir avisés et vertueux grâce à cette lecture'. Rabelais, *Gargantua*, 'Prologue de l'auteur', pp. 81–9.
- 18 'C'est de ce point de vue que le contemplait le saint prophète quand il le dépeint en disant: "Il n'avait point d'apparence ni de beauté. Nous l'avons vu et il n'avait point de figure; nous l'avons perdu, il était méprisé comme le dernier des homes" et une foule d'autres choses qui suivent cette phrase'. Erasme, *Oeuvres choisies*, ed. Jacques Chomarat, Paris: Le Livre de Poche classique, 1991, *Les Adages*, 2201, 'Les Silènes d'Alcibiade', pp. 402–35.
- 19 Thierry Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève. Des fidèles entre deux chaires en France au XVI^e siècle*, Paris: H. Champion, 1997.
- 20 'Par quarante ans l'Iris n'apparoistra, Par quarante ans tous les jours sera veu:
La terre aride en siccité croistra, Et grands déluges quand sera apperceu.' Nostradamus, *Les Prophéties*, 1.17.
- 21 Edwin M. Duval, *The Design of Rabelais's Pantagruel*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991.
- 22 'Buvons, oh, laissons toute mélancolie ! Apporte du meilleur, rince les verres'. François Rabelais, *Pantagruel*; Edition critique sur le texte de l'édition publiée à Lyon par François Juste, ed. Gérard Defaux, Paris: Le Livre de poche, 1994, Chapter 3, pp. 111–15.
- 23 Denis Crouzet, *Nostradamus. Une médecine des âmes à la Renaissance*, Paris: Éditions Payot, 2011.

10 Propaganda in the English Civil Wars

Designing emotions to divide a nation

Troy Heffernan

Propaganda's ability to manipulate emotions that fostered violence was an ever-present feature of the English Civil Wars throughout the 1640s. In the years leading up to and during the Civil Wars, the politicians, or those leading the Royalist or Parliamentary factions, employed the services of propagandists. The latter is a collective term for the creators of propaganda, or public relations material, that furthered their employers' political cause through pamphlets and posters that were delivered to select areas or within specific demographic groups. This chapter will demonstrate that propaganda's power lay in its ability to manipulate readers' emotions, and this influence on emotions often resulted in the power to guide the audience's actions. This manipulation was not by chance, but was a conscious tactic that propagandists relied on and adapted to best influence their readers' decisions as the events surrounding the Civil Wars unfolded. The evidence used to develop this analysis comes primarily from the diaries, memoirs, letters, and parliamentary accounts that record why propagandists chose to publish the material they did, and how members of the public reacted to it. These sources demonstrate that politicians and propagandists knew they were successfully influencing emotions, and it establishes that the audience's manipulated emotions resulted in predictable actions of violence.

In discussing propaganda and its influence during the English Civil Wars, consideration must be given to seventeenth-century notions of violence and emotions. At its core, propaganda was attempting to influence English citizens' individual emotions to procure an external action. Propaganda was constructed as a device to instigate beliefs and emotions that opposed the social parameters and expectations of the late 1630s and 1640s. The state and essence of a person's individual emotional life was the subject of a great deal of theological and scientific speculation in the seventeenth century, perhaps most famously examined in Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, which surveys the beliefs and moral structure that guided the emotions of the English gentleman, and set an example of how he might feel, and physically respond, to his emotional state.¹ Ultimately, it was propaganda's task to successfully alter its significantly

male audience's interior moral compass and emotions. During various stages of the Civil Wars, the Royalist and Parliamentarian propagandists were not attempting to merely initiate violence, rather, propaganda was designed to result in a precise form of conflict, directed toward a specific group of people, to achieve an explicit objective. Propagandists hoped to control and direct violence, to counter the fact that violence in early modern England was routine; this was a period in which Mathew Hopkins, among others, hunted witches.² Executions were public spectacles and not designed to immediately kill; instead hangings, disembowelments, and drawing and quartering were used to inflict as much pain as possible on the victim prior to their death. Even members of the Church, figures we today associate with peace, used torture to gain information from dissenters.³ Thus, while violence in the seventeenth century constituted torture, murder, and execution, as it might in modern times, the difference is that violence in England during the 1630s and 1640s was regular, and a highly visible event such as execution was a public spectacle, and was not particularly shocking to people of the time, as it might be in the twenty-first century.⁴ However, it is because of the ubiquity of violence during the period that propagandists were charged with the task of countering the Englishmen's emotional and moral status quo to create a specific type of violent behaviour.

Propagandists were additionally tasked with revising the English understanding of the end results that violence achieved. Primarily, violence in the public setting, such as execution, was a device to restore order; witch-hunting removed the perceived threat of witches, and public executions were carried out against criminals as punishment for civil disobedience. Conversely, civil war was a form of violence in which sanctioned military conflict ordered by the Royalist and Parliamentary army's commanders, would destroy social order, or 'turn the world upside down', to paraphrase Christopher Hill's work on the social disorder during the Civil Wars.⁵ If propagandists were to be successful in their political campaign to initiate civil conflict, they had to make the social disorder that would occur as a result of authorized military conflict appear as a necessary cost to achieving each side's final objectives. As part of achieving this goal, as civil war began and continued, propagandists had to take the concept of violence, which was common (although not frequent), and transform conflict into a normalized action. Propagandists had to ensure that acts of violence could potentially occur hundreds of times a day, and this had to remain socially tolerable if the justification for civil war, on either side, was to remain popular with their supporters.

The definitions and discussion concerning the challenges that propagandists faced in countering seventeenth-century perceptions of violence, emotions, and social order, go some way to outlining how this work differs from earlier explorations of the topic. This work positions itself as a meeting point between scholarship that largely focuses on propaganda and that which concentrates on the events and political consequences of the English Civil Wars. Propaganda's importance in the Civil Wars is commonly discussed by Jason Peacey who

evaluates propaganda's evolution in detail.⁶ Peacey's work is a comprehensive analysis of propaganda's mechanics, its function in the process of displaying political concepts on posters or pamphlets, and what politicians hoped to achieve once this material left the presses. Conversely, this chapter's focus is to assess how propagandists manipulated the emotions of the men who had to condone and fight in the conflict if civil war was to successfully be instigated and continued. David Como discusses how propaganda was used to influence its readers' emotions and turn them into political radicals.⁷ Thematically, this essay shares a similar goal to Como's work, as both are attempting to demonstrate how propaganda was used to manipulate emotions to create a particular result. Como's discussion concerns the creation of radical Puritans during 1640 and in the years that follow, while this study focuses broadly on more than a decade of propaganda that left the Royalist and Parliamentarian presses in an effort to justify the beginning and continuation of the Civil Wars. Como's work also regularly features duplicates of the propaganda he discusses; in the confines of this chapter I have elected to forgo reproductions of propaganda, and instead chosen to broadly define the nature of the material that was used to procure an emotional response from its audience. My analysis also contributes to the conflict's war histories such as Charles Carlton's *Going to the Wars: The Experience of the British Civil Wars 1638–1651*, and Barbara Donagan's *War in England 1642–1649*.⁸ These texts assess in intricate detail the discussions, conflicts and battles that I can only summarize here, as this work's focus is to examine how propaganda influenced its audience's emotions, and how this led them to begin and continue the violence necessary for war.

One of the primary goals that propagandists were tasked with by politicians was the need to make their work appear objective to the specific audiences who received the output of the presses. Propagandists were able to manipulate people's emotions, via images or texts depending on the intended audience and message, and their earliest material in relation to the English Civil Wars was based on politically motivated interpretations of past events. The outsourcing, the writing, printing, and subsequent distribution of politically motivated material by politicians was itself quite new in 1640. The type of propaganda that featured during the Civil Wars largely began to surface at the end of the Elizabethan period, through the efforts of such politicians as Lord Burghley and Francis Walsingham, and Archbishops Parker and Whitgift.⁹ The craft's early pioneers took their political views and turned them into the pamphlets and posters that were circulated throughout the shires. However, the early casual-propagandists' success likely led to the realization by English politicians that propaganda had the potential to gain the attention of the male public who could vote, condone war, or participate in military actions.¹⁰ It was this awareness that led to the introduction of professional propagandists who were employed to further the political view of their governmental employers. The political viewpoints taken by the propagandists used by each side ensure that assessing the Royalists' and Parliamentarians' actions leading up to the Civil Wars is pivotal.

The English Civil Wars' origins, and the subsequent propaganda that was created, largely begins with Charles I's decision in 1637 to introduce a Scottish *Book of Common Prayer* that was almost identical to the English version, as many Scots considered this to be Charles's attempt to Anglicize the Kirk.¹¹ The anger of certain Scottish factions that arose from the forced implementation of the Scottish *Book of Common Prayer* led to the Bishops' War, a series of escalating conflicts. At the Battle of Newburn in 1640 the English Royalists were far outnumbered and defeated by a Scottish Covenanter army.¹² Charles was then forced to call Parliament on 3 November 1640 in the hope that financial bills would be passed to recover some of the finances lost in the Bishops' War.¹³ Instead, many members of Parliament immediately began proceedings to see that Thomas Wentworth, 1st Earl of Strafford, was impeached and charged with high treason.¹⁴ Strafford had raised an Irish Catholic army that Charles had the option of using to fight the Scottish on England's behalf; an act that infuriated those parliamentary members loyal to Parliament rather than the king. Charles was left with little recourse to argue against Parliament's demands. Events of recent years had left the king with few supporters in Parliament, as followers of the monarch had fared badly in elections; it is estimated that of the House of Commons' 493 members, more than two-thirds were opposed to the king.¹⁵

Strafford became the primary target of the Parliamentarians and John Pym, their vocal leader. Strafford faced the charge of high treason on 22 March 1641 in a trial that was the first for the kingdom, as the three main political groups of the Old English, New English, and Gaelic Irish came together to put forward evidence against Strafford in a single proceeding. Strafford was saved after the case against him weakened due to poor evidence; however, John Pym led the Parliamentary response to the collapse, and created a Bill of Attainder that declared Strafford guilty of high treason, and that he should be sentenced to death for his actions. Fortunately for Strafford, the bill created by Pym was worthless without Charles's signature. Charles had remained steadfast in his refusal to sign the bill, but as unrest grew Charles began to fear for his family's safety if the turbulence escalated further. The king signed the Bill of Attainder on 9 May 1641, and Strafford was beheaded three days later.¹⁶

Strafford's beheading had peculiar repercussions for Charles in Ireland. While some were eager for the king to be given more control over Ireland's governance, this did not reflect all the landowners' beliefs. The Old English members of the Irish Parliament were Catholic and their loyalty to Charles prioritized their interests in post-Reformation England. The New English members of Parliament were Protestant and they were primarily loyal to the English Parliament, rather than to the monarch. The disputes between the New English and Old English factions of the Irish Parliament gradually turned from minor debates into larger arguments, and conflict within Ireland soon turned into the Irish Rebellion of 1641, which saw the Old English supporters unite against the New English. Thus, Ireland's Catholic Old English, who favoured the king, were fighting the New English's Protestant supporters, who affiliated themselves with the English Parliament.¹⁷

The outbreak of violence in Ireland immediately began to cause difficulties between the Royalists and Parliamentarians in England, and as tensions grew in the early 1640s, the output of propaganda suggests that Parliamentarian politicians tasked the propagandists with the objective of berating Charles's leadership of the kingdom.

The propagandists of the 1640s had to claw at their readers' emotions, remembering that emotions are a largely subjective, intangible, unpredictable entity, and persuade the audience to reinforce their allegiance, or convince them to choose the opposite political side. Furthermore, the political material that left the presses could not influence or motivate the readers into action for just a short period of time as the Civil Wars' propaganda was attempting to convert people's innermost beliefs. The propagandists had to take civil violence, which was commonly perceived as a tool to restore order, and instead promote civil disorder as an acceptable cost to achieving each side's objectives. It was the propagandists' success at this task that allowed them to divide a nation into those who supported the Parliamentarians, and those who remained loyal to the king.

The propagandists were tasked with heightening their readers' passions, and the primary affective tool they relied on was fear. Jason Peacey's extensive research on propaganda suggests that politicians sought to 'create a sense of crisis', and this led propagandists to use the fear of the unknown as one of the greatest motivators, and they knew how to invoke this emotion to its best effect.¹⁸ The propagandists also knew there was not just one type of fear. They had countless variants of the emotion that could be used as the instigating factor in cultivating counter-intuitive activities such as using violence to cause the necessary civil disorder of civil war, rather than using violence to punish criminals to restore or maintain civil order. Though the propagandists had an arsenal of methods at their disposal, portraying Parliament's view of the king as a threat to the people and the English kingdom was the initial, and arguably the simplest method of using the rawest form of fear to prompt people to take up arms and fight for the cause. This capacity is perhaps best demonstrated by the way propagandists portrayed the Earl of Strafford's actions. Strafford had provided a point of common ground between the Irish Catholics and Protestants, and the English Protestants. However, the Earl's decision to raise a Catholic army that Charles could use to fight the Scottish who had settled in northern England was destined to provide the pamphleteers with an opportunity to slander both Strafford and the king.¹⁹

Following Strafford's execution, a small but powerful group of Irish landowners became panicked by the news, given that Strafford had safeguarded them from attack by Protestant England. In a pre-emptive strike, the Irish group decided to attack first. Robert Sidney, 2nd Earl of Leicester, received a letter notifying England of the outbreak of violence in Ireland on 1 November 1641.²⁰ Sidney told the House of Lords that he had been informed of, 'a most wicked and damnable conspiracy, plotted and contrived, and intended to be also acted, by some evil-affected Irish Papists here (in England)'.²¹ As Charles's hope of

uniting England, Scotland, and Ireland dissolved, John Pym saw an opportunity to strip the monarch of what little power he still held. Pym and his Parliamentary colleagues were eager to demonstrate that the king could not protect the people. They aimed to raise an army to fight the king, and this fight would occur for the safety of, as Parliament saw it, the kingdom's people and the kingdom itself. As the Irish continued to rebel, they unwittingly gave substance to Pym's cause by claiming that they were fighting on Charles I's behalf, their (allegedly) Catholic king.²² This gave Pym and the propagandists the opportunity to use printed material to tell the English people that they were the next to be tortured and murdered if Charles and his Catholic army were not stopped.

The prints that were created depicted atrocities that were designed to terrify the English people, and make them support and partake in the war against the king. Propaganda featured babies being impaled on forks, children being torn apart by angry mobs, and Irish soldiers basking in the glory of having disembowelled Protestants.²³ These images were so powerful that the pictures only needed titles to clearly mark attacker and victim; no other explanation was needed in the view of those crafting these works. Posters of slaughtered women and children drove fear into the citizens' hearts, and undoubtedly contributed to answering emotional and moral questions regarding the necessity of extreme and regular violence to nullify the threat portrayed in the posters. According to contemporary reactions, just seeing these pictures was enough to convince many to side with the Parliamentarians.²⁴ The Parliamentarians and propagandists believed that the emotional response that could be procured by this method of instilling fear ensured that their work helped to remove logic from the thought processes of those who viewed their material. The images that were being circulated as Parliament formed an army were extreme, and the propaganda during this period benefitted greatly as truth in the press was not yet a moral construct and actual episcopal restrictions were loosening. This freedom allowed propagandists to operate unreservedly, and enabled the most successful political writers, such as Peter Heylyn and John Birkenhead, to become personalities of the period.²⁵ However for some, like Paul Amiraut, their fame and political stances made them both famous and infamous, with many receiving physical protection from possible attack.²⁶

It is difficult to know what number of infants or children, if any, were killed, or if any Irish fighter found glory in disembowelling a Protestant. If these atrocities did take place, the lack of solid evidence currently available suggests that the fatalities of this nature were isolated and minimal. The fact that there is little proof that the events that were presented in early propaganda actually occurred is an indication of the propagandists' power as they did not need to rely on fact if the audience saw whatever featured in successful propaganda as fact. At least, that was what the politicians ordering the propaganda, and artisans constructing it, believed as they continued to produce similar material that routinely depicted fear-inducing acts, such as infanticide and disembowelment.²⁷

Propaganda's early success helped Pym to procure his wish, and war undoubtedly began to seem inevitable to the politicians and English people. However, as the likelihood of war increased, the original material, which was largely Parliamentarian and employed images to demonstrate to the widest audience possible that Charles and the Royalists posed a threat, increased and changed in tone as its audience became the men who would condone, command and fight in the wars. As conflict became a possibility, propaganda turned from the crude posters of severe violence that were enough to persuade many that a war was necessary, to posters and pamphlets that had to contain words and a message that might influence political thinkers, and possibly even some politicians. Pamphlets that could contain hundreds of words were not designed for the posters that predominantly featured images with few words and were aimed at a broad audience, although the message of these works was similar to that of the early images of physical atrocities, and each side took the same mantra of telling its readers, 'side with us, or else'. Nonetheless, this political marketing could no longer rely on the shock tactics of fear and ultimatums. Propaganda had to put forward an argument that made a logical, political, and solid case to as many people as possible if it hoped to prompt them to take up arms. It had to take a stranglehold of someone's emotions and insecurities, and be enough to persuade them to make their own decision and turn their backs on their peers' decisions, if that was what their political inclination required.

Early 1642 became a time when propagandists had to influence people's emotions when they had ample thinking time, and no shortage of issues to consider. The decisions that had to be made were not taken lightly, and there is an abundance of diaries, letters, and memoirs that record the agonizing thought processes that many individuals went through. This time of contemplation was the perfect breeding ground for propaganda that was the precursor to war. Propaganda had the power to sway someone's opinion completely, but its greatest power came in influencing the deliberations of the undecided. Propaganda was not just about persuading someone to make a decision regarding their political affiliation; it was a political tool that could alter their life's course. This decision was one of the greatest of their lives, requiring soul searching and consideration of how they would justify their decision to themselves, their family and their friends.

Propagandists were also challenged with a new task as war began and continued. The need for war had been asserted by horrific images, political argument had followed and had been enough to create family-splitting allegiances, but as the fighting continued, propaganda took on a new role. The new battle in printed material came from berating those who changed sides – the turncoats. Propagandists now had the task of creating an entirely new form of fear that only threatened military men, be they elite commanders or common soldiers; the fear of public humiliation, with suggestions of treachery and social ostracism if someone dared change sides.

Turncoats are a complicated aspect of the Civil Wars because soldiers of different social classes could change sides for different reasons; some were undoubtedly unprincipled opportunists, while shifting political circumstances and allegiances likely influenced others. Nonetheless, it should be acknowledged that when a military soldier changed sides in the seventeenth century it was not an isolated action, or one of great significance. During the Civil Wars, the regular soldiers of the infantry were known to have changed sides due to the offer of better wages, although there are also records of troops altering their allegiance as a result of the offer of a new pair of boots, or because the opposition's army camp was closer to their hometown or village.²⁸ Aristocratic turncoats were a more difficult issue for Parliamentarians and Royalists, as the fear was that a social elite's side-changing was more influential and could instigate others to abscond.²⁹ Undoubtedly propaganda's focus – when it came to side-changers – was to criticize, condemn and make an example out of those who chose to alter their loyalty. Subsequently, denouncing turncoats became one of the propagandists' primary objectives in an attempt to limit or discourage the practice.

Propagandists of both sides responded to elite turncoats in an almost identical fashion as they represented the same threat. Subsequently the focus of the printed material was to seize upon the opportunity to take the action of side-changing and relate it to civil life, so as not to focus solely on the turncoats' war-time repercussions. This method ensured that the propagandists soon associated the turncoats' disloyalty and distrust with the actions of someone who was not a gentleman. One must consider that denial of gentility in seventeenth-century England was such an insult that it justified conflict; Major Lewis Audley faced the House of Common for abusing two members of Parliament that he claimed had called him a turncoat who was not a gentleman.³⁰ In order to ruin an individual's name, propagandists drew upon images of treachery from the Bible, literature and the stage. Terms such as 'base', 'rogue', and 'knave' were also used to deny gentility, while fictitious material was propagated for popular consumption to turn particular individuals into hate-figures.³¹ Lying, irreligion, and cowardice were also popular themes, while the propagandists' posters and pamphlets were occasionally known to imply that a side-changer might suffer from sexual difficulty. Nicknames that would stand the test of time were also coined for side-changers through the ink of the propagandists' presses. Colonel John Poyer was a Parliamentarian who joined a Royalist rebellion, after which he was scorned as the father of bastards, an indiscriminate plunderer, and the leader of lawless rabble.³² Sir Hugh Cholmley was derided as 'Judas Cholmley' after he defected from the Parliamentarians, and his nickname's reference to Judas also exemplifies another of the propagandists' weapons, that of calling upon derogatory biblical references.³³ Predictably, the most common biblical allusion was to Judas Iscariot; by comparing a turncoat to Christ's betrayer, propagandists portrayed the enemy as the Bible's greatest villain, and also implied that God favoured the damaged party.

Some propagandists appear keen to use the fear of humiliation as a deterrent to side-changers, but they also resorted to printing stories that illustrated the gruesome ends suffered by turncoats in order to deter others from following their path. The action of relating the violence that may be inflicted upon a particular individual was a pivotal element of turncoat propaganda. As public executions and torture as a means to gain information for the Church or government were used frequently during the period, the gruesome events that the propaganda depicted were not in themselves a threat or warning; the task of turncoat propaganda was to convince the audience that they, as the individual, would not escape a violent death if they attempted to change sides. This action not only allowed propagandists to utilize the most fundamental emotion of pure fear leading to terror, and the evolutionary need to survive; but they could also interweave horrific events with biblical justifications. When Sir Richard Grenville, 1st Baronet, was wounded, some factions of the London press trumpeted this as a sign of divine providence, and rejoiced in the emasculation of him receiving, ‘a brace of bullets in his groin’ as a ‘just judgement of God’.³⁴ This happened because he was ‘a notable whoremaster’, and, ‘a notable profaner of the Lord’s day’. As if the propaganda wrote itself, Grenville was also noted to have received this wound ‘on the Lord’s day and in the West Country, where his hat hanged and he murdered so many men’.³⁵

The harsh punishment of defectors was becoming routine by 1648. Parliament was ready to use martial law against its former servants who had ‘betrayed their trust’ and joined the enemy. Some, such as Colonel John Power, were tried and shot, while others, such as Colonel John Dalbier and Major Henry Lilburne, were never brought to trial, but instead were hacked to death or decapitated by Parliamentarian soldiers. For propaganda purposes, hangings or public beheadings were the most common images reproduced; public executions possibly had connotations of a lawful trial, rather than death by mob rule.³⁶ It was during this time that Parliament came to realize that nothing, not even propaganda’s power and its writers’ expertise, could curb the flow of side-changers. Accordingly, this realization was one of the many reasons that the Parliamentarians came to believe that they could never be truly victorious in the war while the Royalists’ figurehead, Charles I, remained alive.³⁷ Propaganda also sealed Charles’s fate in a different way. So much effort had been spent reinforcing the deplorable nature of those against the Royalists that the Parliamentarians came to accept that if the king lived, they would forever face the accusations and consequences of treachery, even if they were the victors of the Civil Wars. Thus, the Parliamentarians who, a decade earlier, believed that violence against humans was a method of punishment to maintain or restore social order, embraced violence in what they saw as a just cause to legitimize the execution of the king.

In conclusion, propagandists realized that the presses could foster such emotions that could inspire soldiers to pick up their swords and fight for a cause. At almost all times of the Civil Wars the politicians and propagandists believed, and routinely saw the success of, instilling fear into their audience

as the most effective way to manipulate them. The printmakers' realization that negative material could procure predictable actions ensured that it was atrocity images, such as those of murdered infants or disembowelled civilians, that were promoted as events that would unfold across England if Charles and his Catholic army were not stopped. These posters were enough to convince many that a war needed to take place, and the understanding of negative propaganda's power ensured that the next material to leave the presses was political stories, exaggerations and fabrications of the truth that were printed in pamphlets and warned people that they must 'fight or else'. Once the war was underway, it became the propagandists' task to guarantee that any potential turncoats were frightened into loyalty by the campaign of material displaying the humiliation, guilt and murderous ends of the men who had preceded them.

Propaganda's power was able to create such emotional turmoil that for almost a decade it successfully divided a nation into Royalists and Parliamentarians. Propaganda took the seventeenth century's melancholic state of mind and emotional equilibrium, and made the violence required for civil war appear acceptable and supported by much of England's population, although predominantly by the men who would approve, command and fight in the subsequent battles. The propagandists also took a certain kind of violence that had been a tool for maintaining civil peace, and convinced their respective sides that the destruction of life should be used to destroy social order if it meant securing the long-term goal of ending the conflict as victors. The propagandists' pamphlets and posters were subsequently aimed at generating emotions that were designed to motivate hundreds of thousands of soldiers to take to the battlefield. This essay has broadly examined how propaganda used fear to spur violence and war for the Royalists and Parliamentarians. What remains to be examined is the use of specific posters and pamphlets, and their use of images, words or terminology, to assess how this material impacted the emotions, and subsequent actions, of the individuals or specific cohorts of soldiers or civilians who came into contact with the propaganda. Such research would not only allow for an evaluation of what types of political material were or were not effective on specific audiences, it would also allow for an even more detailed understanding of how emotions can translate into actions, and accordingly, with what precision Civil War propagandists could manipulate their audience. However, what will remain evident throughout such research, is that propaganda's power and its ability to create emotions that fostered violence and war cost approximately 51,000 Royalists and 34,000 Parliamentarians their lives; and saw Charles I's head fall victim to the executioner's axe on 30 January 1649.

Notes

1 Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, London: William Tegg, 1867.

2 Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic – Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century England*, London: Penguin, 1970.

- 3 Robert Southwell to Father Claudio Aquaviva, 31 August 1588, Stonyhurst MSS Anglia VI, 59.
- 4 The nature of violence and death in early modern England is discussed in: George Wharton, *Emeroscopieon: The Loyall Almanack, for the Year of Christ, 1650*, London: Londini, 1650.
- 5 Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution*, London: Penguin, 1984.
- 6 Jason Peacey, *Politicians and Pamphleteers: Propaganda During the English Civil Wars and Interregnum*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004.
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- 14 Clementine Oliver, *Parliament and Political Pamphleteering in Fourteenth-century England*, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2010, p. 192.
- 15 Gregg, *King Charles I*, pp. 317–19.
- 16 The events surrounding Strafford’s trial and execution are recorded in George Johnson (ed.), *Memoirs of the Reign Charles I: Two Volumes, Volume 2*, London: Bentley, 1848, pp. 117–33.
- 17 A selection of letters recording the outbreak of the Irish Rebellion by notable Parliamentary members can be found in Sir John Temple, *The Irish Rebellion*, Dublin: Golding, 1751.
- 18 Peacey, *Politicians and Pamphleteers*, pp. 239–40.
- 19 Gregg, *King Charles I*, p. 323.
- 20 Contents of the letter the Earl of Leicester received are discussed in N.H. Keeble (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Writing of the English Revolution*, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2001, p. 59.
- 21 The transcript of the House of Lords is recorded in Matthew Carey, *Ireland Vindicated: An Attempt to Develop and Expose a Few of the Multifarious Errors and Falsehoods Respecting Ireland*, Philadelphia: M. Carey and Sons, 1819, p. 320.
- 22 Eamon Darcy, *The Irish Rebellion of 1641 and the Wars of the Three Kingdoms*, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2013, pp. 62–7.
- 23 The diversity of propaganda ensures that original documents are spread throughout the archives of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and the Republic of Ireland; although a substantial collection is housed within the State Papers of England’s National Archives.
- 24 The success of Parliamentary propaganda is discussed in Anne Laurence, *Parliamentary Army Chaplains, 1642–1651*, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 1990, pp. 66–7.
- 25 Peter Heylyn’s work is evident from printed collections of his material; see Peter Heylyn, *The Historical and Miscellaneous Tracts of Peter Heylyn*, London: Harper, 1681; and a brief overview of Birkenhead’s prominence is discussed in John Aubrey, *Brief Lives: A Modern English Version*, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 1982, pp. 39–40.

- 26 Public Records Office, State Papers 24/1, ff. 84v, 113, 116v.
- 27 Disembowelling and the murder of children are common themes that recur with great frequency throughout the posters and pamphlets, and reproductions of original propaganda that historians have access to today.
- 28 Clive Holmes, *The Eastern Association in the English Civil War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 142.
- 29 Public Records Office, State Papers 16/492/2, Letter from Wharton to Willingham, 3 September 1642, details the repercussions of side-changing by turncoat Lord Dunsmore.
- 30 The transcript of the trial of Major Lewis discusses denial of gentility as a basis for provocation: Thomas Burton, *Diary of Thomas Burton, 3: Member in the Parliaments of Oliver and Richard Cromwell*, London: Colburn, 1828, pp. 33–45.
- 31 Burton, *Diary of Thomas Burton*, 3, pp. 33–45.
- 32 As Poyer was governor of Pembroke castle, his military records are discussed in Arthur Leach, *The History of the Civil War (1642–1649) in Pembrokeshire and on Its Borders*, London: Witherby, 1937, p. 42.
- 33 The circumstances and repercussions of the term ‘Judas’ Cholmley is discussed in Jack Binns, *Sir Hugh Cholmley of Whitby 1600–1657: Ancestry, Life and Legacy*, Pickering: Blackthorn, 2008, p. 88.
- 34 Grenville and Granville both feature as common spelling of the 1st Baronet’s name.
- 35 Quoted in Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science, Literature and Art (ed.), *Report and Transactions – The Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science, Literature and Art, Volumes 103–104*, Devonshire: Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science, Literature and Art, 1971, p. 157.
- 36 David Farr, *John Lambert, Parliamentary Soldier and Cromwellian Major-general, 1619–1684*, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2003, p. 119.
- 37 The Parliamentarians’ fear and loathing of Charles is demonstrated by the acts of the Rump Parliament in January 1649 that resulted in the king being charged with treason despite Charles being restored to the throne, by 129 votes to 83, in December 1648.

11 A ‘Protestant’ approach to colonization as envisaged in John Lockman’s martyrology (1760)

Giovanni Tarantino

In February 1556, Bonner and Thirleby were sent to degrade him [the Archbishop Cranmer], for his contumacy in not going to Rome; though this was impossible, as he was a prisoner. He then was cloathed in all the pontifical vestments, made of canvas; after which, he was stript of them, pursuant to the ceremony of degradation; on which occasion Bonner behaved with his usual insolence. Thirleby being a good-natured man, and Cranmer’s friend, performed his part of the ceremony with tears. But Cranmer seemed little concerned . . . He was not sorry, he said, to be thus cut off, with all his pageantry, from every relation to the church of Rome. This spectacle might not only have extorted compassion from his enemies, but even have melted, as it were, inanimate things to tears.¹

Our Jesuits may be considered in two very different lights . . . Can we possibly figure to ourselves a more amiable being, than a man, who, after enriching his mind with the noblest treasures of knowledge, voluntarily quits his friends, his relations, and his native country, hazards himself to all the perils of the sea, and afterwards goes ashore . . . among a barbarous people . . . in danger, every moment . . . of being murthered by wild beasts or by the natives; and all this solely from a desire of polishing their minds, of assisting their corporeal part, and of saving their souls? . . . On the other hand, if we reflect on a man whose only design, in acquiring learning, is to impose upon his fellow-creatures; who under the cloak of religion . . . visits foreign regions, and there ingratiates himself with the several natives of them, in order to make them slaves in their own country, where, amid their virtuous ignorance, they enjoyed undisturbed felicity: Can imagination frame a more horrid creature than this?²

Entrenched views – to the effect that violence gradually became contained in early modern Europe and cultural intolerance towards it grew progressively in response to the dictates of civility and politeness and to emerging control on the part of the state – need to be rethought, as do teleological narratives about a shift from expressive to instrumental violence (one arising from

passion, the other grounded in reason), in order to develop more nuanced and fine-grained conceptualizations of the phenomenon. Rather than assuming a general waning of violent interaction, it might be more accurate to talk in terms of its displacement, redeployment and repackaging. Alexandra Shephard, in particular, has recently observed that certain kinds of interpersonal and collective violence, while fading from the perceptions, habits and conversation of the early modern urban elites, were reformulated or remained legitimate in more distant arenas such as the battlefield, the slave ship or theatres of colonial expansion – all of which were instrumental to the development of eighteenth-century Britain.³ The present essay considers the shifting boundaries of legitimate and illegitimate violence in the early modern period through the lens of an indefatigable exposer of violent Roman Catholic proselytism as well as a stout advocate of the social containment of urban unrest at home and of the civilizing mission of British colonialism abroad. In an age of colonial expansion, the suppression of ‘barbaric’ and ‘primitive’ behaviour seems to have been regarded as a moral and racial imperative. Civility, after all, was not synonymous with humanity.⁴ Furthermore, the topical depiction of the covetousness, violence and religious intolerance of the Roman Catholic priesthood – which certainly helped to forge the British Protestant ‘emotional community’ – was not matched by a similar indictment of the violence and discrimination employed against the Catholics in England and, above all, Ireland.⁵ Nor was there a corresponding colonial ideology that went beyond the glib opposition between Christian civilization and barbarity, a fine example of the segmentary identity grammar developed by social anthropologist Gerd Baumann: the Other may be my enemy in a context lying at a lower level of segmentation, but my ally in a context at a higher level of segmentation.⁶

Two extraordinary prints issued by William Hogarth in 1751 offer a comparison between two London streets in the mid eighteenth century, certainly imaginary and yet with features that would have been immediately recognizable to Londoners at the time:⁷ one, *Beer Street*, is well-kept, prosperous, hedonistic, dynamic and healthy (Figure 11.1); the other, *Gin Lane*, seems run-down and ramshackle, blighted by a poverty and endemic violence that spares no one: a child dies from neglect, an honest businessman is driven to suicide for want of trade, while the pawnbroker prospers (Figure 11.2).

In Hogarth’s vision, Ronald Paulson observes, the inhabitants of *Gin Lane* are victims of the ‘unholy trinity’ of church, state and pawnbroker.⁸ After all, the artist was a deist, and despised the clergy. Furthermore, the sight of children allowed to fall to their death, or even impaled on a spike, seems to recall the dramatic fate of other children, snatched from their mother’s arms or killed by men clouded not by alcohol but by religious zeal.

In point of fact, representations of neglected, violated, naked, mutilated and lifeless children regularly accompanied reports of massacres perpetrated in the name of a faith. Just think of the depictions of the seventeenth-century massacres of Piedmontese Waldensians, designed to stir indignation and feeling among European Protestants, and to raise money to help the exiled



Figure 11.1 William Hogarth, *Beer Street* (1751)

Source: © Trustees of the British Museum

survivors.⁹ One of these is a late seventeenth-century Dutch leaflet that vividly conveys the horrors of the ‘Pasque Piemontesi’ massacre in April 1655: a winged, veiled female figure, an allegorical portrait of Religion, is reduced to tears before the horrific spectacle of mutilated children and adults cast into Alpine ravines (Figure 11.3).¹⁰

Naturally, there were also innumerable pictorial treatments of the biblical theme of the massacre of the innocents, although in these the violence of power was generally contrasted with the desperate, vain resistance of the mothers.



Figure 11.2 William Hogarth, *Gin Lane* (1751)

Source: © Trustees of the British Museum

In Hogarth's print, the dramatic fate of the children is even more horrific because of the culpable inertia of their mothers, although they too are clearly victims of the moral, but above all economic, disintegration of the social fabric. Just a few years earlier there had been an outcry about the horrendous infanticide committed by Judith Defour, a poor silk twister who sold her daughter's clothes to feed a gin addiction, and then strangled her to stop her crying. The two prints were conceived, then, in the wake of the crusades launched in the 1730s to contain and regulate the sale and consumption of



Voy la Religion, qui
pleure incessamment,
qu'on repand, sans pitié,
le sang de l'innocent!



Religie beschreyt
in tranen door t'ver,
gieten van t' onnosel
bloet.

Figure 11.3 Religion in Tears ['*Voy la Religion qui pleure incessamment qu'on répand sans pitié le sang de l'innocent*'], a detail from a late seventeenth-century Dutch leaflet vividly conveying the horrors of the massacres of the Piedmontese Waldensians, attr. to Chr. de Pas

Source: © Waldensermuseum Henri-Arnaud-Haus, Ötisheim-Schönenberg

gin, and to halt the moral and physical decay of the British labouring classes, all the more alarming given the possibility of fresh and imminent conflict with France. What's more, the widespread availability of cheap gin contributed to an increase in brawls and violent crime, in which young soldiers and sailors back from the War of Austrian Succession got embroiled all too often. In fact, the demobilization of some 80,000 soldiers and sailors, most of them in their twenties and most unable to find work, sparked a rise in property crime and particularly in robberies that carried the threat of violence. But the serious social repercussions of demobilization were not effectively addressed in Parliament. In the aftermath of the war, a group of philanthropists and merchants took a direct interest in the problem by attempting to push through protective legislation to make herring fishery a profitable British industry. One of their number was Hogarth's friend John Lockman (1698–1771), who called for the setting up of a naval reserve to provide permanent employment for sailors, as celebrated in times of war as they were forgotten in times of peace, so they would 'not slip into a life of crime or join foreign fleets'.¹¹ A year before Hogarth produced the two prints, Lockman was appointed secretary to the council of the Free British Fishery, incorporated in 1750. As a sign of friendship, but perhaps also out of a shared conviction that some form of paid employment might at least partly help to remedy the woes of society, Hogarth included in *Beer Street* two neatly attired herring sellers reading a ballad in favour of the herring industry by Mr Lockman.¹²

John Lockman, a figure as productive and active in eighteenth-century cultural life as he is ignored in critical studies – he is generally only mentioned in relation to Voltaire and William Boyce – appears not to have gone to university, educating himself instead through private study (Figure 11.4).¹³ He was reputed, perhaps with some exaggeration, to have translated 'with general accuracy, more books for half a century together than any man of his time'.¹⁴ He learned to speak French by frequenting the Old Slaughter's Coffee House at the upper end of St Martin's Lane, London, perhaps the most famous of all the Georgian coffee houses.¹⁵ He also moved in Alexander Pope's circle, and was acquainted with Handel, Fontenelle and Nicolas-Claude Thiriot, Voltaire's close friend and general assistant.¹⁶ Translations from the French ascribed to Lockman include a selection of the Jesuit *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, the *New Reflexions on the Fair Sex* by the Marquise de Lambert, Béar de Muralt's *Letters Describing the Characters and Customs of the English and French Nations* and works by Voltaire, most famously *Henriade*, *Letters Concerning the English Nation*, and *An Essay on the Age of Lewis XIV*.¹⁷ Lockman also did some solid work for the 10-volume *General Dictionary, Historical and Critical* (1734–41), including a meticulous life of Samuel Butler and a 'new and accurate translation' of Pierre Bayle's *Dictionnaire*.¹⁸ Equally successful and more popular compilations were his histories of England (1729), Rome (1737) and Greece (1743). Written in a question-and-answer format, they were used as school books until long after their author's death.¹⁹ He was also the author of the sacred cantata *David's Lamentation over Saul and Jonathan*



Figure 11.4 John Lockman (1698–1771)

Source: © Photograph of a lost miniature, reproduced by kind permission of the owner, Margaret Buchanan, a descendant of Lockman

(1736) and the *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day* (1739), both set to music by his friend, the composer William Boyce. His musical drama *Rosalinda* (1740) was set to music by Handel's protégé John Christopher Smith.²⁰ Unfortunately to date no trace of Lockman's *History of Christianity* has been found, either in manuscript or print form.²¹

Even more interestingly, Lockman played a significant role in the English publishing fortunes of the *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde* edited by Jean-Frédéric Bernard, and lavishly illustrated by Bernard Picart, one of the best-known engravers of the age.²² Curiously, this beautiful work was only rediscovered in recent years, when it became the focus for thorough iconographic studies and collective volumes by leading scholars of the radical Enlightenment.²³ Whenever the first English translation of the *Cérémonies* is mentioned in these studies, reference is invariably made to the seven-volume edition printed in 1733–39 for Claude Du Bosc, who was among the first wave of skilled French engravers to arrive in London in the

early years of the eighteenth century. The Du Bosc edition selectively reproduced Lockman's first incomplete translation, three volumes of which were printed for Nicholas Prevost in 1731, while a fourth was announced in the *Gentleman's Magazine* two years later.²⁴ This edition also transposed in preface to the fourth volume the enlightened letter to the reader that Lockman had originally intended as a pointed introduction to the whole work. In the letter, Lockman, who was a fervid supporter of religious toleration, stresses the potentially self-critical dimension inherent to drawing comparisons between one's own culture and 'the genius, policy, manner and arts' of other peoples:

Many men otherwise of good understanding, who have never travelled themselves, or only read and conversed with such travellers as have carried their little prejudices with them wherever they have been, have conceived contemptible notions of the rest of the world, and consequently flatter themselves in the highest strain for the chimerical excellence they and their own nation have above all others. These are like the Chinese, who were wont (and it is likely continue the practice) to place their own country in the center of their maps, and draw little frightful figures upon their borders to represent the nations round about them . . . So natural is it for those who deem themselves the grand favourites of heaven, to act the most unworthily of the divine beneficence! Not considering that God is the tender parent of all mankind wheresoever dispersed . . . As if the father of many children should unnaturally fix all his affection on some particular son, and commend him to murder all his brethren, because he liked not them so well as himself.²⁵

Lockman also recalls that 'the last of our navigators that visited the Western coasts of America, gives a very edifying account of the Southernmost Californians, and places them in a state of perfect innocence'. This, he adds bitterly, is 'because they have not yet been tainted by the intercourse of the Europeans or others, nor exasperated by the oppression of invasion and tyranny'.²⁶ And in focusing on the divergent attitudes of Christians and 'Mahometans' towards people with different religious persuasions (although both, like the Jews, lived with expectations of bringing the rest of humankind 'into an observance of their respective laws'), Lockman seems to echo Pierre Bayle, who had pointed out that 'les hommes se conduisent peu selon leur principes'.²⁷ 'We see then,' Lockman observes similarly, 'that in some measure the Christians seem to obey the fierce commandment of Mahomet, and the Mahometans in some degree to be softened by the mild and gentle law of Christ'. Above all, Lockman's letter (the force of which was certainly blunted by its position in the Du Bosc edition) contains an explicit criticism of the violence, abuse of power and dehumanizing racist rhetoric of European colonialism:

[A] prevailing notion . . . has obtained among the several nations, that have pretended to God's special grace and undoubted revelation; namely, that

this spiritual blessing could not be complete without temporal honour; and because this might be equal to that, nothing less than the empire of the world could suffice . . . The Negroe idolaters are involved in an obscurity, much darker than their own complexion: but . . . instead of treating them with the charity due to fellow-creatures, we use them worse than beasts, debasing the image of God to a level with the ass of burthen.²⁸

In 1760, Lockman published a *History of the Cruel Sufferings of the Protestants, and Others, by Popish Persecutions, in Various Countries*. Though compiled at the time of the last Jacobite uprising in 1745, it was only published in the aftermath of the English conquest of Quebec. In the preface, Lockman maintains that 'no man ought to be hated, on account of his country', that toleration is his 'favourite principle', and that 'it would be highly irrational, and inconsistent with the precepts of the gospel, to hate any man, merely on account of his religion'. He also repeatedly states – rather unconvincingly – that this work 'is against popery in general, not against papists in particular' (vaguely echoing Augustine's dictum '*cum dilectione hominum et odio vitiorum*'). Somewhat ironically, the cruelty of 'bloody Bonner', bishop of London under Queen Mary, is condemned by resorting to the arguments expressed by the non-juror bishop Jeremy Collier in his *Ecclesiastical History of Great Britain*, according to whom 'supposing truth to be on the side of the persecutors, yet to burn a man because he will not belye his conscience, and turn hypocrite, is unaccountable. Men cannot believe what they please.'²⁹

Presented as a series of questions and answers, as his most popular histories of England and Rome had been, the *History of the Cruel Sufferings of the Protestants* was mainly designed for use in schools and as a conversational topic when Protestant families gathered in the evenings. Dedicated to the Anglican clergy and imbued with a strongly anti-Catholic tone, it mainly gathers together and summarizes emotionally charged passages from Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, Holinshed's *Chronicles*, and some of the best-known works of European Protestant historiography (Sleidanus, Pufendorf, Veit Ludwig von Seckendorf, Gerard Brandt, Sir John Temple, Jean Claude, Rapin de Thoyras and Gilbert Burnet, to mention just a few).³⁰ However, it also draws on works in which Protestant militancy and the denunciation of Catholic superstition, hypocrisy and untrustworthiness seem to give way to a much more radical critique of religion, of the kind offered by Bernard, Bayle and Voltaire.

Commencing with the Lollards and Henrician evangelicals, the work presents a bite-size history of the Reformation in various national contexts, also considering forerunners (Piedmontese Waldensians and Bohemian Hussites, for instance), sympathizers (among others, Pierre du Chastel) and martyrs. A separate chapter deals with the 'History of the persecutions of the Waldenses and Albigenses'.³¹ Emotive accounts of violence against the Waldensians had been enormously significant to Protestants across Europe, because a number of illustrious Protestant apologists, from the Anglo-Irish bishop James Ussher to John Milton, had responded to the Catholic challenge

that ‘Protestantism lacked apostolic succession’ by pointing to the Waldensians’ maintenance of ‘apostolic purity’.³² Gilbert Burnet (1643–1715), the author of the *History of the Reformation in England* (one of Lockman’s sources), described the Waldensians as ‘the most ancient of all [churches], that from the top of the Alpes, had illuminated a great part of the universe’. He then went on to recount their dreadful sufferings in gory detail.³³

Following a model consolidated since the publication of the Protestant martyrologies of John Bale and John Foxe, Lockman’s representation of the victims of violent doctrinal intransigence continually presents a ‘Christ-like type of martyrdom’: stoical, calm and passive.³⁴ For example, the ‘constancy’ of the Henrician martyrs as they went to the stake, declaring their faith and exhorting the people to ‘a good life and mutual love’, reputedly impressed those present and cast ‘a great odium’ on the persecutors.³⁵ Lockman also recalls how Herman Schinkel, the book printer beheaded in Delft’s Great Market Square on 13 July 1568 for having published heretical ballads, met his death with amazing courage and constancy: just a few hours before his execution he even wrote some Latin verses and shared his critical observations on the 42nd verse of Seneca’s *Octavia* with the Dutch humanist and physician Adriaan de Jonghe.³⁶

One of the most dramatic passages in Lockman’s *History* is a relentless account of the suffering caused by the Irish rebellion of 1641. Frightened women and children wandered the streets of Dublin, before collapsing and dying, overcome by tiredness, hunger and the cold:

Wives came, bitterly lamenting the fate of their husbands; mothers that of their children, barbarously destroyed before their eyes; poor infants ready to perish, and to pour their souls in their mother’s bosoms. Some, over weary with long travel, came creeping on their knees. Others froze with cold, ready to give up the ghost in the streets. Thus was the city, within a few days after the breaking out of the rebellion, filled with most lamentable spectacles of sorrow. These wandered up and down, in great numbers, in all parts of the city; desolate and forsaken . . . Great numbers of them died; leaving their bodies as monuments of the most inhuman cruelty, exercised upon them. The greatest part of the women and children, thus barbarously driven out of their habitations, died in the city of Dublin.³⁷

Naturally it was above all the massacres of the Huguenots in France and the revocation of the ‘famous irrevocable’ Edict of Nantes that reinforced the image of Catholicism as a bloody and treacherous religion. ‘If any thing upon earth, ever resembled the gates of hell, they must be the persecutions of France,’ Lockman comments bitterly,

Those monarchs to whom the fame of being just and equitable is precious . . . are far from studying, how best to throw uncertainty over all things; and to fill every part of their kingdom with fear and sorrow. They do not

seek for motives of joy, from the tears and groans of the innocent; nor take a delight in keeping their subjects in perpetual uneasiness, and their lives in precarious state.³⁸

However, Lockman's *History* also considers other victims, not just Protestants, of Roman Catholicism, perhaps so the narrative would not be weakened by a purely confessional and partisan perspective. And so there is a chapter on the expulsion of the Jews and Moriscos from Spain (with reiterated remarks about the devastating consequences of the expulsion on the Spanish economy and a long digression about the greed and the openly racist ferocity displayed by the archbishops of Valencia and Toledo³⁹ in particular); detailed descriptions of Spanish atrocities (the 'salutary violence') in America⁴⁰; a harsh attack on the 'ill behaviour', venality and pride of the Jesuit missionaries ('those noxious vipers!'); and an outraged account of the violent efforts of the Portuguese to latinize the Ethiopian Church (which held that Divinity and Humanity are united in one or a single nature in the person of Jesus Christ).

Very interestingly, the volume, whose second Dublin edition (1763) also includes a separately paginated section presenting an excerpt from Voltaire's remarks on the execution of Jean Calas,⁴¹ ends with an admiring description (mainly taken from Mathurin Veyssiére de La Croze) of the Indian missionary work of the Lutheran Pietist Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg (1682–1719), who distinguished himself for his frugal lifestyle, his extraordinary efforts to learn the Tamil language and understand its culture, and his translation of the New Testament into the local language:

How wide a difference is there between the conduct of the protestant, and that of Romish missionaries, in converting heathen nations! The proselytes of the latter are ignorant of Christianity; they knowing very little more than the *Ave Maria*, the *Pater Noster*, and to cross themselves on all occasions. But our protestant missionaries employ no other method, in their conversions, than that of the apostles themselves, *viz.* persuasion, and convincing arguments, which display the corruption of human nature, and the necessity of a mediator.⁴²

Lockman reports, with evident approval, that Ziegenbalg presented to the king of Denmark a native of Malabar who had converted to Christianity, and who thanked the sovereign, in German, 'for his gracious protection of the mission' – a further example, to our postcolonial eyes, of indigenous individuals brought to Europe from the colonies as trophies or experiments, in itself a form of violence, degradation and humiliation.⁴³ There is a glimpse here of the contradictions inherent even in the most enlightened Protestant approach to colonialism.⁴⁴ In this regard, Lockman's dedication to the Clergy of the Church of England of his *History of the Cruel Sufferings of the Protestants*, compiled, as I mentioned, in the aftermath of the English conquest of Quebec, deserves to be quoted at length:

A reflexion on the temporal advantages that might accrue, to these kingdoms, from our possessing so widely extended a country as Canada, must rejoice the heart of every true Englishman. But to consider this only in a religious view . . . what happiness would accrue to millions, yet unborn, should you carry the pure light of the gospel, into far distant regions, now either clouded by Paganism; or, what may be still worse, infected with Romish principles: principles teeming with cruelty; and thence no ways adapted to root out the inhuman custom of scalping, and other barbarous practices!⁴⁵

Six years later, John Callander (d. 1789), in his preface to *Terra Australis Cognita* (1766–68, partly translated from the French of M. de Brosses with somewhat inadequate acknowledgment) – in which he claimed that Australasia must fall to Great Britain because of her possession of sea power – would say, in a tone similar to Lockman's:

What must his praise be, who shall prove an happy instrument in the hands of the Divine Providence to carry into those unknown regions the pure and unadulterated truths of Christianity, unmixed with Popish superstitions, and unstained by the bloody rigours of a Portuguese inquisition.

Lockman's ‘book of martyrs’ can be regarded as a further early modern attempt to represent Roman Catholics as intrinsically untrustworthy, hypocritical, and violent. Together with a rich tradition of Protestant martyrologies, there is no doubt that it contributed to shaping the British Protestant ‘emotional community’, especially as it was principally directed at a school audience. However, it perhaps also anticipated the contradictions of those who purported to promote peaceful co-existence between different cultures and religions, presenting as universal principles feelings and values that were actually an expression of the hegemonic and conquering culture.

Notes

- 1 John Lockman, *A History of the Cruel Sufferings of the Protestants, and Others, by Popish Persecutions, in Various Countries*, Dublin: J. Potts, 1763, first printed in London, 1760, pp. 51–2.
- 2 John Lockman, ‘Preface’ to *Travels of the Jesuits into Various Parts of the World: Particularly China and East-Indies*, 2nd edn, London: Printed for T. Piety, 1762, p. xii.
- 3 Alexandra Shepard, ‘Violence and Civility in Early Modern Europe’ [review article], *The Historical Journal* 49, 2, 2006, 593–603.
- 4 See the editor’s insightful introduction to *Cultures of Violence: Interpersonal Violence in Historical Perspective*, ed. Stuart Carroll, Hounds Mills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, esp. pp. 37–8: ‘The civilizing process may well make us less tolerant of violence, more squeamish, but it does not necessarily make us more empathetic to our fellow men.’

- 5 In a thought-provoking conversation on 'Religious Identities and Violence' published in the *American Historical Review* in December 2007, Philip Benedict noted that 'in early modern Europe there was undoubtedly a conviction that power can be derived from righteousness . . . Rulers and their theogico-political advisers were tempted at times to think, "We are the righteous, therefore God will aid us in our battles to defend His cause and His honor"' (p. 1459).
- 6 See Andre Gingrich and Gerd Baumann (eds), *Grammars of Identity/Alterity: A Structural Approach*, New York: Berghahn Books, 2004. Drawing on and 'cannibilizing' three classic social theories originally developed by Edward Said (1978), E.E. Evans-Pritchard (1940), and Louis Dumont (1980), Baumann conceptualizes three grammars of selfing/othering – orientalizing, segmentation and encompassment – in which identities and alterities are viewed as 'mutually constitutive or potentially dialogical'.
- 7 London is explicitly evoked in both prints: in *Gin Lane* by the steeple of St George's, Bloomsbury, designed by the Baroque architect Nicholas Hawksmoor and with a statue of George I in Roman dress; and in *Beer Street*, by the view of St Martin-in-the-Fields in the background, on top of which a fluttering flag indicates that it is George II's birthday: the figures in the scene are doubtless toasting his health.
- 8 Ronald Paulson, *Hogarth*, 3 vols, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1991–93, vol. 3, pp. 21–7; Nicholas Rogers, *Mayhem: Post-War Crime and Violence in Britain, 1748–53*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012, pp. 62–3, 153–7 and passim.
- 9 The most frightening set of prints illustrate the chronicle of the 1655 massacres reported in *The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piemont* by the English diplomat Samuel Morland in 1658. The images are appalling, and testify to the brutal violence meted out also to women, children and foetuses.
- 10 See *Atlas van Stolk: Katalogus der historie-, spot- en zinneprenten betrekkelijk de geschiedenis van Nederland*, 11 vols in 10, Amsterdam: F. Muller & Co., 1895–1931, vol. 3, no. 2301. Religion here is obviously the Reformed one, as can be inferred from the open Bible on her lap and from later and more famous iconographic testimony such as Bernard Picart's *Tableau des principales religions du monde*, which visually summarizes the aims and contents of Jean-Frédéric Bernard's *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde*, the seven-volume comparative work published in Amsterdam between 1723 and 1737.
- 11 Rogers, *Mayhem*, p. 63. The distillation of gin had surged in England following the introduction of high customs duty on the import of French brandy, but also because it helped to diminish the excessive grain surplus resulting from abundant local harvests. Gin was cheaper and faster-acting than beer, and was advertised with the catch phrase: 'Drunk for a Penny/Dead drunk for two Pence/Clean straw for Nothing.' Rising gin consumption, particularly in London, took place in a context of increased overcrowding and widespread poverty, but drunkenness came to be regarded as the cause of social unrest, rather than as concomitant to it. The government made several attempts to control the sale of gin, including the Gin Act of 1736, which required retailers to obtain a licence for £50 and increased duty fivefold. But the measure was unpopular, and various ways were found to get round it, for example selling gin under other names. See Ernest L. Abel, 'The Gin Epidemic: Much Ado About What?', *Alcohol and Alcoholism* 36, 5, 2001, 401–95.
- 12 In 1750–1 Lockman wrote some prose and verse pamphlets on the importance of the white herring industry, including a song called 'Britannia's Gold Mine or the Herring Fishery Forever!'. See Bob Harris, 'Patriotic Commerce and National

- Revival: The Free British Fishery Society and British Politics, c.1749–53’, *English Historical Review* 114, 1996, p. 311. Lockman had the song performed at Vauxhall Gardens, where he was Poet in Residence, so it is no surprise really that he has gone down in history as ‘the herring poet’. For more about his 1752 *Sketch of Spring-Gardens*, see Gregory Nosan, ‘Pavilions, Power, and Patriotism: Garden Architecture at Vauxhall’, in Michel Conan (ed.), *Bourgeois and Aristocratic Cultural Encounters in Garden Art, 1550–1850*, Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2002, pp. 101–21.
- 13 Lockman’s mild manners earned him the nickname of ‘the Lamb’ among his literary acquaintances (see James Sambrook’s entry in the *ODNB*). This sweetness of disposition can be seen in a photograph of an oil portrait of Lockman (Figure 11.4), which, according to a booklet compiled by Lockman’s descendants in 1883 (*Family Memoirs. Lockman-Porter-Street*, by Margaret Wray and the Rev. George Charles Street), was with descendants in England at that time, while a large oil portrait was in Chicago at that time in the ownership of one of Lockman’s great-great-grandchildren, Arthur Wray Street, the father of Julian Leonard Street (1879–1947). I am grateful to Margaret Buchanan, herself a descendant of Lockman, for supplying a copy of the photograph.
- 14 *Gentleman’s Magazine*, 1st ser., 62, 1792, p. 314.
- 15 See John Hawkins, *The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.*, 2nd edn London: 1787, p. 516n. From among the intellectuals and artists who congregated at Old Slaughter’s, Hogarth set up the St Martin’s Lane Academy (which became the Royal Academy).
- 16 See J. Patrick Lee, ‘The Unexamined Premise: Voltaire, John Lockman and the Myth of the *English Letters*’, *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* 10, 2001, 240–70. See also Lockman’s dedications, respectively to Pope and Fontenelle, of his translations of Charles Porée’s Latin oration on the morality of the theatre (London, 1734) and of La Fontaine’s *The Loves of Cupid and Psyche* (London, 1744); and his preface to *The Entertaining Instructor in French and English. Being A Collection of Judicious Sayings . . . Extracted from the Most Celebrated French Authors and Particularly the Books in Ana*, London, 1765, p. xix. In 1727 he had also published *The Amusing Instricter*, a bilingual collection of Italian sayings prefixed with ‘An Account of the Decay of the Latin Tongue, and the Rise of the Italian’.
- 17 Lee, ‘The Unexamined Premise’, pp. 248–9. Lockman appears to have lived on patronage and by his pen until he became secretary to the Society of the Free British Fishery. Lee notes that the list of people to whom Lockman dedicated his various works ‘reads like a page of an eighteenth-century *Who’s who*’. His social ascent also seems to have attracted malicious talk and suspicions, as he himself complained in *A Proper Answer to a Vile, Anonymous Libel. Written by L.D.N. [Lemuel Dole Nelme?] chiefly against John Lockman . . . In a Letter to Slingsby Bethell*, London, 1753. Here Lockman also rebutted the accusation that personal motives lay behind his efforts to prevent a convicted murderer from going to the gallows, observing that the man’s innocence had been pleaded by eminent magistrates (p. 17).
- 18 *ODNB; Notes and Queries*, 2nd ser, xi, p. 102; British Library, Add. MS 4254, f. 116.
- 19 By 1770 Lockman’s *New History of England* had reached its sixteenth edition, and was still in use in schools in the first decade of the nineteenth century. It even appears to have served as a textbook for teaching French. See M.G. Sullivan, ‘Rapin, Hume and the Identity of the Historian in Eighteenth Century England’, *History of European Ideas* 28, 2002, 145–62, p. 150.

- 20 See Ian Bartlett, 'Boyce and Early English Oratorio-1', *The Musical Times* 120, 1634, 1979, 293–7. Lockman's main music texts are among the list of his works for sale at H. Chapelle in Grosvenor-Street, London, included at the end of his *Ode for the Crushing of the Rebellion, Anno MDCCXLVI* (London, 1746). Significantly, the full establishment of the oratorio as a genre was helped by the explosion of anti-Catholic sentiment prompted by the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion: Italian opera was affected because the performers, who were foreigners and hence mostly Roman Catholic, attracted widespread prejudice.
- 21 In 1732 Lockman announced it was 'ready for the press' in note 18 to his translation of Voltaire's *Henriade* (p. 239). Five bound manuscript volumes of Lockman's poems (primarily occasional poems, odes, and satirical verse) are held in the James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University (c267, 4 vols; c268).
- 22 Bernard, a French language bookseller in Amsterdam, published nine volumes under the same title. However, he added the last two (published in 1743) as a kind of afterword and numbered them 7/second half (Tome Septieme/Second Partie) and 8. None of the translations include them, and they have no illustrations by Picart, who died in 1733. In 1733 and 1736 Bernard had published two more supplementary volumes under the title *Superstitions anciennes et modernes*.
- 23 The most important recent studies on Picart include: Paola von Wyss-Giacosa, *Religionsbilder der frühen Aufklärung: Bernard Picarts Tafeln für die 'Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde'*, Wabern: Benteli, 2006; Lynn Hunt, Margaret C. Jacob and Wijnand Mijnhardt (eds), *Bernard Picart and the First Global Vision of Religion*, Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2010; Lynn Hunt, Margaret C. Jacob and Wijnand Mijnhardt, *The Book that Changed Europe: Picart & Bernards's 'Religious Ceremonies of the World'*, Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2010; Silvia Berti, *Anticristianesimo e libertà: Studi sull'Illuminismo radicale europeo*, Naples: Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Storici, 2012, esp. pp. 235–73; Maria Effinger, Cornelia Logemann and Ulrich Pfisterer (eds), *Götterbilder und Götzenidener in der Frühen Neuzeit*, Heidelberg: Universitätverlag, 2012.
- 24 Only four volumes (of the originally planned six) of the *Cérémonies* had been published when the English translation of the first three appeared under Prevost's imprint. Late in life Lockman only mentioned 'two volumes (folio) of the religious Customs and Ceremonies of all Nations' among 'his labours' (*The Entertaining Instructor*, p. xix).
- 25 Although too often in the eighteenth century the single human nature was assumed to exist in various stages of maturity and enlightenment, Bernard had not hesitated to wish that 'by the help of Brotherly Love all mankind shall become *true brothers* to each other' (*Cérémonies*, Du Bosc edn, IV, p. 236).
- 26 In his entry on Japan in the *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (1704), Bayle justifies the persecution suffered by Christians in Japan by his conviction that the 'Christianity of the sixteenth century . . . was a bloody, a murdering religion [and that the] Japanese could neither preserve their ancient government nor religion, but by destroying the Christians, who sooner or later would have destroyed both.' See also Lockman, *A History of the Cruel Sufferings*, p. 322.
- 27 Lockman, *A History of the Cruel Sufferings*, p. 334; Pierre Bayle, 'Mahomet', in *Dictionnaire historique et critique*, 5th edn, 4 vols, Amsterdam: Brunel and others, 1740, vol. 3, pp. 256–72.
- 28 *Cérémonies*, Du Bosc edn, IV, pp. vi–vii.
- 29 Lockman, *A History of the Cruel Sufferings*, p. 56. Collier had quarrelled with the Anglican bishops in 1715 and 1717, after they took him to task for allegedly expressing Roman Catholic sympathies in his two-volume *Ecclesiastical History*

- (1708–14). Their criticism derived partly from Collier’s habit of supporting his arguments with quotations from the Church Fathers, deemed inappropriate for a Reformed Church priest.
- 30 See Lockman, *A History of the Cruel Sufferings*, p. 64 and passim.
- 31 See Lockman, *A History of the Cruel Sufferings*, pp. 239–48. The 1561 massacre of the Waldensians of Calabria, in Southern Italy, is also sympathetically recalled both in Lockman’s *History* (p. 334) and on p. 351 of his notes on ‘The Origin of the Inquisition’ (mainly compiled from Limborch, Bayle and La Croze) annexed to *The Sufferings of John Coustos, for Free-Masonry, and for His Refusing to Turn Roman Catholic, in the Inquisition at Lisbon*, London: W. Strahan, 1746.
- 32 See John W. Marshall, John Locke, *Toleration and Early Enlightenment Culture: Religious Intolerance and Arguments for Religious Tolerance in Early Modern and ‘Early Enlightenment’ Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, esp. Chapter 2.
- 33 In the *History of the Persecution in the Valleys of Piedmont* (London: 1688), Burnet described prisoners being skinned alive, parents witnessing their small children being killed and cut to pieces, and soldiers satisfying ‘their infamous lusts on the very bodies of those whom they had deprived of life’. When the survivors were finally allowed to depart, the majority of those who arrived in Geneva were naked and bare-footed. They all ‘carried about them such marks of excessive sufferings, and extreme misery, that the most obdurate heart would have been pierced to the quick with a sensible grief at the very sight of them’ (pp. 31–45). It should be noted that the attribution to Burnet of this text (published first in French as *Histoire de la persécution des valées de Piémont*) is likely but not certain. See Giovanni Tarantino, ‘Gli eccidi dei valdesi nella propaganda antigiacobita di Gilbert Burnet e John Lockman’, *Bollettino Società Studi Valdesi* 215, 2014, 73–102.
- 34 Patrick Collinson, ‘Truth and Legend: The Veracity of John Foxe’s Book of Martyrs’, in A.C. Duke and C.A. Tamse (eds), *Clio’s Mirror: Historiography in Britain and the Netherlands*, Zutphen: Brill, 1985, p. 48; Thomas S. Freeman, ‘Over Their Dead Bodies: Concepts of Martyrdom in Late Medieval and Early Modern England’, in Thomas S. Freeman and Thomas F. Mayer (eds), *Martyrs and Martyrdom in England c.1400–1700*, Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2007, p. 20.
- 35 Lockman, *A History of the Cruel Sufferings*, p. 27.
- 36 Lockman, *A History of the Cruel Sufferings*, p. 181.
- 37 Lockman, *A History of the Cruel Sufferings*, pp. 117–18, quoting Henry (Maule), Lord Bishop of Dromore’s sermon *God’s Goodness Visible in Our Deliverance from Popery*, preached at Christ-Church, Dublin on 23 October 1733 and frequently reprinted. It was actually an inaccurate second-hand citation of Sir John Temple’s well-known *History of the Irish Rebellion*, which famously served as an authoritative voice for justifying the brutal repression of the rebellion. It also proved influential in shaping English perceptions of the Irish, and the resulting stereotypes, for many years to come.
- 38 Lockman, *A History of the Cruel Sufferings*, pp. 206, 229, 224.
- 39 ‘Don Bernardo de Rojas y Sandoval . . . was so zealous for extinguishing the whole race of the Moriscoes, that he even opposed the detaining of their children, who were under seven year old; affirming, that it were better to cut the throats of all the Moriscoes, men, women, and children, than to leave any of their children in Spain, to pollute the true Spanish blood, with its mixture with the Moorish’ (Lockman, *A History of the Cruel Sufferings*, p. 275).
- 40 Considerable space is given to the protest of Bartholomeo de las Casas against the abuses perpetrated at the expense of the Native Americans: ‘To blacken these unhappy people, their enemies assert, that they are scarce human creatures. But

it is we ought to blush, for having been less men, and more barbarous than they . . . Christ came to free, not to enslave us' (Lockman, *A History of the Cruel Sufferings*, pp. 311–12).

- 41 They had been published in both London and Dublin a year earlier with parallel French and English texts. See *Original Pieces Relative to the Trial and Execution of Mr. John Calas . . . With a Preface, and Remarks on the Whole*, by M. de Voltaire, Dublin: Printed for John Mitchell, 1762, pp. 33–57 and 87–93. A few years earlier, Lockman had intervened in an admittedly less sensational and dramatic case, to publicly defend the reputation of Benjamin May, manager of the King's Theatre in Haymarket until his death in 1759, from a 'diabolic malice'. There had been claims that he had been plotting to take the life of the royal family 'by lodging barrels of gun-powder under the Opera-House'. See John Lockman, *A Faithful Narrative of the Late Pretended Gun-powder Plot in A Letter to the . . . Mayor of London* (London, 1755).
- 42 Lockman, *A History of the Cruel Sufferings*, p. 342. Born in Saxony, Ziegenbalg was studying theology in Halle when a call came for missionaries to be sent to the overseas territories of Frederick IV of Denmark. The annual letters of the missionaries, sent out from Halle and distributed in Britain, had great influence in stirring missionary interest there. 'English' missions in the territories out from Tranquebar came to be financed from England, even though they were run by the German Lutherans of the Danish-Halle Mission. Given the deist leanings of many European intellectuals, the *Malabar Correspondence*, with its 'documentation' of natural monotheism in one of the world's oldest nations (and its tendency to extol the heathen Indians 'in order to chastise degenerate European Christians') contributed to a gradual shift of interest in eighteenth-century Europe from China to India. See Urs App, *The Birth of Orientalism*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010, pp. 88–9.
- 43 Lockman, *A History of the Cruel Sufferings*, p. 342.
- 44 In his collection of *ana*, Lockman includes the following saying by Saint-Evremond: 'It is asked, whether love be preferable to ambition . . . The tranquillity of love is an indolence, incompatible with all great actions: but ambition is a divine fire which animates heroes, and makes them worthy of empire'. However, he also adds a footnote, saying that 'this "divine fire," as the author calls it, is an infernal one, when the destruction of mankind is its object' (*The Entertaining Instructor*, p. 53). Carlo Ginzburg has recently noted that the author of *La Conformité des Coutumes des Indiens Orientaux avec celles des Juifs et des autres Peuples de l'Antiquité* (1704) (also included in Bernard's *Cérémonies*) presented himself, at the same time, as 'an unconditional partisan of empire and European colonization' and an admirer of the Jews and Indians' suspicion of progress ('Provincializing the World: Europeans, Indians, Jews (1704)', *Postcolonial Studies* 14, 2011, 135–50). It is also worth noting that the publication of the *Cérémonies* was funded by the substantial profits made by its compiler Bernard from the well-timed sale of his shares in colonial ventures. See Wijnand Mijnhardt, 'Jean Frederic Bernard as Author and Publisher', in Hunt, Jacob and Mijnhardt, *Bernard Picart and the First Global Vision of Religion*, pp. 26–7.
- 45 Lockman, *A History of the Cruel Sufferings*, p. vi. He added, though, that 'the Spaniards to justify their crimes, falsely represented the Americans as canibals [sic] and sodomites' (p. 317).

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