



Palgrave Studies in the
History of Emotions



*Disaster, Death and the Emotions in the
Shadow of the Apocalypse, 1400–1700*

Edited by
JENNIFER SPINKS
CHARLES ZIKA



Palgrave Studies in the History of Emotions

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Jennifer Spinks • Charles Zika
Editors

Disaster, Death and
the Emotions in the
Shadow of the
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Editors

Jennifer Spinks
The University of Manchester
United Kingdom

Charles Zika
The University of Melbourne
Australia

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PRAISE FOR *DISASTER, DEATH AND THE
EMOTIONS*

‘Despite the doom-laden title, this book is an uplifting read focusing as it does on human responses to adversity. It cleverly weaves together the History of the Emotions with environmental history, and its carefully-researched essays, covering a wide range of topics, make fascinating use of a variety of documentary and visual sources.’

—Penny Roberts, Professor and Director of the Centre for Arts Doctoral Research Excellence, University of Warwick, UK

‘This collection of outstanding contributions by leading scholars from three continents ranges widely across the disciplines of European art history, literature, music, cultural history, religion, politics, and society. Emerging from Melbourne University’s Centre for the History of Emotions, it more than lives up to the expansive promise of its title.’

—Larry Silver, Farquhar Professor of Art History,
University of Pennsylvania, USA

‘This collection of essays examines the range of early-modern Europeans’ emotional responses to nature’s trials. Drawing upon perspectives from history and the history of art, literature, and religion, the book takes readers on a grand, but lamentable tour of the socio-cultural forces that left traditional Europe exposed to the elements.’

—Philip M. Soergel, Professor and Chair of the Department
of History, University of Maryland, USA

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Jennifer Spinks
Charles Zika

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Susan Broomhall is Professor of Early Modern History at The University of Western Australia. She was a Foundation Chief Investigator in the Australian Research Council (ARC) Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, 1100–1700 and now holds an ARC Future Fellowship. She is author of a series of studies exploring gender, emotions, social welfare, disaster and violence in early modern Europe. She held an ARC Discovery Grant with Charles Zika and Jennifer Spinks, in which she analysed the reading and recording of disaster in sixteenth-century France. Her new project explores emotions and power in the correspondence of Catherine de Medici.

Dagmar Eichberger is participating in the EU-funded research project *artifex* at the University of Trier and continues to be a member of the Department of Fine Arts in Heidelberg. With Charles Zika she edited *Dürer and his Culture* (1998). She wrote *Leben mit Kunst—Wirken durch Kunst* (2002), and edited several books on women and the arts in early modern Europe: *Women of Distinction. Margaret of York and Margaret of Austria* (2005) and *Women at the Burgundian Court* (with Anne-Marie Legaré). Her next publication will be *Visual Typology in Early Modern Europe. Continuity and Expansion* (with Shelley Perlove).

Sigrun Haude is Associate Professor of History at the University of Cincinnati. She is the author of *In the Shadow of ‘Savage Wolves’: Anabaptist Münster and the German Reformation During the 1530s* (2000) and of several chapters and articles on the Thirty Years’ War, Anabaptism, and gender, including ‘Gender Roles and Perspectives Among Anabaptist and Spiritualist Groups,’ in *A Companion to Anabaptism and Spiritualism, 1521–1700* (2007) and ‘The Experience of War’ in *The Ashgate Research Companion to the Thirty Years’ War* (2014). She is currently finishing her monograph, *The Thirty Years’ War: Experience and Management of a Disaster (1618–1648)*.

Erika Kuijpers teaches history at Leiden University and is a postdoctoral researcher at VU University in Amsterdam. From 2008 to 2013 she worked at Leiden University on personal memories of the Dutch Revolt and co-edited *Memory Before Modernity: Practices of Memory in Early Modern Europe* (2013). She is currently working on a monograph about the way early modern witnesses and victims of war dealt with traumatic memories. At VU University she is involved in a project entitled ‘Embodied Emotions’ that aims to develop computational methods for the analysis of emotional expression in digitized historical texts.

David Lederer is Senior Lecturer at Maynooth University, where he teaches early modern German history. His interests include the histories of psychiatry, suicide and clerical concubinage during the Counter-Reformation. His publications range across these topics broadly and his monograph, *Madness, Religion and the State in Early Modern Europe* (2006), received the Gerald Strauss prize for best book on Reformation history. He is currently engaged in research on emotional welfare and brotherly love under the auspices of a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship from the European Commission.

Dolly MacKinnon is an Associate Professor at The University of Queensland. A cultural historian, her research publications focus on analysing the mental, physical and auditory landscapes of past cultures. Her latest book is entitled *Earls Colne’s Early Modern Landscapes* (2014). Her most recent publications include battlefields as emotional landscapes in England and Scotland, and ‘Slave Children: Scotland’s Children as Chattels at Home and Abroad in the Eighteenth Century’, in Elizabeth Ewan and Janay Nugent (eds) *Childhood and Youth in Premodern Scotland*, St Andrews Studies in Scottish History (2015).

Louise Marshall is Senior Lecturer in the Department of Art History and Film Studies at the University of Sydney, where she teaches late medieval and Renaissance art. She has published widely on Italian Renaissance plague images as well as on late medieval devotional imagery and early representations of purgatory. Recent publications include articles on plague-related works by Tintoretto (‘A Plague Saint for Venice: Tintoretto at the Chiesa di San Rocco,’ *Artibus et Historiae*, 2012) and Giovanni di Paolo (‘Plague in the City: Identifying the Subject of Giovanni di Paolo’s Vienna Miracle of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino,’ *Renaissance Studies*, 27, 2013).

Una McIlvenna is Lecturer in Early Modern Literature at the University of Kent, where her research looks at execution ballads and the singing of news in early modern Europe. She has previously held positions at Queen Mary University of London and the University of Sydney. Her recent publications include ‘The Power of Music: The Significance of Contrafactum in Execution Ballads’, in *Past & Present*, and ‘The Rich Merchant Man, or, What the Punishment of Greed Sounded Like in Early Modern English Ballads’, forthcoming in the *Huntington*

Library Quarterly. She is also the author of the monograph *Scandal and Reputation at the Court of Catherine de Medici*.

Gerrit Jasper Schenk is Professor of Medieval History at the Technische Universität Darmstadt. He has taught at the universities of Heidelberg, Stuttgart and Essen and has held fellowships from the Gerda Henkel Foundation and the German Historical Institutes (Rome, Paris). He is an associated member of the Cluster of Excellence ‘Asia and Europe in a Global Context’ (University of Heidelberg). His main research interests are rituals, ceremonies, pilgrimage, environmental history, historical disaster research and urban history. Most recently he has coedited books on *Historical Disasters in Context* (2012), *Krisengeschichte(n)* (2013), *Disaster as Image* (2014) and *Mensch. Natur. Katastrophe. Von Atlantis bis heute* (2014).

Patricia Simons is a Professor in the Department of History of Art at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Her books include *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe: A Cultural History* (2011) and the co-edited *Patronage, Art, and Society in Renaissance Italy* (1987). Her studies of the visual and material culture of early modern Europe have been published in numerous anthologies and peer-reviewed journals, ranging over such subjects as female homoeroticism, gender and portraiture, the cultural role of humour, and the visual dynamics of secrecy and of scandal.

Jeffrey Chipps Smith holds the Kay Fortson Chair in European Art at the University of Texas, Austin. He specializes in Northern European art 1400–1700, especially that of Germany and the Netherlands. Smith’s books and publications have focused on Nuremberg, Albrecht Dürer, German sculpture, German goldsmith work, Jesuits, northern Renaissance art, historiography, issues of visual acuity and the reception of Renaissance art in later centuries. In August 2012, he was a Distinguished International Visiting Fellow of the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions at the Universities of Queensland (Brisbane), Western Australia (Perth), and Melbourne.

Jennifer Spinks is Senior Lecturer in Early Modern History at the University of Manchester. She previously spent three years as Australian Research Council Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Melbourne. Her publications include *Monstrous Births and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Germany* (2009) and *The Four Horsemen: Apocalypse, Death and Disaster* (2012; co-edited with Cathy Leahy and Charles Zika, and accompanying a collaboratively curated exhibition). She recently co-curated a new exhibition project on early modern supernatural beliefs with Sasha Handley and is working on a study of wonder books with the support of an Arts and Humanities Early Career Fellowship.

Stephanie Trigg is Professor of English Literature at the University of Melbourne. She is editor of *Wynner and Wastoure* (2000), and author of *Gwen Harwood* (1994), *Congenial Souls: Reading Chaucer from Medieval to Postmodern* (2002),

Shame and Honor: A Vulgar History of the Order of the Garter (2012), and editor of *Medievalism and the Gothic in Australian Culture* (1994). She is currently a Chief Investigator in the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, 1100–1800 (2011–17).

Alexandra Walsham is Professor of Modern History at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of Trinity College and the British Academy. She has published widely on the religious and cultural history of early modern Britain. Her most recent books include *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (2011), which was joint winner of the Wolfson History Prize, and *Catholic Reformation in Protestant Britain* (2014). Her current project, funded by a Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship, is entitled ‘The Reformation of the Generations: Age, Ancestry and Memory in England 1500–1700’.

Charles Zika is a Professorial Fellow in the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies, University of Melbourne, and Chief Investigator in the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions. His interests lie in the intersection of religion, emotion, visual culture and print in early modern Europe. His most recent books include *The Appearance of Witchcraft: Print and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (2007); *The Four Horsemen: Apocalypse, Death & Disaster* (edited with Cathy Leahy and Jennifer Spinks 2012); *Celebrating Word and Image 1250–1600* (with Margaret Manion 2013).

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Introduction: Rethinking Disaster and Emotions, 1400–1700

Jennifer Spinks and Charles Zika

Under the pressure of the global climate change debate, and in response to increased reporting of major local and regional natural disasters in recent years, such as the south east Asian tsunami, the Haiti and Nepal earthquakes, or cyclone Katrina, the literature on disasters continues to grow at a remarkable pace.¹ A wide range of experts in multiple sectors have become involved in endeavouring to establish better systems by which governments and social agencies can help predict disasters, mitigate their impact, assist in recovery, and minimise future risk.

I

Prior to the last two decades or so, historians have had little to say about disasters. Conceptualised for the most part as single, exceptional and unpredictable events, disasters seemed beyond the scope of historical

J. Spinks

School of Arts, Languages and Cultures, The University of Manchester, UK

C. Zika

ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, The University of Melbourne, Australia

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analysis.² They were considered one-off events beyond history; ‘acts of God’ which did not allow for detailed analysis and understanding. But in contrast to traditional historical analyses that have concentrated for the most part only on major and dramatic disasters—such as the Great Fire of London of 1666, the Lisbon Earthquake of 1755, or even perhaps the Basel Earthquake of 1356—recent attention is being given to those numerous smaller disasters which affected European communities on a more regular basis—such as the flooding of various rivers like the Arno and the Rhine, or of the North Sea coastal communities of Germany and the Netherlands, the numerous earthquakes to strike central and northern Italy, Switzerland and parts of France, and the avalanches of the Alpine regions. And more detailed attention has also been given to the epidemics and famines that struck most of Central and Northern Europe at the time of dramatic cooling associated with the Little Ice Age from the 1560s through to 1650–1700, reaching its peak in Western Europe between 1565 and 1628.³

This new interest has been predicated on new models of conceptualising nature-induced disasters. Social scientists have increasingly viewed ‘natural disasters’ as social and cultural phenomena, rather than simply ‘natural’. Natural hazards become disasters because of social, political, economic and cultural conditions. As the anthropologist Anthony Oliver-Smith has argued: ‘Disasters do not just happen. In the vast majority of cases, they ... take place through the conjuncture of two factors: a human population and a potentially destructive agent that is part of a total ecological system ... A society’s pattern of vulnerability is a core element of a disaster.’ Disasters occur ‘at the intersection of nature and culture and illustrate, often dramatically, the mutuality of each in the constitution of the other.’⁴

As a result, there has been much greater focus on the recurring nature of disasters, on their longer-term causes, on common patterns of individual and collective response, on the longer-term impacts on social and cultural organisation. The ‘vulnerability’ of societies to hazards is critical—whether that be the ‘risk culture’ of the Philippines, for instance, with its proneness to earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, typhoons and flood, or the ‘risk culture’ of the so-called hydrographic or dike cultures of early modern Netherlands or coastal Northern Germany, with their propensity to recurrent flooding.⁵ A critical question is how these hazards are recognised and confronted—culturally and emotionally, as well as through agriculture, architecture or other forms of technology.

When dealing with early modern European societies, however, the line between the sphere of ‘nature’ and the sphere of the human is extremely elastic and complex. Both are firmly within the scope of divine providence and action. What we understand to be natural disasters and human-induced disasters have the divinity as their primary cause. All are subordinate to the divine will and plan. Warfare in particular is one of the most terrifying disasters visited by God on human society. The four horsemen of the Apocalypse in the Book of Revelation, for instance, ride the horses of Conquest, Famine, Death and War. So in this book we include warfare in particular among the disasters European societies faced in the early modern period. Indeed, we seek to put different sorts of disaster into a common framework of religious meaning and emotional impact. For early modern Europeans experienced human-generated disasters such as warfare with terrible regularity, not least because of the unfolding of the Reformation and its frequently violent aftermath in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This is most vividly apparent in violence shaped in part by religious fault-lines, such as the Peasants’ War (1524–25) and the Schmalkaldic War (1546–47) in German lands; the French Wars of Religion (1562–98); the Dutch Revolt (1568–1648); and the Thirty Years’ War (1618–48).

The intersections between natural and human-generated disasters such as war were profound, for whether due to battle, marauding troops, flood or earthquake, the devastation of homes and lands led to hunger, dislocation, the disruption of human relationships, and the witnessing and experience of death. Grief and fear were often woven through the fabric of life.⁶ For early modern Europeans, particularly from the later sixteenth century, also lived through periods of deprivation fostered by climate change that led to cold winters and wet summers, as well as waves of plague and other disease.⁷ Such smaller-scale and incremental patterns of want and deprivation experienced by many form a background to the dramatic and disastrous upheavals on a larger scale that constitute the subject of this book.

Just as scholars are beginning to pay more attention to the multiple smaller disastrous events that formed part of the pattern of life in late medieval and early modern Europe, they are also considering in more nuanced fashion the different ways the fears and desires of emotional life shaped religious belief and practice and thereby the human responses to such events.⁸ The notion of the Last Days was one of the most profound ways in which early modern Europeans made sense of the disorder around them. They read the signs of natural disaster and warfare as an accumulat-

ing pattern of terrible events that would lead to the Apocalypse and Day of Judgment, when the dead would rise. Apocalypse made sense of disorder, and also of death.

The concept of apocalypse was most substantially articulated in the Book of Revelation, with its heavenly, ferocious angels blowing trumpets and opening vials that set off waves of utter disaster; its monstrous beasts and false prophets; and its mercilessly riding four horsemen, who trample all underfoot. Images of the Last Days became extraordinarily popular in this early modern period, in painting cycles and above all in widely circulating prints, revealing their significance for people at many levels of society.⁹ Recourse to the Book of Revelation is perhaps the most fully developed example of how a visionary, prophetic, apocalyptic mindset could inform the ways early modern Europeans—Protestant and Catholic—read what they believed was a terrifying collapse of the natural and moral order around them, from earthquakes to floods, from monstrous births to comets, and from extreme human cruelty to the disasters of war. As Charles Zika argues elsewhere in this collection, this was a way of experiencing not just the physical world but also the unfolding of time, in ways that generated strong and even contradictory emotional responses. More broadly, this apocalyptic mindset was part of a world in which God's providence was visible—if not always legible—in the changing, sensory and emotional world of human experience.¹⁰ A comforting—as well as terrifying—sense of God's providence, and communal forms of emotional coping strategies were also part of the pattern.¹¹

While notions of apocalypse and of God's providence could provide a framework for understanding the disordered world, and even provide consolation and hope, it is indisputable that disaster wreaks terrible havoc in the lives of individuals and communities. It destroys infrastructure, brings death, and produces violent emotions and trauma. But it also reinforces coping strategies and develops new pathways to recovery. The particular focus of this collection is to explore how individuals and communities understood and responded to disasters and mass death in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe, and the crucial role that emotions played in shaping these understandings and responses, as well as devising the techniques and instruments used to cope with such events and minimise their future impact. It therefore aims to bring together this new interest in the historical meanings and impact of disaster with the new directions pursued in the history of emotions.

The most frequent impulse driving the exploration of emotions within historical studies would seem to be the relationship between cognition, experience and feeling in individuals and social groups, and the manner in which embodied emotional states contribute to, or even drive, human action.¹² We have learnt that emotions are something people experience and also do; they are domains of effort exercised by mindful bodies and follow particular social and cultural scripts. Through this exercise, forms of identity can be strengthened and the borders of communities re-formed. In the experience of disaster, emotions are critical in three significant ways and at three different phases in the narrative to which we have access as historians. These phases are seldom discrete from each other in terms of effect, sequence or time, but a conceptual identification helps one understand the extensive and critical involvement of emotions in any such disastrous event.¹³

First, the initial impact of a disaster brings major individual and collective loss and horror, and with it suffering, pain, confusion, shock, chaos, trauma. Second, the disaster needs to be understood through its location in a broader interpretative cosmological model that provides cultural meaning, identifying origin and cause, as well as the appropriate human response. In the early modern period the response might not only be fear, sorrow, guilt or repentance, but also awe, wonder, or even blame, hate and vengeance—given the prevalence of a theology of divine punishment and a belief in apocalyptic expectation and judgment. Third, emotions are critical for devising and practising personal and collective rituals that help to heal suffering and loss, maintain community and identity, strengthen organisation and mitigate the recurrence of similar events in future. These techniques might sublimate fear and provide consolation, mobilise hope and resilience in the face of suffering and death, channel anger at perceived agents or causes of misfortune, offer gratitude for survival, generate hope in future safety and even stimulate joy at the punishment of the wicked and the assurance of ultimate salvation. The contributions to this book attempt to describe and analyse these different phases in narratives of disaster within the particular context of time and place.

II

The chapters in this book focus on a number of different European societies between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, bringing together materials that will hopefully facilitate systematic future comparative analyses

of the emotional experience of disasters within diverse cultural and religious communities. First workshopped at a symposium in 2012, in the context of an exhibition project that focused on early modern print culture and images of apocalypse, death and disaster, the chapters also reach across disciplines.¹⁴ Experience of death and disaster, their frequent framing in apocalyptic terms, as well as their emotional expression and management, were manifested in a wide variety of cultural, social and political ways, pervading and underpinning early modern life. These essays deploy evidence and methodologies from the fields of history, art history and literature, often in cross-disciplinary ways. In so doing, they pose and answer questions about how the emotional dimensions of the early modern world intersected with violent social upheavals like disaster and war. By focusing on the complex interrelationship between disasters, apocalyptic scenarios, and the emotional experiences of actors and observers in fifteenth-, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe, the collection aims to offer new perspectives on the cultural, social, and religious worlds of early modern Europe.

Part I of this book focuses on a conceptual understanding of the key terms that underpin the more particular studies in this collection—disaster, providence, emotions, apocalypse. It attempts to locate these terms and their usages within the changing intellectual, social and religious context of late medieval and early modern Europe. It is particularly concerned to demonstrate how, prior to the momentous changes in the understanding of nature between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, disaster, divine judgment, emotions and apocalypse were very often conceptually and inextricably linked. While recent approaches to a history of disasters in this period have acknowledged the significance of apocalyptic thinking and emotional impact, it is seldom the case that scholars working in the field of apocalypse studies have considered the way disasters influence and sustain the historical relevance of apocalyptic thought. The multi-faceted and critical impact of emotions to both fields of historical study remains quite marginal.

Alexandra Walsham opens Part I by demonstrating how a language of emotion was at the very heart of the idea of divine providence in the religious literature concerned with disaster in sixteenth and seventeenth-century England. For disasters were primarily experienced and imagined as divine punishments. Despite theological claims that the divinity was not prey to human passions and affections, disasters were routinely described as ‘legible characters’ of God’s rage, as vials of his indignation, signs of his exasperation. Yet at the same time, they were considered proofs of the

overwhelming love of an ‘affectionate father’, God’s instruments for communicating hope and providing consolation. The faithful in turn were encouraged to express their repentance through a profusion of tears and groans, an outpouring of emotion meant to deflect God’s anger. A highly affective form of repentance testifies to Puritanism as a ‘heart religion’—at least through to the later seventeenth century, when the passions imputed to God were modified, sorrow began to be internalised, and emotion was increasingly removed from the public religious realm.

Gerrit Schenk explores the long history of key words and semantic usages related to disaster in order to open up understanding of this conceptual field and reveal its history. In tracing the German and Latin terminology of earthquakes and floods, as well as the broader categories of ‘disaster’ and ‘catastrophe’, Schenk shows how religious, magical and natural explanations of extreme events survived side by side. It was astrometeorological explanations—which survive in our word ‘disaster’ (bad star)—that attest to the increasing influence of natural explanations of disaster. These emerge in the fourteenth century, and become well established in Latin, the Romance languages and visual imagery by the sixteenth century. Yet it is only after 1650 that such natural explanations challenge divine providence as a primary cause.

Charles Zika looks at the role of apocalyptic thought in offering meaning for the incidence and impact of disasters. Through an examination of a number of pamphlets in the late sixteenth-century collection of the Zurich pastor, Johann Jakob Wick, he shows how apocalyptic thought helps create an emotional state that reinforces convictions concerning the immanence or presence of an apocalyptic End Time. Moreover, the nature of some disasters as beyond human experience and even comprehension, together with uncertainty as to whether the timing of Apocalypse is open to human influence, stimulate conflicted emotions and feelings of being out-of-time. Apocalyptic readings of nature, he concludes, are meant to produce emotional states as well as theological insights, and both are employed to shape understanding of disaster and an appropriate response.

Part I of this book underscores how disaster, apocalypse and providence were pervasive and profound concepts in early modern Europe. They were cornerstones of how people made sense of the world, and—as the essays across the entire volume demonstrate—they were also inextricably bound up with the experience, expression and management of emotions. Part II continues to explore these issues through a focused series of case studies that take as a common theme the experience of violent upheaval, and

the corresponding unleashing of different sorts of emotional experiences, responses and management strategies. Fear and violence dominate much of this section.

The upheavals of the Revolt of the Low Countries from 1568 onwards form the context for *Erika Kuijpers'* analysis of war chronicles. Kuijpers examines the communal, contextual and carefully managed ways that individuals and communities made sense of their fearful anticipation and sometimes experience of violent assaults and homelessness as a result of war. She argues that expressing emotions in these first-person narratives was less important than ordering emotions as part of a larger, coherent narrative. Personal experiences of violence or the death of close family members were often treated only briefly in these accounts, and they often demonstrate a patient acceptance of God's providence, and (in some respects) the development of neo-stoic behavioural tropes as the revolt went on. Emotions set within a religious framework formed a crucial part of coping with disaster and death, as did the act of blaming enemies, and a focus on community rebuilding.

Jennifer Spinks examines the representation and meaning of violent upheaval in wonder books published during the French Wars of Religion (1562–1598). She addresses the ways that the meaning of prodigies was shaped by the expectation and impact of civil war violence. In this environment, she argues, authors writing about the appearance and meaning of prodigies often identified acts of extreme human cruelty and violence as prodigious, particularly when these acts took place in familial environments or involved violence towards children. Such stories were deliberately framed to maximise emotional impact. The prodigious eruptions of unnatural violence brought disorder to the natural world of the family, as it did to the kingdom on a larger scale, adding to the disruptions of the natural world more commonly associated with wonder books in recent scholarship.

The violent disorder of sixteenth-century conflicts, grounded in religious reform, was followed in the seventeenth by what might be termed the 'total' war of the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). *Sigrun Haude* takes as her case study the experiences of members of religious orders in Franconia and Bavaria, and vividly conveys unique, personal experiences, while also unpacking communally shared ideas about disaster and catastrophe. These women and men produced texts vividly describing the fear and terror of attacks upon enclosed religious communities. They lament the

experience of displacement and exile, commonly described by contemporaries—in an emotionally laden phrase—as ‘going into misery’. This was partly mitigated by the maintenance of information networks and close bonds of companionship, strategies that demonstrate the entwining of pragmatic and emotional ways of coping with disastrous events.

Dolly MacKinnon explores the fearful anticipation and experience of flood along the North Sea coastline of East Anglia—experiences it shared with Netherlandish communities. The recurrence of this fear in response to the flood’s regular manifestation did not diminish the drama of coastal flooding, in which people engaged in a constant battle against natural forces. From disaster planning to the acceptance of God’s providence, early modern sources provide rich evidence of how the regular threat of flood shaped the cultural and emotional landscapes of local communities, creating literary, material, auditory and other testimonies of a communal identity partly forged in response to this experience of disaster. Emotions were unleashed and also managed when faced with this surging power of water, as violent an upheaval and also as distressingly familiar an experience as warfare across early modern Europe.

The different understandings and impact of disaster in early modern Europe were disseminated through a range of textual, literary and visual media. Part III focuses on the way disasters were depicted in visual media, and how those media modelled appropriate emotional responses. Visual media were of paramount importance in societies that were largely illiterate. While wall and panel paintings, sculpture and manuscript illuminations were instrumental in communicating responses to disaster in the late middle ages, and not least through genres such as votive images, with the spread of the print medium and new print-making techniques from the later fifteenth century, woodcuts, engravings and etchings published in broadsheets, pamphlets, illustrated books or as single prints or print series, ensured that news of disasters would be circulated far more quickly and widely than ever before. The resulting increase in artistic production led to many different and even conflicting interpretations of disasters, whether in the distant classical or biblical past or in the present, and these served to authorise particular emotional responses and their management.

Louise Marshall examines how a series of miniatures in a richly illustrated manuscript completed in 1400 responded to the bubonic plague epidemics that struck the city of Lucca in the second half of the fourteenth

century. She shows how these graphic, emotionally compelling and carefully orchestrated drawings, together with their accompanying texts, could map out a rich 'rhetoric of disaster' for viewers. Demons cooperate with angels to visit divine punishment on humanity, as dead bodies lie twisted and contorted on the ground, transfixed by arrows, left unburied. None can escape God's destructive anger at human sin, the images proclaim. While their immediate purpose is to invoke visible horror and fear of the terrifying impact of plague, they nevertheless hold out hope of salvation by persuading viewers to embrace repentance.

Patricia Simons also explores the power of visual rhetoric, but in ways that show how the story of disaster could be redeployed visually for quite varied purposes. Her subject is the biblical account of Lot and his daughters, who flee the city of Sodom before its destruction as an act of divine punishment for human sin. Although the story functions traditionally as a divine, and often apocalyptic, warning and exemplar for more recent terrifying disasters, Simons shows how artists manipulated the story to extract varied, even dissonant, meanings. Especially in the sixteenth century, when Lot's drunkenness and incest become more prominent, the moralising message is counteracted by references to desire, seduction, sensuality and sodomy. The images can be both pleasing and disconcerting, captivating and repellent, emphasising resilience, regeneration and survival over apocalyptic destruction.

Dagmar Eichberger examines Maarten van Heemskerck's print cycle of 1569, the *Clades Judaeae Gentis*, which featured many Old Testament stories of the downfall of the Jewish people. Eichberger argues that these scenes were deliberately presented in an emotionally restrained style, with crowd scenes depicted more often than individuals, and the accompanying text usually tersely descriptive. The *Clades Judaeae Gentis* represents a contrast to some of Heemskerck's other print cycles, and notably a large print produced in the same year that depicts the fall of Babylon with the individual faces and gestures of victims displaying vivid emotions. In contrast to Heemskerck's restrained treatment of the distant past of the Old Testament, its focus firmly on moral righteousness, the fearful anticipation of the violent upheavals of the Last Days prompted a more emotionally extreme visual register.

The destruction of Magdeburg in 1631 was one of the most notorious events of the Thirty Years' War. It was a spectacular media event, as vividly demonstrated by *Jeffrey Chipps Smith's* examination of printed

broadsheets about the destruction of the city and its personification as a ‘maiden’. While Catholic forces under the Count of Tilly might have carried the day in military terms, Smith argues that they effectively lost the propaganda war. Smith focuses especially on the visual images in these printed broadsheets and how they condemned Catholic barbarity and fostered outrage through their depiction of wanton destruction and reports of shocking death tolls. Pro-Catholic prints, conversely, presented Tilly as the saviour of the ‘maiden’ rescued from the sully of Lutheranism. These act as examples of how both Catholics and Protestants deployed emotionally loaded visual media to battle over the interpretation of disastrous events.

As many chapters in this collection indicate, discussion and awareness of all manner of disasters were most frequently disseminated through forms of popular print or reportage such as journals or diaries that recorded and communicated newsworthy events, whether illustrated or not. Part IV examines how the authors of pamphlets, broadsheets, ballads, or of more consciously framed personal journals, used a variety of emotion words, linguistic devices and narrative strategies to persuade readers or listeners of the significance of their message. They attached meaning to a wide variety of everyday events, thereby underscoring specific and individualised messages, while also developing broader moral or religious themes and values that were understood to underpin collective behaviour or identity.

Una McIlvenna explores how ballad broadsheets sung to well-known tunes made these views accessible to all social levels and across all religious divides. Ballads communicated their meanings and emotions through music, words and performance, and they provide us with rich sources for the history of emotions. While the tunes were often spirited in tempo, they recounted distressing tales of violence, execution and war (such as the 1631 destruction of Magdeburg, the focus of the chapter by Jeffrey Chipps Smith). Some even adopted the first-person voice of a perpetrator of violence, thereby ratcheting up their rhetorical and emotional power. McIlvenna argues that ballads performed the critical public function of warning audiences about God’s punishment and encouraging them to repent.

David Lederer also explores broadsheets and violent crime, focusing on the affective relationships in cases of family annihilations, in which one family member murders the others and then commits suicide. One response to such sensational crimes was the emergence of a genre of

hard-heartedness ballads, which mitigated the individual responsibility of the perpetrator by reference to the disastrous impact of famine. Wealthy local noblemen or burghers were condemned by the moralising authors of these broadsheets for neglecting their love of neighbour by refusing bread to the murderer/suicide. In this way otherwise inexplicable acts were given meaning as potential portents within a framework of divine providence and apocalypse, at a time of frequent famine during the Little Ice Age. This development emphasises the significance given to brotherly love as a social bond by Lutheran reformers.

Susan Broomhall also focuses on the relationship between confessional affiliation and emotional response. In exploring how sixteenth-century French diarists collected and interpreted the accounts of war and disaster that poured off Paris presses, she shows how their emotional responses were reflective of their confessional identities. Some, such as Jehan Glaumeau, sequenced different destructive events to endow them with wondrous significance that supported his newly professed Calvinist faith. Others, such as the Benedictine nuns from Beaumont-lès-Tours and Jean Burel, performed their emotional attachments to the Catholic League by transcribing and binding particular documents into their journal, or by pasting in prints, colouring them and providing them with captions. Broomhall argues that these diarists used textual and material practices in their journals to manage the affective states created through their reading of disasters in print. In this way God's wrath could result in optimism and hope, and deadly events could generate confidence and even joy. Emotional responses were frequently instruments for providing reassurance and validating individual belief.

While most chapters in this collection explore sequences of lesser-known disastrous events, *Stephanie Trigg* applies the methodological insights of emotions research to one of the most iconic single disasters in European history: the 1666 Great Fire of London. Trigg focuses on one of its best-known primary sources, the eyewitness diary of Samuel Pepys. Through her unpacking of the work's 'exceptional' status and the literary strategies at work in Pepys' account of his impressions and encounters with other Londoners, Trigg examines the diary's self-consciously constructed nature. She assesses how this impacts upon its status as a source for past emotional experiences, and in particular the experience of traumatic events.

III

The contributions to this book have sought to highlight the ways in which disasters and mass death in the early modern period need to be understood in the context of religious meaning and emotional impact. Horror, fear and dread, but also resilience and hope, were an integral and dynamic part of human responses to disaster and they were often shaped by the passions attributed to the divinity. Religious and emotional responses were not simply reactive, of course. Religious meanings, whether a belief in disasters as the product of divine anger or love, or a conviction that disasters represent an unfolding of the apocalyptic timetable of the Last Days, shaped the experience and understanding of traumatic events throughout this period.

Natural explanations began to emerge alongside such religious meanings only gradually from the fifteenth century, especially under the pressure of astrometeorological models, and did not achieve more widespread influence in Europe until the second half of the seventeenth century. But the emotional resonances of past disasters, whether actually remembered or otherwise commemorated through oral or written transmission, also influenced the understanding and experience of contemporary disastrous events. In the face of intense emotions and hardship, such techniques were complemented by calls for stoic patience, communal solidarity and unified action. A clear imperative for a history of emotions related to disasters is to apply a comparative approach across linguistic, national and confessional boundaries, in order to identify the key moments and circumstances when emotional understandings of disaster register significant change.

The most important single outcome of exploring the range of interaction between disastrous events, religious culture, and emotional behaviour and experience in early modern Europe, however, is to demonstrate how inadequate it is to view disasters through a unifocal lens. Many of the essays in this collection demonstrate that while disasters were clearly events that generated horror, fear, and also outrage, and brought untold suffering and distress that had to be painfully endured, they also presented an opportunity for reworking religious frameworks, for rediscovering opportunities for hope, gratitude and love, and for creating an emotional resilience that could galvanise communities into creative action. Both print and visual media, sometimes separately and at other times in concert, created rich rhetorics of disaster through which we can read such processes. Textual and pictorial narratives, theatrical performances and sung ballads, whether

describing contemporary disasters or biblical events, could become rich models and resources for the expression of a broad range of often dissonant emotional behaviours. This book has attempted to cast a fresh light on these complex processes in the early modern European world. It aims to open up to further exploration the multiple interactions between reported experiences of natural disaster and war, the apocalyptic and other religious beliefs that provided these experiences with meaning, and the range of emotional associations and scripts that created the urgency and dynamic for such meanings to be translated into personal and collective understanding and action.

NOTES

1. For some of the recent and most significant historical studies relevant to medieval and early modern European societies: Monica Juneja and Gerrit Jasper Schenk, eds, *Disaster as Image: Iconographies and Media Strategies across Europe and Asia* (Regensburg: Schnell und Steiner, 2014); Andrea Janku, Gerrit Schenk and Franz Mauelshagen, eds, *Historical Disasters in Context: Science, Religion, and Politics* (London: Routledge, 2012); Gerrit Jasper Schenk, ed., *Katastrophen. Vom Untergang Pompejis bis zum Klimawandel* (Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 2009); Christof Mauch and Christian Pfister, eds, *Natural Disasters, Cultural Responses: Case Studies toward a Global Environmental History* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2009); Christian Rohr, *Extreme Naturereignisse im Ostalpenraum: Naturerfahrung im Spätmittelalter und am Beginn der Neuzeit* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2007); Dieter Groh, Michael Kempe and Franz Mauelshagen, eds, *Naturkatastrophen. Beiträge zu ihrer Deutung, Wahrnehmung und Darstellung in Text und Bild von der Antike bis ins 20. Jahrhundert* (Tübingen: Narr, 2003); Anthony Oliver-Smith and Susanna Hoffman, eds, *The Angry Earth: Disaster in Anthropological Perspective* (London: Routledge, 1999).
2. For the following, see especially: Gerrit Jasper Schenk, “Human Security” in the Renaissance? “Securitas”, Infrastructure, Collective Goods and Natural Hazards in Tuscany and the Upper Rhine Valley,’ *Historical Social Research* 35 (2010): 209–33; Gerrit Jasper Schenk, ‘Managing Natural Hazards: Environment, Society, and Politics in Tuscany and the Upper Rhine Valley in the Renaissance (1270–1570),’ in *Historical Disasters in Context*, 31–53; Monica Juneja and Franz Mauelshagen, ‘Disasters and Pre-Industrial Societies: Historiographical Trends and Comparative Perspectives,’ *The Medieval History Journal* 10 (2007): 1–31; Gerrit Jasper Schenk, Disaster Research: Concepts, Methods and Case Studies,’

- Historical Social Research* 32 (2007): 9–31; Franz Mauelshagen, ‘Disaster and Political Culture in Germany (Since 1500)’ in *Natural Disasters*, 41–75; Michael Kempe, ‘“Mind the Next Flood!” Memories of Natural Disasters in Northern Germany from the Sixteenth Century to the Present,’ *The Medieval History Journal* 10 (2007): 327–54; Christian Rohr, ‘Man and Natural Disaster in the Late Middle Ages: The Earthquake in Carinthia and Northern Italy on 25 January 1348 and its Perception,’ *Environment and History* 9 (2003): 127–49; Elaine Fulton, ‘Acts of God. The Confessionalisation of Disaster in Reformation Europe,’ in *Historical Disasters in Context*, 54–74.
3. Wolfgang Behringer, *A Cultural History of Climate*, trans. Patrick Camiller (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010); William G. Naphy, *Plagues, Poisons, and Potions: Plague-Spreading Conspiracies in the Western Alps, c.1530–1640* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002); William G. Naphy and Penny Roberts, eds, *Fear in Early Modern Society* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997).
 4. Anthony Oliver-Smith and Susanna M. Hoffman, eds, *Catastrophe and Culture: The Anthropology of Disaster* (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, 2002), 3, 24.
 5. Franz Mauelshagen, ‘Flood Disasters and Political Culture at the German North Sea Coast: A Long-term Historical Perspective,’ *Historical Social Research* 3 (2007), 133–144; Marie Luisa Allemeyer, ‘Kein Land ohne Deich ...!’ *Lebenswelten einer Küstengesellschaft in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2006); Greg Bankoff, *Cultures of Disaster. Society and Natural Hazard in the Philippines* (London: Routledge, 2003).
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 7. Andrew Cunningham and Ole Peter Grell, *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse: Religion, War, Famine, and Death in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Elaine Fulton and Penny Roberts, ‘The Hand of God: Reactions to Crisis and Natural Disasters in Pre-Modern Europe,’ in *History at the End of the World? History, Climate*

- Change and the Possibility of Closure*, ed. Mark Levine, Rob Johnson and Penny Roberts (Troubadour/Humanities E-books, 2010); and see note 3, above.
8. Jennifer Spinks and Charles Zika, 'Introduction,' in *The Four Horseman: Apocalypse, Death and Disaster*, ed. Cathy Leahy, Jennifer Spinks and Charles Zika (Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria, 2012), 1–13.
 9. On the visual material, see Frances Carey, ed., *The Apocalypse and the Shape of Things to Come*, exhibition catalogue (London: British Museum Press, 1999). On the widespread textual culture of apocalyptic thought, see Denis Crouzet, *Les Guerriers de Dieu. La violence au temps des troubles de religion (vers 1525–vers 1610)*, 2 vols in 1 (Seysssel: Champ Vallon, 1990); Irene Backus, *Reformation Readings of the Apocalypse: Geneva, Zurich, Wittenberg* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Robin Bruce Barnes, *Prophecy and Gnosis: Apocalypticism in the Wake of the Lutheran Reformation* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988).
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 13. From the vast literature on disaster, emotions and trauma, the following works have been helpful: Jack Saul, *Collective Trauma, Collective Healing: Promoting Community Resilience in the Aftermath of Disaster* (New York: Routledge, 2014); Colin Wastell, *Understanding Emotion and Trauma: Dealing with Trauma using an Emotion-Focused Approach* (Crows Nest, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 2005); Froma Walsh, *Strengthening Family Resilience* (New York: Guilford, 2006).

14. The symposium was held at the University of Melbourne, September 1–2, 2012. It accompanied the opening of an exhibition co-curated by Petra Kayser, Cathy Leahy, Jennifer Spinks and Charles Zika. See Cathy Leahy, Jennifer Spinks and Charles Zika, eds, *The Four Horsemen: Apocalypse, Death and Disaster*, exhibition catalogue (Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria, 2012).

PART I

Conceptualising Disaster, Providence,
Apocalypse and Emotions

Deciphering Divine Wrath and Displaying Godly Sorrow: Providentialism and Emotion in Early Modern England

Alexandra Walsham

On 30 November 1586, the Suffolk market town of Beccles was consumed by a devastating fire. Starting in a chimney and blown by a blustery wind, it quickly spread to other buildings and raged out of control for nearly 24 hours, reducing the market place, parish church and 80 houses to smouldering ashes. In the wake of the conflagration two ballads appeared. Set to mournful tunes, both attributed the catastrophe to divine wrath at human iniquity and urged those who meditated upon the plight of its victims and the dismal spectacle of its ruins to learn a religious lesson from the terrible calamity that had befallen this once ‘stately town’. Adopting the persona of Beccles itself, Thomas Deloney’s *Proper newe sonet* began:

With sobbing sighes and trickling teares
My state I doe lament
Perceiving how Gods heavie wrath
Against my sinnes is bent

A. Walsham
Faculty of History, The University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK

Let all men viewe my woefull fall
 And rue my woefull case
 And learne hereby in speedy sort
 repentaunce to embrace.¹

News pamphlets reporting the ‘woeful news’ of other settlements devoured by flames reiterated the same providential and moral common-places and deployed the same distinctive emotional register of lugubrious sorrow. And in turn these closely echoed the lachrymose tone of tracts and sermons composed by Protestant ministers in the wake of similar events. Preaching on the Sunday after a fire destroyed much of Banbury in Oxfordshire in March 1628, its vicar, William Whately, similarly called upon its occupants to grieve and weep, not for their material losses and physical sufferings, but for the offences and transgressions that had stirred up the Lord’s displeasure and induced Him to smite them so severely. Taking the text of John 5:14 and deploying what he called ‘the language of tears’, he repeatedly implored his auditors to ‘Sinne no more, least a worse thing come unto thee’.²

This essay explores the emotional complexion of providentialism in post-Reformation England through a study of the printed texts engendered by natural disasters such as fires, floods, storms, and earthquakes. Setting aside theoretical debates about whether or not emotion has a biological base and is a transcendent element of human experience, it concentrates instead on the ways in which it was expressed and by which it was provoked in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. While we cannot access the feelings of people in the past in an unmediated fashion, by exploring their semantics and grammar we can learn something about the religious and cultural environments by which they were shaped and constructed.³ It is easy to dismiss the linguistic traces of early modern ‘affections’ and ‘passions’ as merely formulaic, but generic and rhetorical convention is less an obstacle to understanding emotion than a critical tool by which it can be investigated. The familiar tropes of the dozens of ‘doleful ditties’, ‘lamentable relations’ and jeremiads that emanated from the presses and pulpits in the aftermath of calamities should not breed contempt but instead be the subject of our particular attention. It is also necessary to discard the post-Cartesian polarities we have inherited and to recognise the porous boundaries between the literal and metaphorical, body and mind, thought and the world in early modern society.

I

Providence was not the only lens through which early modern English people viewed catastrophic events of which they were ear- and eye-witnesses.⁴ As the vocabulary of texts reporting them reflects, contemporary outlooks were highly eclectic. Some spoke of them as a consequence of the haphazard operations of fortune and chance or the remorseless chain of fate; others invoked astrological and demonological explanations and attributed them to malign conjunctions of planetary bodies and the malicious spells cast by witches. The very word disaster literally meant ‘ill-starred’.⁵ Others thought and wrote of the ‘ordinary course’ of nature as if it were an autonomous force and described the geological and meteorological causes of earth tremors, outbreaks of wild and tempestuous weather, and overflowing rivers and seas that submerged vast tracts of agricultural land. Nor did they ignore the agency of human beings, whose incompetence and negligence were immediately responsible for careless domestic accidents that resulted in mass devastation: the old woman who discarded her bed straw into a grate that still contained hot coals; the artisan’s apprentice who over-stoked the furnace and went out to play with his friends; the two inhabitants of a thatched cottage cooking pancakes which caught fire and ignited the roof.⁶

But preachers and pamphleteers were quick to reprove those who resorted to rival ideologies to account for calamities, and at pains to stress that whatever the secondary causes of events, their first author was the Almighty himself. His supernatural finger could be detected at work and he used the elements and his creatures as the ‘Artillerie of His vengeance’.⁷ Violent winds such as those experienced during the winter of 1612–13 were examples of the Lord pouring ‘forth the consuming vials of his incensed heave Indignation, upon all the misgoverned sonnes of sinfull men’.⁸ Earthquakes like the one that destroyed the Westphalian city of Munster in the same year were ‘Flagella Dei, his Rods which hee ties up in bundels against some more terrible execution’.⁹ Floods in East Anglia and Wales and fires in East Dereham and Woburn were described as ‘lively documentes’ and ‘legible characters’ of His rage against mankind. In the face of the outrageous enormities and flagrant impiety practised by the members of English society it was no wonder that God was roused to violent exasperation.¹⁰ Sabbath-breaking, drunkenness, swearing, idleness, covetousness and sins had fuelled the flames of his fury and provoked him to punish villages, towns, cities and the nation at large.

They were the chief reason why the Lord now had a controversy with England, as with ancient Israel before it. Scripture provided many precedents and templates for understanding these manifestations of the divine passion of anger: from the story of Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed by fire and brimstone to the Flood that had drowned the world in the days of Noah, and from the plagues that he had visited upon Old Testament kingdoms to the destruction of Jerusalem.¹¹ If such catastrophes were ominous prognostications and ‘domb warnings’ of heavy temporal punishments, they were also eschatological signs that the end was nigh.¹² Guided by the book of Revelation, some contemporaries regarded such calamities as harbingers of the impending Apocalypse. According to Abraham Fleming, the earthquake that shook southern England and the capital in April 1580 was an alarm bell from heaven, a ‘bright burning beacon’ to warn wise virgins to trim their lamps against the coming of the Bridegroom; the puritan divine Thomas Wilcox saw a fire that destroyed Woburn in Bedfordshire in 1595 as a precursor of the Last Judgment and the Second Coming.¹³

Yet balladmongers, pamphleteers and preachers consistently claimed that such disasters were simultaneously evidence of God’s overwhelming love for humankind. They were the gentle corrections by which, like a tender-hearted and affectionate father, he sought to wean his wayward children from sin and redeem them. By the fire at Banbury, William Whately told his congregation, the Lord had ‘lovingly smitten us’.¹⁴ The conflagration at Bury St Edmunds in 1608 was similarly proof of his benevolence and of his tendency to ‘chastise farre underneath the rate of our misdeedes’: such ‘scourges and afflictions’ should be accounted ‘as easie messengers to call us homewards’ and return to the fold, like a prodigal son (Fig. 2.1).¹⁵ Such disasters gave expression to the charitable hatred of the deity.

Frightening tremors like the one that rocked Coventry in 1626 were only ever sent for instruction, to rouse people from the ‘Cradle of Securitie, wherein we have beene long rocked asleepe’.¹⁶ Such ‘subsidiary judgments’ were ‘Medicinal, not mortal’.¹⁷ They attested to the long-suffering patience and paternal indulgence of the Almighty, who sent warnings before he struck fatal blows, chastened those whom he loved, and mitigated his just and righteous severity with mercy. The God they envisaged fused the implacable Jehovah of the Hebrew Scriptures and the tender father evoked in the Christian gospels and epistles: he had mixed emotions.

The miracles that lay and clerical writers discerned in the midst of these catastrophes were a further reflection of these features of the divine personality.¹⁸ Many pamphlets and sermons incorporated extraordinary stories of unexpected preservation that were the Lord's means of communicating hope, combating despair and providing consolation in the midst of terrible tragedy. Thus an infant survived the floods in Monmouthshire in 1607 when the cradle in which it was sleeping floated on top of the swift flowing waters and was carried to safety by a cat acting as the 'steres-man'.¹⁹ Others were 'strangely saved' by 'Gods good providence' from drowning by clinging onto debris and the carcasses of sheep.²⁰ In the same way, the schoolhouse in Tiverton had been singled out and protected from the raging fire swallowing up the residences around it. Together with the preservation of 20 or 30 humble dwellings of the poor of the town, this

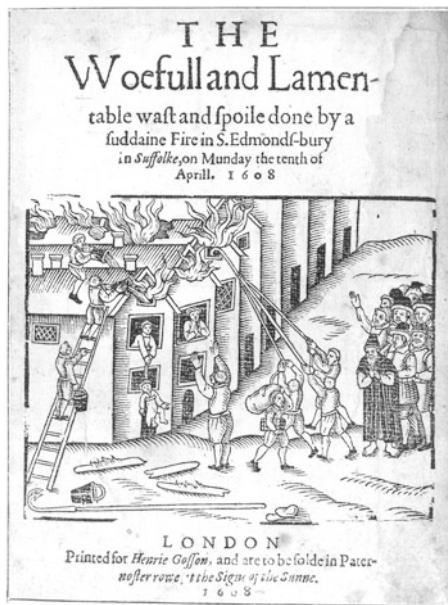


Fig. 2.1 *The woefull and lamentable wast and spoile done by a suddaine fire in S. Edmonds-bury in Suffolke, on Munday the tenth of Aprill. 1608* (London: [E. Allde] for Henry Gosson, 1608), title-page. British Library, London: C. 192.a. 128

was reminiscent of the deliverance of the three children out of the fiery furnace in the book of Daniel and ‘a settled wonder for ensuing times’.²¹ It was compelling evidence of divine compassion and pity.

However, in deploying the language of human emotions to describe the mental outlook and behaviour of God, such texts were ostensibly at odds with a fundamental tenet of the Protestant doctrine of Providence. It was a central axiom of the theology of Calvin and his English disciples that God was an omnipotent and omniscient being, completely beyond the feeble comprehension of men and women. If his operations seemed baffling, arbitrary, fickle and even vindictive and deceitful, this was simply a function of the fact that they were being judged by inappropriate standards. Mere human beings could never fathom the mysterious and inscrutable purposes of the Almighty, and they should not try to do so.²² Preachers reproved the tendency to conceptualise the deity anthropomorphically as a species of popish idolatry and condemned visual depictions of him as a heinous contravention of the second commandment.²³ Some of the woodcuts that adorned the title-pages of pamphlets about catastrophes may have caused them discomfort: a tract about the devastation on fields of crops wrought by Thunder Hail and Lightning in the vicinity of Grimsby in Lincolnshire in 1616 incorporates a traditional image of Christ in judgment enthroned in a bolster of clouds. The accompanying figure brandishing arrows is probably Zeus, the Greek god of thunder.²⁴ Following the first of the Church of England’s Thirty-nine Articles, the Protestant clergy insisted that God was ‘without body, parts or passions’. He was of ‘a most constant and immutable nature’, said Arthur Dent, minister of South Shoebury in Essex, not prey to the ‘passions and affections’ that animated and distracted his creatures.²⁵

Nevertheless, clergy and laity alike consistently spoke as if the Lord did have feelings. They did so in imitation of the Bible and with the sanction of leading guides to the art of pulpit oratory. In his influential handbook *The Art of prophesying*, the famous Elizabethan puritan divine William Perkins recommended this as a legitimate rhetorical technique. The term he employed to describe this was ‘Anthropo-pathia’, which he defined as ‘a sacred Metaphor, whereby those things, that are properly spoken of a man, are by a similitude attributed unto God’. One could refer to his hands, arms, feet, eyes and nostrils also to his benevolence, anger, and irritation. Such strategies were permissible, indeed necessary, because the objective of preaching was not merely to instruct a body of auditors but also to animate ‘godly affections’ and ‘motions’. This was a critical instru-

ment by which the Lord brought His elect not just to knowledge of the gift of faith He had bestowed upon them but to internal experiential proof of the workings of the Holy Spirit within their souls.²⁶

As Arnold Hunt has shown, Protestants conceived of preaching as an engine of sanctification, by which people were called to the state of grace to which they had been predestined and by which others were revealed as inexcusable reprobates. It is wrong to think of sermons as dry-as-dust discourses designed to engage the intellect and reason alone.²⁷ Theorists such as Andreas Hyperius insisted that sermons delivered like civic orations or academic lectures were incapable of moving men and women to real comprehension of Christ's redeeming sacrifice and to sincere amendment of life.²⁸ Perkins spoke of prophesying as 'Flexanima, that allurer of the soule' and said that every preacher and prophet stood in the room of God. It was necessary that he hid human wisdom and had 'an inward feeling of the doctrine to be delivered'. For just as 'wood that is capable of fire, doth not burne, unlesse fire be put to it', so the preacher 'must first bee godly affected him selfe, who would stirre up godly affections in other men'.²⁹ He should strive to be a vessel and conductor of powerful emotions—shame, love, desire, hope and joy. In *The faithful shepherd*, the Somerset divine Richard Bernard described other methods of achieving this effect: 'Prosopopeia; the feigning of a person: when we bring in dead men speaking: or give voice unto senselesse things' could be especially 'patheticall and mooving'.³⁰ William Fenner's *A treatise of the affections* of 1642 went even further in encouraging modulations of the tone, forms of histrionic gesture and other techniques that would arouse sermon goers to a pitch of fervour, catharsis and zeal. To preach like 'a frigid and cold Teacher', declared Fenner, was to preach 'but the dead corps of the Truth'.³¹ Some contemporaries were critical of melodramatic and theatrical modes of delivery,³² but most shared the conviction that sermons were like 'bellowes' which inflamed the 'coales' of men's hearts.³³ They modelled themselves on Old Testament prophets like Isaiah, Zephaniah, Amos, and Hosea whose 'emotion of spirit' they mimicked.³⁴ The jeremiads they delivered to communities afflicted by disaster, as well as to the microcosm of the nation assembled at public pulpits like Paul's Cross in London, were intended to win the praise of 'tears' rather than 'tongues'.³⁵ Filled with anguished and impassioned particles of speech, they endeavoured to instil in their hearers a profound sense of penitence and grief. One contemporary reader of Whately's *Sinne no more* described it as an 'affectionate sermon' and thought that if it 'were a little alter'd & reprinted' it would

be ‘of great use to the people of Tiverton & Blandford & else where now in calamity & distress’.³⁶ The dominant preaching culture of Elizabethan and Jacobean England was, in Hunt’s words, ‘a culture of affectivity’.³⁷

Ephemeral news pamphlets and songs likewise took their cue from the prophetic books of the Bible and sought to stir the emotions of their hearers and readers. They did so by painting a ‘lively picture’ of human misery and physical devastation—of children and animals swept to their deaths, of the blackened shells of incinerated cities, and of landscapes scarred and contorted by tempests and earthquakes. When Tiverton in Devon was burnt to the ground in 1598 and again in 1612 journalists evoked the wailing cries, grief-stricken moans, and wringing hands of those who watched their homes and livelihoods perish. ‘If with the eye of pittie we can endure to behold this beautifull towne turned into a Chaos of confusion, without teare bestained cheeks ... wee shall be thought more hard-hearted then untamed Panthers’.³⁸ Consumed by fire in August 1613, Dorchester was likewise left as ‘a heape of ashes for travellers that passe by to sigh at’.³⁹ According to a ballad of 1601, ‘A sadder sight was never seen with any mortal eyes’ than the devastated spire of Christ’s Church in Norwich shaken down by a violent thunderclap.⁴⁰ Set to solemn and ponderous tunes such as ‘Fortune my Foe’ (or ‘Aim not too High’), ‘doleful ditties’ of this kind enabled their readers to experience the horror, agony and fear of the eye-witnesses vicariously and sought to bring them to a ‘true touch and feeling’ of the sins that had drawn down divine wrath, as with cords and cart-ropes.⁴¹ Pamphlets about providential judgments published by the stationer John Trundle invariably bore the words ‘Reade and Tremble’ (Fig. 2.2) and title-page woodcuts graphically depicting the woes of disaster victims commanded those who perused them to ‘Behold the miserable estate of these poor drowned Creatures’ (Fig. 2.3).⁴² If these were viewed with ‘spiritual eyes’, such spectacles could not fail to produce deep remorse and real contrition.⁴³

II

The repentance for which preachers and pamphleteers called so earnestly requires closer scrutiny. Sermons, tracts and ballads endlessly reiterated the message that the penitence and prayers of the faithful could appease divine indignation, stay the hand of the Almighty from striking, and stave off future punishments. In the story of Jonah, whose tireless prophesying induced Nineveh to put on sackcloth and ashes and thereby reversed

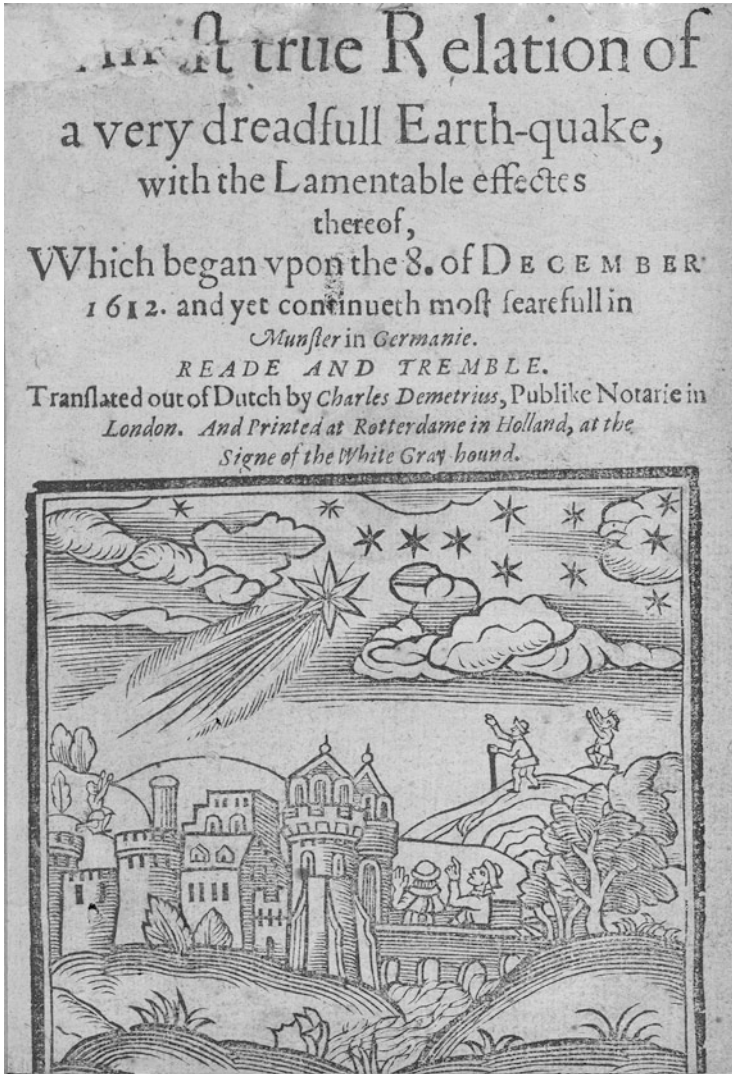


Fig. 2.2 *A most true relation of a very dreadfull earth-quake with the lamentable effectes thereof, vvhich began vpon the 8. of December 1612 and yet continueth most fearefull in Munster in Germanie*, trans. Charles Demetrius (Rotterdam [London]: [T. Snodham], [1612?]), title-page. Bodleian Library, Oxford: 4° L 70(1) Art



Fig. 2.3 *Behold the miserable estate of these poor drowned creatures, in More strange newes: of wonderfull accidents hapning by the late ouerflowings of waters, in Summerset-shire, Gloucestershire, Norfolke, and other places of England* (London: W[illiam] J[aggard] for Edward White, 1607), sig. A2v. British Library, London: C. 32.c.4

God’s decision to destroy it, they found evidence that repentance could be an effective mechanism for deflecting his wrath.⁴⁴ News reporters sometimes suggested that this could have near-automatic efficacy, but ordained ministers and preachers were only marginally more subtle when expounding this theme. Despite the axiom that the course of events had been pre-ordained at the beginning of time, they implied that the Lord might be prevailed upon to change his mind and to save a city, community or nation from temporal or eternal destruction. In learned tomes of formal theology, ministers acknowledged that God had already foreseen the response

of the populace and built this into his original scheme, but in the heat of a crisis they found it pastorally imperative to leave their hearers and readers with the impression that such threats were conditional and that repentance could persuade the deity to lift his menacing sword.⁴⁵ Special liturgies composed for public and private use after calamities such as outbreaks of plague and the earthquake of 1580 also encouraged the view that the Lord's fierce anger might be slaked by renewed piety and by fasting and prayer.⁴⁶ To do otherwise would have been to sow the seeds of helplessness and despair.

Such texts often glossed over the fact that true repentance was not something that human beings could do of their own volition. It was a supernatural work of conversion, a gift given by God that could only be practised by those he had chosen for salvation. 'Before we can powre out one teare into Gods bottle', said Daniel Dyke, 'God must power the water of his spirit upon the dry and healthy ground of our hearts'.⁴⁷ Commonly described as 'godly sorrow', in Protestant thought the concept of repentance had an inherently emotional dimension.⁴⁸ It involved a kind of internal movement or upheaval of the heart and soul. As George Meriton declared in a sermon published in 1607, it was necessary for sinners to 'suffer an Earth-quake within them'.⁴⁹ It was essential for the Christian to feel that a transformation had occurred: assurance of election was acquired through affective sensation. The worst thing was to experience no stirrings of emotion at all: the spiritual insensibility of a 'stony heart' could be taken as a sure sign that God had predestined one to everlasting torment. It was a terrifying token of the decree of reprobation.⁵⁰

Repentance, moreover, brought forth external fruits in human behaviour. As Alexander Udny, a royal chaplain and minister of Hawking in Kent, reminded his hearers in the late 1620s, in Hebrew the word meant 'to send forth many teares'.⁵¹ Although they warned that excessive weeping could breed the suspicion that it was done for outward show alone,⁵² it is striking to discover just how much spiritual significance the early modern Protestant clergy attached to crying. The bitter remorse of Peter after denying Christ three times offered a prototype for the grief that accompanied the conversion of a sinner.⁵³ John Lesly's *Epithrene* (1631) spoke of weeping as a work of regeneration, 'supernaturall Grace', 'the greatest and safest Guard of Mans Life' and described tears as 'Tokens of the Lords love' of the elect and 'the only water that quenbeth the heate of Gods anger'. John Featley's *A fountaine of teares* of 1646 argued that 'it hath bene a sin not to weepe'.⁵⁴ Looking back at the emotive displays of penitence

practised by Old Testament heroes like Kings Hezekiah and David and the prophet Jeremiah, godly Protestants saw groans, sobs and sighs as part of ‘an economy of sentiment that could influence God’.⁵⁵ When preachers such as William Whately called upon their auditors to bewail the iniquities that had induced the Almighty to send vengeance from heaven they were not just speaking figuratively.⁵⁶ And they moved seamlessly between addressing individuals and the promiscuous congregations that comprised the Church of England, using the languages of corporate repentance and personal salvation, penitence and predestination, almost interchangeably.⁵⁷

How did people respond to the disasters that unfolded around them? The sources in which such reactions are described are permeated by inherited *topoi*. News pamphlets about floods frequently insisted that the inhabitants believed that they were being engulfed by a ‘second deluge’.⁵⁸ When severe storms wrought havoc in many English counties in 1589, it was reported that many ‘did rise owt of their bedds and fall to prayenge and weeping thinekinge sure that the later day’ had come.⁵⁹ There was evidently much ‘prophesieng of Doomes day’ in the wake of the 1580 earthquake and the city annals of Coventry recorded that this year there was ‘a disease all the land over called speedy repentance’.⁶⁰ Shortly after it occurred, John Aylmer, Bishop of London, reported to the Privy Council that the metropolitan populace was ‘much moved with the present warninge’, though he suspected that it would be but a ‘ix [nine] daies wondre’, and quoted the Latin maxim *Cito arescit lacryma* (‘a tear soon dries up’).⁶¹

Despite the stereotypes that shape such accounts, it would be unwise to dismiss the suggestion that calamities provoked temporary surges of piety and apocalyptic anxiety. Preachers often complained about the ‘counterfeit’, ‘hypocritical’ and ‘lip repentance’ practised by the majority when they were scourged with affliction. Perkins reproved the tendency of many to return ‘to their old byas againe’, like Pharaoh, when the immediate danger was past.⁶² Though they might ‘lament with Dragons, and mourne like Ostriges’, declared George Meriton in a sermon of 1607, most lacked divine grace and were no better than Cain, Esau, and Judas.⁶³ Servile fear of divine anger and howls of anguish were merely a form of worldly sorrow. ‘[H]ee that will repent in good earnest, must not hang down his heade like a Bulrushe for a day onely, and so have done, nor crie from the teeth outward, Lord have mercie on me’, admonished Arthur Dent.⁶⁴ What was required was a genuine feeling of being wounded in spirit rather than mere ‘crocodile tears’.⁶⁵ The Protestant clergy saw the widespread

phenomenon of superficial penitence as indicative of a profound misunderstanding of the personality of God: too many profane worldlings believed that He was indulgent and soft-hearted, a merciful deity ‘easily entreated by their pitifull moaning, to pardon their sinnes’. In the words of the Suffolk minister, Bartimaeus Andrews, they erroneously supposed that he was ‘sweet and figgy’.⁶⁶

Some, though, do appear to have yielded the affective fruits of true repentance in response to the ‘visible sermons’ sent by God in the guise of catastrophes and the verbal ones composed by pamphleteers and ministers. Eulogistic biographies and puritan diaries provide a portrait of the emotional outpourings to which Protestant piety sometimes gave rise. When John Rogers acted out God’s threat to confiscate the Bible from the ungrateful and sinful English people in his pulpit at Dedham in Essex the congregation was so overcome that the place became ‘a mere Bochim’, the people being ‘deluged with their own tears’. Afterwards, one man was ‘fain to hang a quarter of an hour upon the neck of his horse weeping before he had power to mount’.⁶⁷ Some of those who heard Thomas Playfere preach at the Spittle on Easter Tuesday 1595 apparently wept bitterly in ‘true remorse and sorrow for their sinnes’, while many others had ‘water standing in their eies’.⁶⁸ Mary Rich, Countess of Warwick, cried two or three times a day, convinced that this was a testimony of saving faith and a supernatural token of divine beneficence. Her eyes were ‘more fluid than the springs of Pisgah’. After hearing a sermon about the Great Fire of London in 1666 she wept buckets of tears and the sight of the devastated city two months later led to a further overflowing of godly grief.⁶⁹ Mimicking the lachrymose conventions of Scripture, these episodes reveal a distinctly Protestant variation on the medieval theme of holy tears and spiritual compunction.⁷⁰

Such examples suggest that traditional contrasts between the emotional quality of late medieval and baroque Catholic religiosity and its more austere and cerebral Protestant counterpart have been overstated. Though each was underpinned by different presuppositions about the relationship between penitence and the passions, the episodes of weeping in which the hotter sort of Protestants engaged bear comparison with those provoked by the rural and global missions of the mendicant friars and Jesuits.⁷¹ They also complicate the picture painted by Susan Karant Nunn in her subtle and sensitive study *The Reformation of Feeling*, questioning her suggestion that Lutheran and reformed Protestantism curtailed overt display of the emotions in favour of a more ‘thoroughgoing tranquillity’, privileging

intellectual rigour and ‘calm, text-based declamation’ over an evangelical appeal to the affections. Bearing the imprint of Norbert Elias’s influential thesis regarding the progressive rise of self-constraint, her findings are difficult to reconcile with Alec Ryrie’s recent evocation of the rich texture and high temperature of Protestant devotion in post-Reformation Britain. ‘Far from being suspicious of emotions’, he writes, the godly ‘exalted them’, constantly distancing themselves from ‘stoicall apathy’.⁷² With John Downame, they actively eschewed those who affected a ‘senseless stupidity’ in the midst of affliction.⁷³

Like eighteenth-century Methodism, then, Elizabethan and Jacobean puritanism was a ‘heart religion’ which saw emotion as a key ‘medium of communication between the individual and God’.⁷⁴ It was what William Tyndale, writing in the early sixteenth century, had described as a ‘felynge faith’, attentive to the senses and alert to the inward motions of the soul.⁷⁵ And for all the complaints of the clergy about ‘crocodile tears’ and ‘hypocritical repentance’, moments of emergency had the potential to bring a much broader swathe of the population into temporary membership of the distinctive emotional community created by fervent Protestantism. They had the capacity to bring them under the umbrella of affective Calvinist piety.

III

How did the relationship between providentialism and the emotions evolve in the latter half of the seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries, against the backdrop of the religious, intellectual and cultural shifts that comprised what may be called the English Enlightenment? Historians are no longer as confident as they once were that the years after 1660 witnessed a rapid ‘disenchantment of the world’ and the emergence of a secularised society. But it is harder to dismiss the suggestion that religion changed in character as the dominant strand of Protestant theology drifted away from the rigidities of Calvinist predestination in an Arminian direction and allowed more room for human free will. This coincided with scientific developments that were recasting the universe as a machine and reducing the scope for irregular interventions in its operation. One effect of these tendencies and trends was to transform God from a busy controller and unpredictable meddler in human affairs into a kind of divine clockmaker—a mild-mannered spectator on the workings of the world. In the course of the period, argue John Somerville and Blair Worden, contemporaries

moved away from conceiving the deity as a vengeful and awesome dictator towards thinking of him as a benign and friendly monitor preoccupied with promoting the happiness of his creatures. He became more distant but also less frightening, more disposed to display mercy than to mete out sharp discipline. In short, to use the language of emotion, he became gentler and kinder.⁷⁶

These adjustments occurred against the backdrop of simultaneous and equally complex transformations in the sphere of sensibility. The rise of 'rational religion' in Anglican circles was accompanied by a vigorous reaction against all forms of enthusiasm. Ostentatious outpourings of emotion were frowned upon by the ecclesiastical establishment and marginalised using the vocabulary of mental illness.⁷⁷ The evangelical style of preaching popularised by Elizabethan and early Stuart puritan ministers fell out of favour, as the sermon ceased to be regarded as a mechanism for imparting saving knowledge and conveying the charisma of the Holy Spirit and became regarded simply as a branch of rhetoric.⁷⁸ At the same time, 'a new economy of body language' was becoming established which altered the way in which people manifested their feelings, one dimension of which was growing distrust of immoderate weeping. Marjory Lange has examined how 'poetic expression of tearful creativity' dwindled after the 1650s and Anne Vincent Buffault speaks of a 'transformation of the status of tears', describing how masculine restraint and stoicism was increasingly contrasted with feminine (and effeminate) sentimentality. Religious emotion was in the process of being relocated from the public domain to the private realm, at least within the religious mainstream, a process that occurred in parallel with the retreat of belief in the supernatural from open debate to discreet speculation.⁷⁹ Although special liturgies continued to be issued by the official Church in response to disasters during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the notion that the wrath of the Almighty might be quenched by prayer retained its vitality,⁸⁰ 'godly sorrow' was progressively internalised. Copious crying ceased to be regarded as a sign of sincere repentance and over time new codes of civility and gentility required men in particular to display a stiff upper lip in the face of adversity.⁸¹

Within the parameters of a short essay, there is no space to investigate how far responses to disaster and catastrophe reflected these gradual and subtle modifications of the shape and colour of late seventeenth-century religious culture, or to assess the extent to which the rhetoric of sermons and newsprint lost its lachrymose quality. But it is appropriate to close by

setting an agenda for further investigation: if language is a critical medium through which emotion is represented and constructed, variations in the lexicon and key of texts about calamitous events may offer insight into its constant fluctuations and perpetually ‘moving frontiers’ and cast light on the changing complexion of Protestant religiosity.⁸² They may offer a perspective on how English society constantly remodelled divine providence in accordance with its own cultural values and preoccupations. As we have seen, the Bible provided a blueprint for how people should feel as well as what they should think and do. The passions people imputed to God and the ways they interpreted and responded to them illuminate the nature of the spiritual and emotional communities of which they were members, as well as the elliptical twists and turns these took in the centuries following the Reformation.

NOTES

1. D. Sterrie, *A briefe sonnet declaring the lamentation of Beckles, a market towne in Suffolke* (London: Robert Robinson for Nicholas Colman, 1586); T[homas] D[eloney], *A proper newe sonet declaring the lamentation of Beckles, a market towne in Suffolke, which was in the great winde upon S. Andrewes eve pitifully burned with fire* (London: Robert Robinson for Nicholas Colma[n], [1586]).
2. William Whately, *Sinne no more. Or a sermon preached in the parish church of Banbury Tuesday the fourth of March last past, upon occasion of a most terrible fire that happened there on the sabbath day immediately precedent* (London: [Eliot’s Court Press] for George Edwards, 1628), 2.
3. Some key interventions include: Peter N. Stearns and Carol Z. Stearns, ‘Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards,’ *American Historical Review* 90 (1985): 813–36; Richard M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Gail Kern Paster, Katherine Rowe, and Mary Floyd-Wilson, eds., *Reading the Early Modern Passions: Essays in the Cultural History of Emotion* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006); Penelope Gouk and Helen Hills, eds., *Representing Emotions: New Connections in the Histories of Art, Music and Medicine* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); John Corrigan, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Emotion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Ute Frevert, *Emotions in History—Lost and Found* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2011); Ute Frevert et al., *Emotional Lexicons: Continuity and*

- Change in the Vocabulary of Feeling 1700–2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).
4. On providentialism, see my *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), esp. ch. 3.
 5. See *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, s.v. ‘disaster, n.’, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/53561>.
 6. Thomas Wilcox, *A short, yet a true and faithfull narration of the fearefull fire that fell in the towne of Wooburne, in the countie of Bedford, on Saturday the 13. of September last, anno 1595* (London: [Widdow Orwin, for Thomas Man], 1595), 14; *Wofull newes from the west-parts of England. Being the lamentable burning of the towne of Teverton* (London: T. S[nodham] for Thomas Pauier, 1612), sigs A3v-4r, C3r-v.
 7. *A most true relation of a very dreadfull earth-quake, with lamentable effectes thereof, which began upon the 8. of December 1612. and yet continueth most fearefull in Munster in Germanie*, trans. Charles Demetrius ([London: [T. Snodham], 1613]), sig. B3r.
 8. *The last terrible tempestuous windes and weather* (London: [Edward Alde and John Beale] for Joseph Hunt, 1613), sig. B2r.
 9. *A most true relation of a very dreadfull earth-quake*, sig. B3v.
 10. Arthur Gurney, *A doleful discourse and ruthful reporte of the greate spoyle and lamentable losses, by fire, in the towne of East Dearham* (London: Richard Bradocke, for Richarde Hollens, 1581); Wilcox, *Short ... and faithfull narration*, 25.
 11. On divine anger, see Barbara H. Rosenwein, ed., *Anger’s Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 233–34.
 12. *Gods warning to his people of England. By the great overflowing of the waters or floudes lately hapned in South-wales, and many other places* (London: [R. Blower] for W. Barley, and John Bayly, 1607), sig. A2r.
 13. Abraham Fleming, *A bright burning beacon, forewarning all wise virgins to trim their lampes against the comming of the bridegroome* (London: Henry Denham, 1580); Wilcox, *Short ... and faithfull narration*, 59–60.
 14. Whately, *Sinne No More*, 3, and see 15.
 15. *The woefull and lamentable wast and spoile done by a suddaine fire in S. Edmonds-bury in Suffolke, on Munday the tenth of April. 1608* (London: [E. Alde] for Henry Gosson, 1608), sig. B3v.
 16. *Motus Medi-terraneus. Or, a true relation of a fearefull and prodigious earthquake, which lately happened in the ancient citie of Coventrie* (London: [B. Alsop and T. Fawcet] for Henry Holland, 1626), 123.
 17. Thomas Adams, *The barren tree* (London: Augustine Mathewes for John Grismand, 1623), 46.

18. See Hartmut Lehmann, 'Miracles within Catastrophes: Some Examples from Early Modern Germany,' in *Signs, Wonders, Miracles: Representations of Divine Power in the Life of the Church*, ed. Kate Cooper and Jeremy Gregory (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2005), 321–34.
19. *1607 Lamentable newes out of Monmouthshire in Wales* (London: [Edward Allde] for W[illiam] W[elby], 1607), sig. D1v.
20. *Gods warning to his people of England*, 13.
21. *Wofull newes from the west-parts of England*, sig. B2r-v.
22. See the fuller discussion in Walsham, *Providence*, 8–15.
23. See, for example, John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1989), 1:100 (bk 1, ch. 11, §12); William Perkins, *A warning against the idolatry of the last times*, in his *Workes* (London and Cambridge: John Legatt and Cantrell Legge, 1616–18) 1:660, 677.
24. *Thunder haile, & lightni[ng] from heaven. Sent against certaine covetous persons, inhabitants of Humerstone [Lin]colneshire* (London, [1616]).
25. Gerald Bray, ed., *Documents of the English Reformation* (Cambridge: James Clarke and Co, 1994), 285; Arthur Dent, *The plaine mans path-way to heaven* (London: for Robert Dexter, 1601), 424.
26. William Perkins, *The arte of prophecying, or a treatise concerning the sacred and onely true manner and methode of preaching*, in his *Workes*, 2:656, 666.
27. Arnold Hunt, *The Art of Hearing: English Preachers and their Audiences, 1590–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), esp. 81–94. See also Mary Morrissey, *Politics and the Paul's Cross Sermons, 1558–1642* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 61–63.
28. Andreas Hyperius, *The practise of preaching, otherwise called the pathway to the pulpit*, trans. John Ludham (London: Thomas East, 1577), bk 1, ch. 16 (fols 41r–49v).
29. Perkins, *Arte of prophecying*, in *Workes*, 2: 645, 671.
30. Richard Bernard, *The faithful shepheard: or the shepheards faithfulness* (London: Arnold Hatfield for John Bill, 1607), 67.
31. William Fenner, *A treatise of the affections: or, the soules pulse* (London: R.H. for J. Rothwell, 1642), 9, 107–8.
32. See Perkins, *Arte of prophecying*, in *Workes*, 2: 672; Bernard, *Faithful shepheard*, 89.
33. Stephen Marshall, *A divine project to save a kingdome* (London: Richard Cotes for Stephen Bowtell, 1644), 40 [vere 44].
34. For this phrase used in connection with Jonah, see Henry Hall, *Heaven ravished: or a glorious prize, atchieved by an heroicall enterprize: as it was lately presented in a sermon to the honourable house of commons, at their sollemn fast, May 29. 1644* (London: J. Raworth, for Samuel Gellibrand, 1644), sig. A2r.

35. Quotation from Thomas Jackson, *Judah must into captivitie. Six sermons on Jerem. 7. 16* (London: J. Haviland for Godfrey Emondson and Nicholas Vavasour, 1622), sig. A3v. On Paul's Cross and prophetic sermons, see Walsham, *Providence*, ch. 6.
36. Whateley, *Sinne no more*, annotated title-page. Cambridge University Library copy, shelfmark Syn. 7.62.297.5.
37. Hunt, *Art of Hearing*, 92. See also Marjory E. Lange, *Telling Tears in the English Renaissance* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), chs 3–4.
38. *Wofull newes from the west-parts of England*, sigs B1r, B4v.
39. John Hilliard, *Fire from heaven ... With the fearefull burning of the towne of Dorchester upon Fridaye the 6. of August last 1613* (London: for John Trundle, 1613), sig. C4v.
40. *A newe ballad of the most wonderfull and strange fall of Christ's church pinnacle in Norwitch, the which was shaken downe by a thunder-clap on the 29 of Aprill 1601*, in *The Shirburn Ballads, 1585--1616*, ed. Andrew Clark (Oxford, 1907), 204–7.
41. *Miracle upon miracle. A true relation of the great floods which happened in Coventry, in Lynne, and other places* (London: [G. Eld] for Nathanael Fosbrook and John Wright, 1607), 12.
42. For example, Hilliard, *Fire from heaven*. The same words appear on the title page of *A most true relation of a very dreadfull earth-quake ... in Munster. More strange newes: of wonderfull accidents hapning by the late overflowings of waters, in Summerset-shire, Gloucestershire, Norfolke, and other places of England* (London: for John Trundle, [1607]), sig. A2v.
43. Whately, *Sinne no more*, 12.
44. Among other sermons on this theme, see Robert Wakeman, *Jonahs sermon and Ninevels repentance. A sermon preached at Pauls Crosse. Jun. 20. 1602 and now thought fit to bee published for our meditation in these times* (Oxford: Joseph Barnes, 1603).
45. See the fuller discussion in Walsham, *Providence*, 150–56.
46. See e.g. *The order of prayer upon Wednesdayes and Frydayes, to avert and turne Gods wrath from us, threatned by the late terrible earthquake, to be used in al parish churches* (London: Christopher Barker [and Henry Bynneman], 1580). These liturgies are now readily accessible in *National Prayers: Special Worship since the Reformation*, vol. 1, *Special Prayers, Fasts and Thanksgivings in the British Isles, 1533–1688*, ed. Natalie Mears, Alasdair Raffe, Stephen Taylor and Philip Williamson (with Lucy Bates) (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2013).
47. Daniel Dyke, *Two treatises. The one, of Repentance, the other of Christs temptations* (London: Edward Griffin for Ralph Mab, 1616), 6. See also Adam Harsnett, *Gods summons unto a general repentance* (London: John Dawson, 1640), esp. 11–12.

48. For this commonplace, see William Perkins, *Two treatises I. of the nature and practice of repentance. II. Of the combat of the flesh and spirit* (Cambridge: John Legatt, 1593), esp. 1; Francis Marbury, *Notes on the doctrine of repentance* (London: Peter Short, 1602), 16.
49. George Meriton, *A sermon of repentance* (London: [George Eld] for Thomas Clarke, 1607), sig. B3v. The predominant meaning of ‘emotion’ in the early modern period was ‘movement’, ‘disturbance’, ‘perturbation’ or upheaval. See *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, s.v. ‘emotion, n.’, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/61249>. Walter Montague, in *Miscellanea spiritualia or devout essayes* (London: for William Lee, Daniel Pakeman, and Gabriel Bedell, 1648), 76, wrote of the ‘motion’ and ‘emotion’ of ‘those who have the first fruits within themselves ... viz: some swelling and groaning within themselves’.
50. Arthur Dent, *A sermon of repentaunce. A verie godly and profitable sermon, preached at Lee in Essex* (London: for John Harison, 1583), sig. B5r: ‘except you feele a change & alteration in the bottom of your hart, of all your former lewd waies & misdemeanors you shall surely perish & be damned’. See also Alec Ryrie, *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), ch. 3.
51. Alexander Udny, *The voyce of the crier. Containing I. A denunciation of Gods Judgements. 2. An invitation to repentance to prevent the same* (London: T[homas] C[otes] for James Bowler, 1628), 85, citing Gen. 45:14; Jer. 9:10.
52. For reproof of ‘immoderate and affected weeping’, see John Lesly, *An epithrene: or voice of weeping* (London: A.M. for Humphrey Robinson, 1631), 60–64; Thomas Playfere, *The meane in mourning. A sermon preached at Saint Maries Spittle in London on Tuesday in Easter weeke. 1595* (London: Nicholas Okes for Matthew Law, 1616), 5–9.
53. See e.g. Charles Richardson, *The repentance of Peter and Judas. Together with the frailtie of the faithfull, and the fearefull ende of wicked hypocrites* (London: William Stansby, for Joseph Browne, 1612).
54. Lesly, *Epithrene*, 66, 133, 292, 88, 124 respectively; John Featley, *A fountaine of teares emptying it selfe into three rivelets, viz of compunction. compassion. devotion* (Amsterdam: for John Crosse, 1646), 2.
55. To borrow William A. Christian’s phrase in ‘Provoked Religious Weeping in Early Modern Spain,’ in *Religious Organization and Religious Experience*, ed. J. Davis (London: Academic Press, 1982), 97–114, at 98. On evangelical emotion as a ‘commodity’ offered in exchange for divine favour, see also John Corrigan, *Business of the Heart: Religion and Emotion in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), esp. ch. 9 (‘Prayerful Transactions’). See also Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, 187–95.

56. Whately, *Sinne no more*.
57. See Walsham, *Providence*, 305–10.
58. *Gods warning to his people of England*, sig. A2v.
59. As reported by a Shropshire chronicler, Shrewsbury School, ms. Mus X. 31, fol. 176r.
60. Fleming, *Bright burning beacon*, sig. O4v; *Records of Early English Drama: Coventry*, ed. R. W. Ingram (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981), 294.
61. John Strype, *Historical Collections of the Life and Acts of the Right Reverend Father in God, John Aylmer, Lord Bp of London in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1821), 51–52.
62. Perkins, *Two treatises*, 65–66. See also Richard Stock, *The doctrine and use of repentance* (London: F. Kyngston, for Edmund Weaver and W. Welby, 1610), 6–8.
63. Meriton, *Sermon of repentance*, sig. B2v.
64. Dent, *Sermon of repentaunce*, sig. A7r, and passim.
65. Udny, *Voyce of the cryer*, 87; Playfere, *Meane in mourning*, 97.
66. Bartimaeus Andrewes, *Certaine verie worthie, godly and profitable sermons, upon the fifth chapter of the Songs of Solomon* (London: Robert Waldegrauce, for Thomas Man, 1583), 166.
67. J. C. Miller, ed., *The Works of Thomas Goodwin, D.D., Sometime President of Magdalen College, Oxford* (Edinburgh: J. Nichol, 1861–5), 2:xvii–xviii. The biblical reference is to Judges 2:2, 5. Bochim was the place where the Israelites were rebuked by the angel of the Lord for making a covenant with the Canaanites. In response they wept and offered sacrifice to God.
68. Playfere, *Meane in mourning*, 117.
69. Raymond A. Anselment, ‘Mary Rich, Countess of Warwick, and the Gift of Tears,’ *Seventeenth Century* 22 (2007): 336–57, at 336 and 340. The allusion is to Pisgah, a place of sacrifice, mentioned in Deuteronomy 4:49.
70. See Sandra J. McEntire, *The Doctrine of Compunction in Medieval England: Holy Tears* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1980); Santha Bhattacharji, ‘Tears and Screaming: Weeping in the Spirituality of Marjorie Kempe,’ in *Holy Tears: Weeping in the Religious Imagination*, ed. Kimberley Christine Patton and John Stratton Hawley (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 229–41.
71. See Christian, ‘Provoked Religious Weeping’; and David Gentilcore, ‘“Adapt Yourselves to the People’s Capabilities”: Missionary Strategies, Methods and Impact in the Kingdom of Naples, 1600–1800,’ *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 45 (1994): 269–96, esp. 283–7; Trevor Johnson, ‘Blood, Tears and Xavier-Water: Jesuit Missionaries and Popular Religion in the Eighteenth-Century Upper Palatinate,’ in *Popular Religion in Germany and Central Europe, 1400–1800*, ed. Bob Scribner and Trevor

- Johnson (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), 183–202; Joseph Imorde, ‘Tasting God: The Sweetness of Crying in the Counter Reformation,’ in *Religion and the Senses in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Wietse de Boer and Christine Göttler (Brill: Leiden, 2013), 257–69. See also Sheila Page Bayne, *Tears and Weeping: An Aspect of Emotional Climate Reflected in Seventeenth-Century French Literature* (Tübingen and Paris: Gunter Narr Verlag and Editions Jean-Michel Place, 1981), esp. 34–43.
72. Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Feeling: Shaping the Religious Emotions in Early Modern Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 243, 254. Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Oxford: Blackwell, 1978). Rylie, *Being Protestant*, part I (‘The Protestant Emotions’). Leigh Eric Schmidt’s *Holy Fairs: Scottish Communion and American Revivals in the Early Modern Period* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989) stresses the highly emotional quality of Protestant Eucharistic piety.
 73. John Downname, *Consolations for the Afflicted* (London: John Beale for W. Welby, 1613), bk 2, ch. 1, §5.
 74. Phyllis Mack, *Heart Religion in the British Enlightenment: Gender and Emotion in Early Methodism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
 75. Tyndale, quoted in Matthew Milner, *The Senses and the English Reformation* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 239, and see 221–39.
 76. C. John Sommerville, *Popular Religion in Restoration England* (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1977), ch. 5, esp. 78–83; Blair Worden, ‘The Question of Secularization,’ in *A Nation Transformed: England after the Restoration*, ed. Alan Houston and Steve Pincus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 20–40, at 35–6. See also my ‘The Reformation and “The Disenchantment of the World” Reassessed,’ *Historical Journal* 51 (2008): 497–528.
 77. On rational religion and the reaction against enthusiasm, see John Spurr, ‘“Rational Religion” in Restoration England,’ *Journal of the History of Ideas* 49 (1988): 563–85; Michael Heyd, *Be Sober and Reasonable: The Critique of Enthusiasm in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995).
 78. Mary Morrissey, ‘Scripture, Style and Persuasion in Seventeenth-Century English Theories of Preaching,’ *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 53 (2002): 686–706, esp. 700–5.
 79. Anne Vincent-Buffault, *The History of Tears: Sensibility and Sentimentality in France* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991), at vii, 241. See also Lange, *Telling Tears*, at 245. For the retreat of the supernatural, see Jonathan Barry, ‘Public Infidelity and Private Belief? The Discourse of Spirits in Enlightenment Bristol,’ in *Beyond the Witch Trials: Witchcraft and Magic*

- in Enlightenment Europe*, ed. Owen Davies and Willem de Blecourt (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 117–43; Michael Hunter, ‘Magic, Science and Reputation: Robert Boyle, the Royal Society and the Occult in the Late Seventeenth Century,’ in his *Robert Boyle (1627–91): Scrupulosity and Science* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2000), 23–44, esp. 244.
80. See Mears et al., eds., *National Prayers*; and Philip Williamson, ‘State Prayers, Fasts and Thanksgivings: Public Worship in Britain 1830–1897,’ *Past & Present* 200 (2008): 121–74.
81. Bernard Capp, ‘“Jesus Wept” but Did the Englishman? Masculinity and Emotion in Early Modern England,’ *Past & Present* 224, no.1 (2014): 75–108.
82. Peter Burke, ‘Is there a Cultural History of Emotions?’ in Gouk and Hills, *Representing Emotions*, 35–47, at 42–3.

Disastro, Catastrophe, and Divine
Judgment: Words, Concepts and Images
for ‘Natural’ Threats to Social Order
in the Middle Ages and Renaissance

Gerrit Jasper Schenk

In medieval and Renaissance Europe crises and disasters were generally more common than today. Epidemics, price rises, famine and war seemed to have been the norm in this long period, at least it seems so from the descriptions of historians who have analysed this era. In this chapter, I will examine the words, terms and concepts that were used in medieval times to describe ‘natural’ disasters, illustrating my analysis with a number of images.¹ Rather than examine the terms used for crisis, disaster and catastrophe in general,² I address just a small selection. However, this is a crucial group, particularly as research on the concept of disaster and semantically related terms has paid little attention to the medieval millennium.³

I will first analyse some of the terms for earthquakes, floods or storm tides in the discursive contexts that were used in the Middle Ages and Renaissance in some European languages for phenomena categorised today as natural disasters.⁴ Then I will sketch out the way abstract, but

G.J. Schenk

History of the Middle Ages, Institut für Geschichte, Technische Universität
Darmstadt, Darmstadt, Germany

also emotionally-loaded, terms employed for ‘disaster’ and ‘catastrophe’ today, were used in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

I

The Latin-speaking Middle Ages used a myriad of specialised words, turns of phrase and concepts for individual types of natural disaster. Scholars adapted the concepts of late antiquity⁵ and called earthquakes *terrae motus*, a realistic term that has also survived in Romance languages.⁶ The term uses an essential feature, the movement of the earth, to characterise the designated phenomenon, similar to the term found in German from the late Middle Ages, *erdbidem*.⁷ This term was not associated with a specific interpretation. Occasionally variants in conceptualising the earthquake phenomenon display a shift from a mere description to a religious interpretation. For example, Isidor of Seville in the seventh century wrote of *terrae commotio* and Saba Malaspina in the thirteenth century of *orbis concussa*. There are terms indicating an allegorical understanding of the earthquake as a sign of God’s wrath.⁸

These more emotionally-loaded terms referred to Bible passages according to which earthquakes were understood as divine visitations (*visitatio Dei*) or divine judgment.⁹ Every Christian was, moreover, familiar with the earthquake during Christ’s crucifixion (Matthew 27:51f.) and the earthquake heralded in the Book of Revelation to mark the end of the world (Revelation 16:18). The interpretation of earthquakes as signs of God’s wrath at the sins of the world and as an admonition to repent was popularised by preachers and tracts, imaged in leaflets and portrayed in triptychs and block books, as for example, in the legendary *Fifteen Signs before the End of the World*.¹⁰ The picture formulas used here, which are in many cases abbreviations, communicate a simple and quickly understandable interpretation of earthquakes as signs of God’s anger, as the example of a German-language broadsheet about an earthquake in the Tuscan Mugello Valley on 12 June 1542 shows (Fig. 3.1).¹¹ The title-page includes a composite woodcut, which shows a collapsing city in a mountainous landscape in the lower half of the picture, whereas in the upper half, above the clouds, the symbols of the four evangelists in the two corners and the lamb in the middle symbolise the divine tribunal. The image does not describe the precise event, but emphasises the very common contemporary interpretation of earthquakes in general, as events that allude to the biblical Apocalypse and very likely evoked emotions like fear and perhaps a sense of guilt.

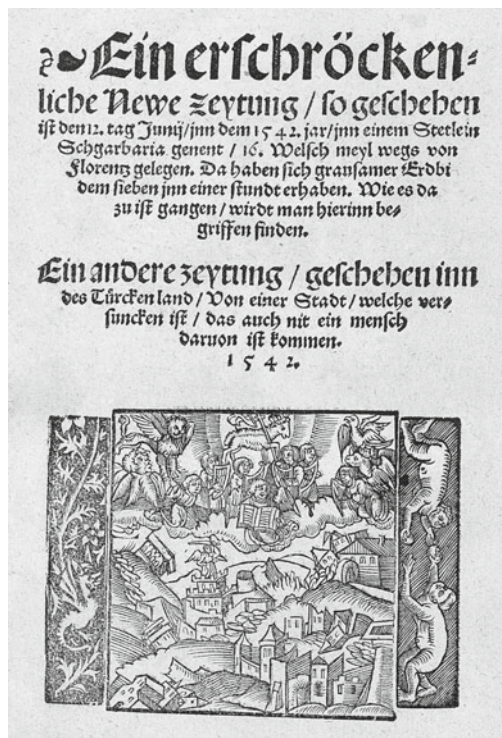


Fig. 3.1 Anonymous, *The Mugello earthquake* (Erfurt: Merten van Dolgen, 1542), title-page, broadsheet. Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel: H: YT 4.4° Helmst. (7)

Jörg Trempler recently argued that disasters only started to be illustrated as precise events in images after the Lisbon earthquake in 1755, and that the concept of catastrophe only came into being because of its visualisation as ‘pictorial act’ in the years after 1755.¹² This radically constructivist assumption is based on a modern and partly secularised understanding of (natural) disasters as turning points, which create a radical rupture between past and present conditions.¹³ In the sixteenth century the understanding of a ‘disaster’ as a defined moment of change was already rather common, as will be shown. The aim of the visualisation followed the religious conceptualisation of ‘disaster’—as a divine sign prior to the end of the world, which calls for repentance and personal change and thus marks

a turning point at another, more abstract, level. The earthquake of 1542 was precisely described in the text of the broadsheet as an event that happened at a particular place and time. The image as a ‘thought figure’, however, communicated an abstract, symbolic or allegorical interpretation and explanation of the precise event.¹⁴ Topographically or architecturally ‘realistic’ details were not considered to be as important. This did not mean that contemporaries did not have an understanding of disaster as a turning point. The image of the Mugello earthquake visualised the event as a disaster (without using this term in the text) cognitively and aesthetically, rather than as a naively naturalistic depiction of events.¹⁵

Scholars have argued that this approach was based upon a ‘theology of punishment’.¹⁶ It raised many questions among contemporary theologians, philosophers, chroniclers and journal writers: why did the scourge of God (*flagellum Dei*) strike the just and the unjust alike?¹⁷ Chroniclers gave an indirect and highly emotional answer to this theodicy when they reported on the wondrous survival of a baby in the rubble and thus emphasised the rescuing of at least one innocent person.¹⁸ Another significant question was how one should respond to God’s wrath. It was usual to flee pragmatically from the city threatened by collapse into the fields and to camp in tents while there was still a threat of quakes.¹⁹ Exactly such a scene is shown in an image called *Madonna dei Terremoti* by Francesco di Giorgio Martini dating from 1467.²⁰ While the city of Siena in the background is protected from destruction by its patron, the Virgin Mary, the tents of the fleeing citizens are presented in the foreground. In the same image religious ideas and pragmatic reactions are shown, which contemporaries obviously did not consider to be contradictory but complementary.

Assistance was organised in a spirit of Christian charity.²¹ Mostly people opted to rebuild the city, and, more rarely, to take preventive measures, for example through banning the construction of architectural elements likely to collapse during an earthquake.²² These measures implicitly contradict a fatalist conception of earthquakes as signs of the world’s imminent end: they suggest a pragmatic model for interpreting the natural disaster as a misfortune to be coped with by the whole community.

By contrast, religious reactions indicate an acceptance of the understanding that sins are the moral cause (*causa moralis*) of natural disasters. These include exhortative sermons, supplicatory masses, common prayers and processions with miracle-working images of city patron saints.²³ Mandates for moral behaviour are also adopted, because governments generally see themselves as committed to good governance (*buon governo*)

and thus to punishing moral misdemeanours as the suspected cause of earthquakes. After the earthquake of 1357 the Strasbourg city government prohibited its citizens from the inappropriate wearing of golden jewellery; in Florence, in 1542, the Senate declared blasphemy (*bestemmia*) and sodomy (*sogdomia*) a crime, after they were perceived to be a cause of an earthquake in the Mugello Valley.²⁴ Implicitly these can be interpreted as social and legal preventative measures against ‘natural’ disasters. It seems obvious, however, that the authorities were concerned not just for the health and eternal salvation of the community, but also the legitimacy of their power.²⁵

There was also a widespread understanding that earthquakes had a natural cause (*causa naturalis*). Interpretative models from the study of nature were based on knowledge handed down from antiquity. In the early Middle Ages, for example, the much read Isidore of Seville passed on a reduced version of ancient explanatory models for earthquakes.²⁶ First, the movement of water in the earth’s interior causes earth shakings (Lucretius). Secondly, earthquakes are caused by winds inside the earth that build up pressure and seek exits (Democritus, Aristotle, Sallust). Thirdly, hollow spaces inside the earth collapse and so shake the earth (Theophrastus, Seneca). There is a fourth explanatory model: the ancient belief, found in the Bible, in the sympathetic prodigious relationship between the macrocosmos (stars, the heavens) and the microcosmos (things on earth). This postulated a direct influence of celestial bodies on earthly events, like the weather (astrometeorology) or the fate of individual human beings.²⁷ Ancient models were thus mostly accepted in a general way and in combination with religious interpretations.²⁸ It was only with the reception of Aristotle via Arabic sources, dating from the High Middle Ages and appropriated by the Scholastics, that nature-based explanatory models became more precise, and an explicitly physical reading of the book of nature found its place alongside a symbolic reading (Figs. 3.2 and 3.3).²⁹ In academic discussion Aristotelianism offered a way to combine religious and naturalistic interpretations, recognising God as the prime cause (*prima causa, causa remota*) of natural disasters and yet seeking a natural second cause.³⁰

These interpretative paradigms were popularised in the Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The astrometeorological and iatro- (that is, medical) astrological faith in the influence of stars on earthly events and the human body found its way into everyday language.³¹ This would seem to have had important consequences for the formation of an abstract



Fig. 3.2 Virdung von Haffurt, *Practica deutsch* (Speyer: Anastasius Nolt, 1523), title-page, woodcut. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich: Res/4 Astr.p. 510,54

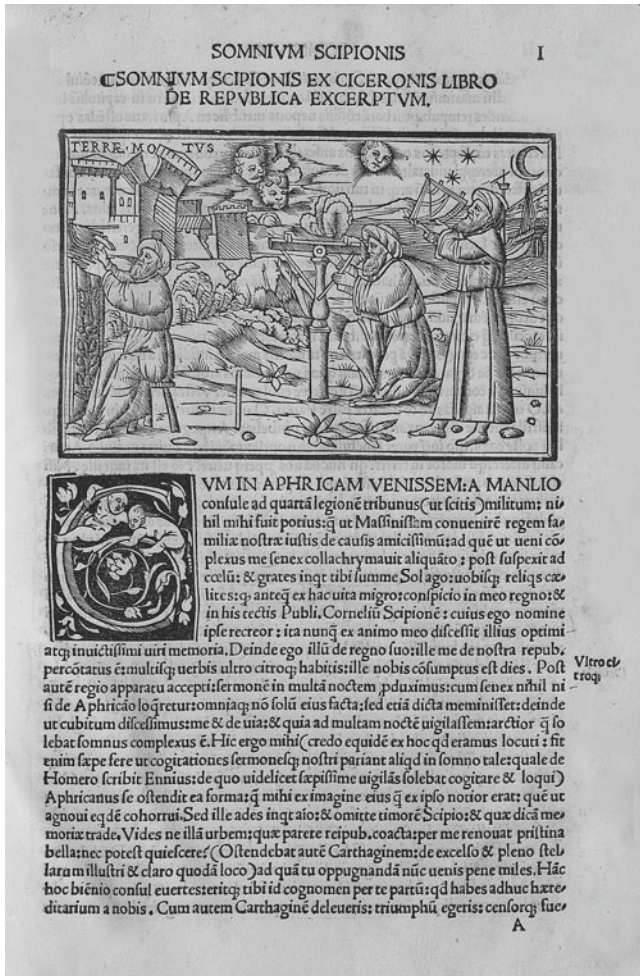


Fig. 3.3 Ambrosius Theodosius Macrobius, *Commentary of Cicero's 'Somnium Scipionis'* (Venice: Lucantonio Giunti/Augustino de Zannis da Portese, 1513), fol. 1r, woodcut. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich: 2 A.lat.b 493

understanding of disasters, crises and accidents, because it ultimately led to a categorisation of these phenomena under a single term that designated the probable cause. There is clear evidence of this process in Italian and related languages at the turn of the fourteenth century, when (at the

latest) the word *disastro* was coined, and in German from the end of the sixteenth century, when we find the use of the word *Katastrophe*.

When we look at the interpretative paradigms and narratives concerning floods and storm tides we notice similarities to the concepts used to describe earthquakes. In Latin these were first denoted with descriptive phrases such as *inundatio aquae/aquarum/maris/fluminum*, which appeared in the Early Middle Ages.³² Reports used many similar neutral phrases to describe a massive volume of floodwater. In Early New High German, *groß wasser* was used to describe the volume of water and height of the flood. However, narrative sources with a literary pretension contain a number of phrases, indicating a semantic shift from description to evaluation. In these cases the focus is on the terrible consequences of flooding for people and their world, characterised by a variety of rather emotional terms, sometimes with religious connotations, like *tribulatio*, *infortunitas*, *calamità*, *schaden*, *not* and *brest*. However, these concepts are also used to describe wars, epidemics, failed harvests, hunger and rising prices. It is only in the late fifteenth century that socially rooted specific terms arise, like the Early New High German composites *wassersnot* and, by analogy, *sturmsnoete*, for distress caused by strong wind events.

The Latin term *diluvium* conveys an explicitly religious interpretation of the event and is in evidence from the Early Middle Ages. In the Vulgate this term in the Old Testament stands for the Flood, in the New Testament for the events at the Last Judgment. In describing this day of reckoning, Jesus refers to both the Flood and God's judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and brimstone. This announcement could be interpreted as an imminent *diluvium* of water and fire, and thereby as the fulfilment of the history of salvation. Consequently the popular narrative of the horrific fifteen portents of the end of the world, which was current from the tenth century conveyed the understanding that the Last Judgment would be introduced, amongst other things, with a flood of water and fire raining from the heavens. The use of *diluvium* (Italian *diluvio*, French *déluge*, English *deluge*) was able to play with these ideas. Reference to the biblical flood also occurred from the tenth century in the translation of *diluvium* into Middle High German *sin(t)vluoet* (from Old High German *sin*: always/everywhere/constantly). But this highly emotionally-loaded word was only used regularly in the sense of a punishment for sins at the Last Judgment from the thirteenth century, in the Early New High German variant *sündflut* or *sündfluß*. Here it was semantically defined and popularised in combination with the astrometeorological forecasts of floods, especially in Reformation discourse in the early sixteenth century.

The use of biblical terminology not only expressed a decidedly religious interpretation, it was also linked to logical problems. Yahweh's covenant with Noah not to annihilate people again by a flood, precluded any interpretation of contemporary floods as the Great Flood (*Sinflut*). This forced more reflective theologians to interpret floods conceptually only as portents, as partial biblical floods, a *diluvium particulare*, or to use the biblical Flood as a point of reference by rating a current flood as the worst one since Noah's times. This reading of floods as a sign from God in nature, as divine judgment (*iudicium* or *gotz verhengnus*), appears to have motivated many societal reactions to floods: sermons, masses, common prayers and supplicatory processions with patron saints.³³ As with earthquakes, flood chroniclers evoked the topos of a baby that had survived unscathed in its cradle. The choice of a forensic term also opened up a salvific dimension—the Latin term *iudicium* stresses the processual nature of the events of the disaster in a decisive situation. In this decisive moment the threat of God's judgment can be interpreted as a last warning to believers to change their sinful lives. In this regard disastrous signs in nature could even be understood as divine grace, helping believers to return to a life more pleasing to God.

The transition between religious and magical practices connected to this semantic field are fluid and point to a latent magical interpretation of natural events. Medieval and early modern practices included calling up demons, burying notes appealing to a patron saint in the case of storms and fire, and also knowing about certain stones that protected against lightning blasts.³⁴ Related practices drew on a wide range of belief in weather magic, protective magic against evil spirits, and fear of magicians and witches.

Attitudes towards magical practices, beliefs and the believers themselves, were extremely diverse over the duration of the Middle Ages and Renaissance.³⁵ The Church's attitude was ambivalent and had remained so from early medieval times. Belief about 'making' the weather was for example supported by biblical reports and the seven plagues of Egypt (in the case of hail), or by saints who performed weather miracles as symbolic acts of God.³⁶ There were, however, broad and heated debates about related questions—the extent to which God as the Lord of nature could act with or against the forces of nature, and whether demonic, evil forces could act against nature and God's will and could be induced to do so through the magical rituals of hailstorm-makers (*tempestarii*).³⁷ Theology and jurisprudence worked on these questions, developing a precise set of instruments for handling this kind of heterodoxy. They provided different

kinds of ritual practices to respond to different social needs and for the use of particular social groups.³⁸ Church reactions ranged from ringing church bells, to warding off thunderstorms and blessing fields, to inquisition trials and burning witches.³⁹

The differentiation between a partial flood and a universal Flood (*diluvium universale* and *particulare*) appealed to those engaged in the study of the natural world, and soon after 1200 found a systematic place in learned flood theory. This was most probably communicated by Avicenna (980–1037), writing in Arabic about a famous passage from Plato (*Timaeus* 22c–23b).⁴⁰ His commentary was translated into Latin before 1200. In it he discusses a *diluvium* as the sublunar victory of an element, determined on natural grounds by certain astral constellations. Avicenna distinguishes four types of elementary excess—a flood of water, fire, air and earth.⁴¹ A simplified discussion of these theories about the natural origins of a universal flood of water and fire on the basis of a conjunction in the constellation of Pisces or Leo according to Albertus Magnus and others, gave increased support to this astrometeorological explanatory model in thirteenth-century learned discourse.⁴² In the fifteenth century preachers picked up and popularised this astrometeorological model in sermons given in the local language.⁴³ Yet this *disaster* theory did not go uncontested, and precisely the claim that a natural universal fiery flood (*diluvium ignis*) might be possible was condemned as heresy as early as 1277 by the Bishop of Paris Étienne Tempier.⁴⁴

Belief in the power of the stars did not abate in the Renaissance, as we can see from the forecasts of a great flood as a result of a conjunction in the constellation of Pisces in 1524. This conjunction has been much discussed by modern historians, for it triggered an unprecedented flood, not of water but of broadsheets.⁴⁵ The annual forecast of Johannes Virdung, the court astrologer from the Electoral Palatinate, for the year 1524, which Anastasius Nolt published in Speyer in 1523 (Fig. 3.2), showed by its striking and deliberately emotionally-charged woodcut on the title-page, much more clearly than the text, that because of an unfavourable stellar constellation, a flood and other misfortunes had to be expected in 1524.⁴⁶ From the fifteenth century onwards, a vulgarised form of astrometeorological rules of thumb spread to the broader public. Although they were of no use in preventing disasters, these ideas were reproduced in printed almanacs, farming handbooks, calendars and weather booklets.⁴⁷

II

As we can see, the Middle Ages had no abstract meta-term for the phenomena which are today connected with the semantic field of ‘disaster’.⁴⁸ However, it is possible to discern an emerging understanding during the Renaissance that particular phenomena form a category. In the fourteenth century, if not before, chronicles show that interest in such events was already a part of this textual genre, and that single disasters were seen as semantically connected. For example, the Strasbourg clergyman Fritsche Closener included two sections on such disasters in his vernacular chronicle of urban events—one on fire, war, pogroms and flagellants, and the other on thunderstorms, crop failures, tempests and earthquakes.⁴⁹ Florentine chronicles of the Late Middle Ages demonstrate a similar taxonomy based on biblical lists of plagues; they read nature traditionally as God’s book, not separating nature and humanity but relating the one to the other.⁵⁰ Signs from heaven and earth are not only listed for reasons of spiritual salvation, but also out of curiosity and a desire for self-assurance. The transition to a history of successfully surviving disasters (natural and human-induced) was fluid and led to the establishment of narratives that interpreted disasters and crises as a test of endurance.⁵¹ Writing history as a coping practice progressed as part of a transition from a God-related interpretation of extreme events to one more focused on the community.

There has been little research into exactly how a concept was found that systematised such thoughts about disastrous events in the world, that connected the variety of such phenomena and then came into common pragmatic use. In current research it is believed that the term ‘catastrophe’ fulfilled such a role in the following way: (1) as late as the seventeenth century it was taken from late antique poetry and theological sources to refer to life experience; (2) even later it was adapted in German to refer to natural disasters; (3) between c.1750 and 1850 it was finally conceptually defined. Though none of these observations are actually false, they overlook the fact that the semantics of ‘*disastro*/catastrophe/crisis’ in their plural usages originated in the pre-modern period as concepts that would deal with relations between heaven and earth, between God and human-kind, between nature and nurture.

When, where and how this exactly happened can only be a cause for speculation. Possibly a new word was created out of Greek and Latin in the twelfth century, in a context steeped in astrology: the Italian *disastro*, meaning ‘bad star’ from Latin *dis-* and *astrum*, deriving from the Greek

aster or *astron*.⁵² At the end of the twelfth or early thirteenth century, an unknown Tuscan translated what was possibly an Occitan version of the story of the ‘Seven Wise Masters’ into his vernacular. He reveals that his readers do not seem familiar with the word *micieffo* (from Old French *meschief*), which the protagonist of the novel uses to describe the circumstances of a misadventure which befalls him in a robbery, by parenthetically explaining the word by one more often used in Tuscany, *disastro*: ‘and instantly he turned to the Lady and told her about the mischief, that is disaster, that happens to him from that robber...’⁵³ The narrative cycle of the ‘Seven Wise Masters’—which was popular from India to Europe and arrived in Europe at the end of the twelfth century at latest, perhaps with the crusaders returning from the Orient—was based on older narratives such as the Sinbad stories.⁵⁴

The new word *disastro* spread rapidly and in very varied contexts: in the popular southern Italian vernacular retelling of classical texts (*Troy*, the *Aeneid*) from the beginning of the fourteenth century, in the Pisan *Breve dell’Ordine del Mare* from the second half of the century, and in the Venetian gospel concordance by Iacopo Gradenigo at the end of the century.⁵⁵ Despite the considerable semantic differences which resulted, the astronomical–astrological reference embedded in the word *disastro* provides, in all cases, an interpretative framework for misadventures in the social sphere—they are ill-fated, and thus end disastrously. Natural disasters were not so named, but the term *disastro* set up a basic correlation between the theological and the natural and the human and the cultural spheres. It remains an open question whether the success of this new interpretative term was connected to the general circumstances of life in those years of crisis and plague. Does it indicate a tendency towards a fatalistic conception of bad luck? Or just the opposite, an attempt to master or cope with the situation, given the ambivalence of *fortuna* and divine providence?⁵⁶ By the sixteenth century ‘disaster’ had also come to the fore in English, and its equivalents in French and Spanish.⁵⁷

This new concept of a ‘disaster’ had a significant impact on the visualisation of mainly earthquakes and floods from the late Middle Ages, as it could easily be associated with the natural philosophical ideas of their causes as discussed above. This relationship of an unfavourable stellar constellation and earthquakes was explicitly depicted in a woodcut illustration in Macrobius’ commentary on Cicero’s *Somnium Scipionis*, a book on cosmological questions published in 1513 (Fig. 3.3).⁵⁸ Astrologers, depicted as oriental scholars wearing turbans, determine stellar constellations by

means of astronomic devices. Chubby-cheeked heads signifying winds show the impact of the stellar constellation through the heating of air and the production of winds. In the upper left corner, buildings collapse and the inscription *terrae motus* refers to this effect of heated winds on the interior of the earth. The broadsheets produced on the occasion of a flood forecast in 1524, also depicted the relationship between a constellation (of Pisces) and a flood on earth (Fig. 3.2).⁵⁹ These visual images might have helped to establish the use of the term *disastro*, in addition to its use for individual mishaps, social upheavals or hazardous events at sea (Italian: *fortuna di mare*⁶⁰), as a term for disasters like earthquakes and floods.

How then did it come about that ‘catastrophe’ finally emerged in the sixteenth century as a generic term for a range of misfortunes? In antiquity, the Greek word *καταστροφή* generally referred to turning points and sweeping changes, but with a certain ambivalence as to whether they were negative or (seldom) positive in connotation.⁶¹ By contrast and to simplify greatly, in the transition from late antiquity to the Early Middle Ages ‘catastrophe’ occupied five semantic fields.⁶² It was used:

1. generally for turns and changes, for example in ball games,⁶³
2. as a technical term for turns and changes in stagecraft,⁶⁴
3. in dramatic theory, either as a reversal of fortune, or as a technical term for the resolution at the end of a comedy (the grammarian Euanthius and Aelius Donatus, also Titus Petronius and Lucian of Samosata),
4. as a medical term for morbid ‘turns’ in the organs of digestion,
5. among Christian writers, as repentance or a confessional change of heart (Jerome).⁶⁵

In the eighth century at latest the word was included in the glossaries of diligent monks in St Gall, Canterbury and elsewhere: *catastropon* was here translated as *conversio*, signifying a change. The word also remained as the latinised Greek medical word for morbid changes in digestion, even if it is difficult to follow the way the word was received and accepted.⁶⁶ Perhaps the missing link is the coining of the antonym *ana(s)trop(h)a*, meaning vomiting, by the doctor of late antiquity, Alexander of Tralles (c.525–c.605), whose texts were available in Latin translation from the sixth century. At the latest by 1200, glossaries connected to the renowned medical school in Salerno included explanations of stomach disorders that defined *ana(s)trop(h)a* as vomiting (*vomitus*) and *cat(h)a(s)trop(h)a* as diarrhoea

(*fluxus ventris*). These definitions gradually spread across Latin-speaking Europe and survived until the early modern period, but apparently only among university-trained physicians.

Among northern humanists, the old and nearly forgotten concept from drama theory gained increasing currency from the end of the sixteenth century and now signified tumultuous politico-religious swings. This can be attributed to a conceptual rediscovery of the ancient poetological facets of the word by Desiderius Erasmus, an editor of Jerome and Lucian of Samosata.⁶⁷ In 1508, in his popular and frequently reprinted *Adagia*, Erasmus made available to the learned public the dramaturgical meaning of *καταστροφή* in late antiquity as an explanatory turning point, or better, a point of resolution, found at the end of a comedy. As early as 1528 the Latinised concept was used in the sense of a political about-turn in a letter by one of Emperor Charles V's diplomats and friend of Erasmus, Cornelis de Schepper.

Shortly afterwards, Erasmus' narrative concept of catastrophe as a (happily) resolved change became associated with the astrological theory of how a special turning of the planets impacts on earthly conditions. In 1531, Erasmus's friend Philipp Melanchthon used the Greek word in a letter written in Latin to his friend Joachim Camerarius (a well-educated naturalist) to denote a political and religious upheaval he expected in connection with the coming of a wondrous comet (Halley's comet) in 1531. The use of this astrologically inflected term in a Reformation-humanist context created a terminological and narratological expectation that problems and situations of the present would eventually dissolve at the end of history. An apocalyptic connotation of the word cannot be overlooked, because the point of reference was the end of the world and the Last Judgment. This expansion of the meaning of the word, highly charged with medieval astrological and salvific meanings, is also to be found in the correspondence of a wide range of different humanists: Tobias Egli, Huldrych Zwingli, Paracelsus, Johann Amerbach and Tycho Brahe.

In the debate by Johannes Kepler and Helisäus Röslin between 1597 and 1604 over the significance of heavenly phenomena for terrestrial political events, 'catastrophe' was fully Germanised. It described a turn of events on Earth reflecting movements in the heavens. This use harked back to astronomical terms (Latin *revolutio*, Greek *καταστροφή*) and stood for a range of extraordinary phenomena, positive according to Röslin, but normally negative. However, it referred to societal processes, not to natural disasters. Because of its as yet unclarified, but now at least debated,

astrological-salvific connotations, ‘catastrophe’ signified something final, resolving and redeeming, that related heaven and earth, natural and societal processes to each other. The semantics of ‘catastrophe’ changed very gradually, however; as Olaf Briese and Timo Günther aptly put it, ‘[...] from a stage of ‘categorical ambivalence’ [...] to that which [...] it is today: “*bad case*” or “*worst case*”’.⁶⁸ But this was not the case in the romance languages, because *catastrophe* had to compete with *desastre/disastro*, and therefore remained a mostly poetological term.

‘Catastrophe’ then had a second career, by virtue of a narrowing of special terms in the early modern era, where it now competed with ‘revolution’ and ‘crisis’.⁶⁹ While ‘revolution’—originally an astronomical-geological term—had taken on a primarily socio-political meaning following the events of 1789, ‘catastrophe’ was increasingly used after 1800 to refer to extreme natural events and was fixed in this meaning in German *circa* 1900 with the coining of the compound noun *Naturkatastrophe*. At the same time, the term ‘crisis’ became the self-diagnostic ‘structural signature of the Modern Age’, as Reinhart Koselleck described it, but at the price of taking universal responsibility for every possible phenomenon of accelerating change in society.⁷⁰

III

To conclude, I would like to propose a hypothesis for further examination as follows: using the analogy of the concept of a modern *Sattelzeit* coined by Reinhart Koselleck, we could refer to a transitional or liminal period when speaking about the early phases of the creation of the terms ‘disaster’ or ‘catastrophe’.⁷¹ The idea of a transitional or liminal period, when new phenomena and words emerge or old words get a specific semantic charge, seems to be plausible. It is a phase of conceptual formation, in which words and phrases compete, are exposed to ideological commitments, expansions, narrowings and reinterpretations, and are tested out in semantic battles. Within a mostly complex discursive field some concepts create categorical power with respect to other related concepts. Thus they play a role in the interpretation not only of discourses, but also of life—in religion, law, politics, business, scholarship and society. In the end, they also contribute to the production of conceptual approaches governing actions in each particular world.

Naturally, this pre-modern *Sattelzeit* can and must continue to be defined and differentiated in its temporal, spatial and thematic dimensions,

in its socio-cultural support, its booms and depressions. One of its central thematic fields could be the handling of religious, economic, social and political contingencies.⁷² The word and concept ‘disaster’ (*disastro*) and the whole field of semantically related terms—for example, ‘risk’ (Latin *resicum*, Ital. *rischio*, Arab. *rzq*) and ‘hazard’ (Arab. *az-zahr/yasara*)—are only a small part of this larger semantic and thematic field.⁷³ It is a field originally distinguished by its plurality of terms, interpretative paradigms, and perspectives, and is remarkably trans-cultural and trans-lingual. This transitional period seems to begin in approximately 1250–1300 in the south-west Mediterranean and is over by 1600–1650. The end of the pre-modern *Sattelzeit* is distinguished by the reduction and consolidation of terminological profusion, which could be connected with the Renaissance, Reformation and Counter-Reformation and the creation of nations within the developing system of European states.

What do these observations mean for an understanding of interpretative models for disasters and related emotions like horror, fear and grief in the long Middle Ages and Renaissance? The plurality of implicit and explicit interpretative models and their images is surprising and we may well ask whether contemporaries felt a cognitive dissonance when faced with these sometimes contradictory explanations.⁷⁴ But faith in the (physical) influence of bad stars on earthly events was by no means incompatible with faith in divine omnipotence.⁷⁵ Apparently contradictory interpretative models tended to be ranked or understood in complementary ways, and there was no fundamental questioning of God as the *causa remota* of all events.⁷⁶ A disaster might shake the world, but not its worldview. On the contrary, disasters were wondrous signs from God, *mirabilia mundi*—however terrible—to the orderly world of human beings, who just had to interpret them properly. Locating extreme natural events within the human sphere, understanding these signs as an offer of communication about the causes of disaster, on fear, grief and charity, and striving to make sense of them, did not just open a window to a somewhat more successful strategy for coping with contingencies. In contrast to the spirit of the Apocalypse, it also opened a door to a general development of sciences concerning the natural world.⁷⁷

NOTES

1. See Monica Juneja and Gerrit Jasper Schenk, 'Viewing Disasters: Myth, History, Iconography and Media across Europe and Asia,' in *Disaster as Image: Iconographies and Media Strategies across Europe and Asia*, ed. Monica Juneja and Gerrit Jasper Schenk (Regensburg: Schnell und Steiner, 2014), 7–40. I explore similar considerations and arguments to the matters raised in this chapter in Gerrit Jasper Schenk, 'Dis-Astri: Modelli interpretativi delle calamità naturali dal medioevo al Rinascimento,' in *Le calamità ambientali nel tardo medioevo europeo: Realtà, percezioni, reazioni. Atti del XII convegno del Centro di Studi sulla civiltà del tardo Medioevo S. Miniato, 31 maggio—2 giugno 2008*, ed. Michael Matheus et al. (Firenze: Firenze Univ. Press, 2010), 23–75, and in Gerrit Jasper Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit? Disastro, Katastrophe, Strafgericht—Worte, Begriffe und Konzepte für rapiden Wandel im langen Mittelalter,' in *Krisengeschichte(n): 'Krise' als Leitbegriff und Erzählmuster in kulturwissenschaftlicher Perspektive*, ed. Carla Meyer et al. (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2013), 177–212.

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2. On the much broader semantic fields of general misery such as plague, social upheaval, hunger (e.g. *calamitas, tribulatio, pestilentia, fames*) see Jean-Robert Armogathe, 'A calamitatibus libera nos: De la prière psalmique à l'invocation litanique,' in *L'Homme Face aux Calamités Naturelles dans l'Antiquité et au Moyen Âge. Actes du 16^e colloque de la Villa Kérylos à Beaulieu-sur-Mer les 14 & 15 octobre 2005*, ed. Jacques Jouanna et al. (Paris: De Boccard, 2006), 119–27.
3. The thorough studies in conceptual history carried out by Olaf Briese and Timo Günther, 'Katastrophe: Terminologische Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft,' *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 51 (2009): 155–95 and Olaf Briese, "'Genommen auß den Comoedien": Katastrophenbegriffe der neuzeitlichen Geologie,' in *Wissenschaftsgeschichte als Begriffsgeschichte: Terminologische Umbrüche im Entstehungsprozess der modernen Wissenschaften*, ed. Michael Eggers et al. (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2009), 23–50 almost completely ignore the Middle Ages. Ricardo Tesi, 'Catastrofe: Fortuna rinascimentale e percorsi moderni di un europeismo I,' *Lingua nostra* 53 (1992): 45–59, Ricardo Tesi, 'Catastrofe: Fortuna rinascimentale e percorsi moderni di un europeismo IIa' *Lingua nostra* 53

- (1992): 97–106, Ricardo Tesi, ‘Catastrofe: Fortuna rinascimentale e percorsi moderni di un europeismo IIB,’ *Lingua nostra* 54 (1993): 3–10, and Riccardo Tesi, ‘Su “cataclisma” (e le oscillazioni del tipo “cataclismo/-a”),’ *Lingua nostra* 54 (1993): 97–109 reconstruct the corresponding etymologies; François Walter, *Katastrophen: Eine Kulturgeschichte vom 16. bis ins 21. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2010), 16–20 and Alan Rosen, *Dislocating the End. Climax, Closure and the Invention of Genre* (New York: Peter Lang, 2001), 6–11 explain the conceptual history of ‘disaster’ mainly in the Renaissance; Michael O’Dea, ‘Le mot “catastrophe,”’ in *L’invention de la catastrophe au XVIIIe siècle: Du châtement divin au désastre naturel*, ed. Anne-Marie Mercier-Faivre and Chantal Thomas, (Genève: Droz, 2008), 35–48 in the eighteenth century.
4. Cornel Zwierlein, *Der gezähmte Prometheus: Feuer und Sicherheit zwischen Früher Neuzeit und Moderne* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2011), 17–8, 235–6 rightly remarks critically that in many cases only the term disaster and not the corresponding semantic field was analysed. As the late-medieval sources in Latin as well as in the vernaculars do not yet exist to a sufficient extent in electronically analysable corpora, the methods of lexicometry could not be used, but the source findings could only be used qualitatively; archival findings were only used as samples (for Tuscany and Alsace). In addition to the relevant encyclopedias, the following digitised source books were used: *Acta Sanctorum*; Brepols’ *Cetedoc Library of Christian Latin Texts*, Brepols’ *Library of Latin Texts (Series A und B)*; digital *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*; Ludwig Hödl and Wendelin Knoch, eds., *Repertorium der lateinischen Sermones des Mittelalters für die Zeit von 1350–1500. Nach den Vorarbeiten von Johann Baptist Schmeyer* (Münster: Aschendorff, 2001), CD-ROM.
 5. Mischa Meier, ‘Zur Terminologie der (Natur-)Katastrophe in der griechischen Historiographie—einige einleitende Anmerkungen,’ in *Historical Disaster Research: Concepts, Methods and Case Studies*, ed. Gerrit Jasper Schenk and Jens Ivo Engels (Köln: Zentrum für Historische Sozialforschung, 2007), 54–55.
 6. Stefano Conti, ‘Lateinische Termini für Erdbeben in literarischen und epigraphischen Quellen der römischen Zeit,’ in Schenk and Engels, *Historical Disaster Research*, 61–62; Isabelle Draelants, ‘Phénomènes célestes et tremblements de terre au Moyen Âge: Enquête sur l’historiographie médiévale dans les limites de la Belgique actuelle (600–1200),’ in *Les catastrophes naturelles dans l’Europe médiévale et moderne. Actes des XVes Journées Internationales d’Histoire de l’Abbaye de Flaran 10, 11, et 12 septembre 1993*, ed. Bartolomé Bennassar (Toulouse: Presses Universitaire du Mirail, 1996), 187–222, 214–5.
 7. Schenk, ‘Vormoderne Sattelzeit,’ 181nn24f, n48.

8. Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit,' 181n26.
9. Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit,' 181–82n27.
10. Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit,' 182n28; Leo Andergassen, 'Die fünfzehn Zeichen vor dem Weltende: Zur Lehrhaftigkeit mittelalterlicher Wandmalereien,' *Der Schlern—Monatszeitschrift für Südtiroler Landeskunde* 78:4 (2004): 56–68; Fabrizio Nevola, 'Picturing Earthquakes in Renaissance Italy,' in *Disaster as Image: Iconographies and Media Strategies across Europe and Asia*, ed. Monica Juneja and Gerrit Jasper Schenk (Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 2014), 99–109.
11. *Ein erschrecken=||liche Newe zeytung/ so geschehen || ist den 12. tag Junij/ jnn dem 1542. jar/ jnn einem Stetlein || Schgarbaria genent* (Erfurt: Merten von Dolgen, 1542). On the print, see Filippo Bellandi and Dennis E. Rhodes, *Il terremoto del Mugello del 1542 in un raro opuscolo dell'epoca* (Firenze: Comunità Montana Zona E, 1987), 48, no. 4.
12. Jörg Trempler, *Katastrophen: Ihre Entstehung aus dem Bild* (Berlin: Wagenbach 2013), 64–79, 137–39.
13. For a critique of this claim, Juneja and Schenk, 'Viewing Disasters,' 26–35.
14. On thought figures, Juneja and Schenk, 'Viewing Disasters,' 35nn112–13.
15. Jan Kozák and Vladimír Čermák, *The Illustrated History of Natural Disaster* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010), consider such images on pp. 2–12 to be naively naturalistic as sources for modern seismology and largely ignore the value of 'allegorical compositions' (12).
16. Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit,' 182n29.
17. Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit,' 182n30.
18. Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit,' 182n31, 189n67 on the parallel story of the wondrous rescue of babies in their cribs from floods. On the problem of theodicy in case of 'natural' disasters, David K. Chester, 'The Theodicy of Natural Disasters: Christianity, Suffering, and Responsibility,' *Scottish Journal of Theology* 51, no. 4 (1998): 485–504.
19. Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit,' 182n32.
20. The image can be found in Archivio di Stato, Siena: Biccherna 51 (cover of the financial file of Siena from January–December 1467). See Nevola, 'Picturing earthquakes,' 227, plate 19.
21. For examples see Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit,' 182n33.
22. As in Strasbourg in 1357. See the report of the chronicler Sebastian Brant in the year 1513, Gerrit Jasper Schenk, ed., 'Lektüren im Buch der Natur: Wahrnehmung, Beschreibung und Deutung von Naturkatastrophen,' in *Geschichte schreiben: Ein Quellenhandbuch zur Historiographie (ca. 1350–1750)*, ed. Susanne Rau and Birgit Studt (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2010), 515; Emanuela Guidoboni and Graziano Ferrari, 'The Effects of Earthquakes in Historical Cities: The Particularity of the Italian Case,' in

- Catalogue of Strong Italian Earthquakes from 461 B.C. to 1997*, ed. Enzo Boschi (Bologna: Ed. Compositori, 2000), 680–82.
23. Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit,' 183n38; Schenk, 'Dis-Astri,' 32–33nn31–32.
 24. Strasbourg: see n23; on Florence 1542 cf. Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit,' 183n39.
 25. On the concern of rulers for the moral and material salvation of governed people and associated conceptions (*securitas, buon governo*), images and discourses, see Gerrit Jasper Schenk, "Human Security" in the Renaissance? *Securitas*, Infrastructure, Collective Goods and Natural Hazards in Tuscany and the Upper Rhine Valley,' *Historical Social Research* 35, no.4 (2010): 209–33.
 26. Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit,' 183n41.
 27. Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit,' 183n42.
 28. Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit,' 184n43.
 29. Guidoboni, 'Earthquakes,' 201–3; Johannes Fried, *Aufstieg aus dem Untergang: Apokalyptisches Denken und die Entstehung der modernen Naturwissenschaft im Mittelalter* (München: Beck, 2001), 72. A twelfth-century example is discussed in Dorothea Weltecke, 'Die Konjunktion der Planeten im September 1189: Zum Ursprung einer globalen Katastrophenangst,' *Saeculum* 54, no.2 (2003): 179–212.
 30. Schenk, "Vormoderne Sattelzeit," 184n47.
 31. Schenk, "Vormoderne Sattelzeit," 184n48. Gerd Mentgen, *Astrologie und Öffentlichkeit im Mittelalter*, vol. 53 of *Monographien zur Geschichte des Mittelalters* (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 2005), 283, however, assumes that astronomy was an arcane science.
 32. For further detailed discussion of the terminology of floods below, see Schenk, "Vormoderne Sattelzeit," 185–90 (with proofs).
 33. Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit,' 188–89nn65–66; on the flood of the Arno in Florence in 1333, Gerrit Jasper Schenk, '... prima ci fu la cagione de la mala provedenza de' Fiorentini ...': Disaster and "Life world"—Reactions in the Commune of Florence to the Flood of November 1333,' *The Medieval History Journal* 10 (2007): 355–86.
 34. Schenk, 'Dis-Astri,' 52–53n89.
 35. Jean Claude Bologne, *Magie und Aberglaube im Mittelalter* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 2003), 95–96, 190–93, 263.
 36. See Monica Blöcker, 'Wetterzauber: Zu einem Glaubenskomplex des frühen Mittelalters,' *Francia* 9 (1981): 121–26; Peter Ernst, 'Wetterzauber,' in *Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde*, ed. Heinrich Beck (Berlin, New York: de Gruyter, 2006), 33:558–60.
 37. Dieter Harmening, *Superstitio: Überlieferungs- und theoriegeschichtliche Untersuchungen zur kirchlich-theologischen Aberglaubensliteratur des*

- Mittelalters* Berlin: E. Schmidt 1979), 247–50; Thomas Linsenmann, *Die Magie bei Thomas von Aquin* (Berlin: Akad.-Verl., 2000).
38. Schenk, ‘Dis-Astri,’ 54n94.
 39. Adolph Franz, *Die kirchlichen Benediktionen im Mittelalter* (Freiburg i. Br.: Herder, 1909), 2:19–123; Wolfgang Behringer, ‘Kleine Eiszeit und Frühe Neuzeit,’ in *Kulturelle Konsequenzen der ‘Kleinen Eiszeit’: Cultural Consequences of the ‘Little Ice Age,’* ed. Wolfgang Behringer, Hartmut Lehmann, and Christian Pfister (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2005), 452–53.
 40. Schenk, ‘Vormoderne Sattelzeit,’ 189n69.
 41. Avicenna, *Libellus de diluviis*, ed. Manuel Alonso Alonso, ‘Homenaje a Avicenna en su milenario: Las traducciones de Juan González de Burgos y Salomon,’ *Al-Andalus* 14 (1949): 306.
 42. Schenk, ‘Vormoderne Sattelzeit,’ 190n71.
 43. Schenk, ‘Vormoderne Sattelzeit,’ 190n75.
 44. Kurt Flasch, ed., *Aufklärung im Mittelalter? Die Verurteilung von 1277: Das Dokument des Bischofs von Paris* (Mainz: Dieterich, 1989), 232 and Roland Hissette, ‘Albert le Grand et l’expression “diluvium ignis”,’ *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale* 22 (1980): 78–81.
 45. Schenk, ‘Vormoderne Sattelzeit,’ 190–91n77.
 46. Virdung von Haßfurt, *Practica deutsch* (Speyer: Anastasius Nolt, 1523), 3, accessed 15 February 2015, <http://www.mdz-nbn-resolving.de/urn/resolver.pl?urn=nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10198659-8>; see Heike Talkenberger, *Sintflut: Prophetie und Zeitgeschehen in Texten und Holzschnitten astrologischer Flugschriften 1488–1528* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1990), 204–206, 463, 520 figure S7; on the different editions 192–206.
 47. Schenk, ‘Dis-Astri,’ 59–60n109.
 48. Meier, ‘Terminologie,’ 54; Conti, ‘Termini’; Briese and Günther, ‘Katastrophe,’ 157–63.
 49. Schenk, ‘Vormoderne Sattelzeit,’ 191n80.
 50. Schenk, ‘Vormoderne Sattelzeit,’ 191n83f.
 51. Gerrit Jasper Schenk, ‘L’alluvione del 1333: Discorsi sopra un disastro naturale nella Firenze medievale,’ *Medioevo e rinascimento: Annuario del Dipartimento di Studi sul Medioevo e il Rinascimento dell’Università di Firenze* 21/n.s. 18 (2007): 46.
 52. Schenk, ‘Vormoderne Sattelzeit,’ 193n87.
 53. *Il Libro dei Sette Savi di Roma: Testo del Buon Secolo della Lingua*, ed. Alessandro d’Ancona (Pisa: Nistri, 1864), 70 m. note. 2 and *Libro dei sette savi di Roma (versione in prosa F)*, ed. Andrea Giannetti (Alessandria: Edizioni Dell’Orso, 2012), 121 §100:3: *e inmantanente se ne ritornò alla dama, e contolle il micieffo, cioè il disastro, che gli era adivenuto di questo ladrone....* On *meschieff*: Frédéric Godefroy, ed., *Dictionnaire de l’ancienne langue française et de tous ses dialects du 9e au 15e siècle* (Paris: Classiques

- Garnier Numérique, 2002), accessed 27 February 2012, <http://www.classiques-garnier.com>.
54. Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit,' 193n89; Norbert H. Ott, 'Sieben weise Meister I,' in *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, vol. 7 (Stuttgart, Weimar: Metzler, 1999) and the web site, Society of the Seven Sages, accessed 22 March 2014, http://myweb.dal.ca/hrunte/seven_sages.html.
 55. Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit,' 193n91.
 56. This thought, which would require an analysis of associations with the semantic fields of 'danger', 'fortune/ misfortune', 'risk', 'destiny', 'coincidence', 'providence' etc. cannot be followed here; cf. in this context Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit,' 194n92, 199n117.
 57. On reception in the French- and English-speaking language area see, Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit,' 194n93.
 58. See Ambrosius Theodosius Macrobius, *En tibi lector candidissime, Macrobius, qui antea mancus, mutilus, ac lacer circum[m]ferebatur, nu[n]c primu[m] integer, nitidus [et] suo nitore restitutus, in quo graecae maiestatis dignitas quo ad eius fieri potuit superstes reperit[us]*, ed. Giovanni Rivio (Venezia: Lucantonio Giunta/ Augustino de Zannis da Portese, 1513), fol. 1r. For the broad reception of Macrobius' commentaries, see Bruce Eastwood, 'Manuscripts of Macrobius, Comentariorum in somnium Scipionis, before 1500,' *Manuscripta* 38, no.2 (1994): 138–55.
 59. Flood: Talkenberger, *Sintflut*, 154–335; Gabriele Wimböck, "In den Sternen geschrieben—in die Bilder gebannt:" Die Furcht vor der Großen Sintflut im Zeitalter der Reformation,' in *AngstBilderSchauLust: Historische Katastrophenerfahrungen in Kunst, Musik und Theater*, ed. Jürgen Schläder and Regina Wohlfahrt (Leipzig: Henschel, 2007), 212–39.
 60. See CNR: *Opera del Vocabolario Italiano. Tesoro della Lingua Italiana delle Origini online*, s.v. 'disastro,' accessed 15 February 2015, <http://tlio.ovi.cnr.it/TLIO/>; *Statuti inediti della città di Pisa dal XII al XIV secolo*, ed. Francesco Bonaini (Firenze: Viesseux, 1857), 3:535; Burkhardt Wolf, *Fortuna di mare: Literatur und Seefahrt* (Zürich and Berlin: Diaphanes, 2013), 11–14.
 61. Meier, 'Terminologie'; Briese and Günther, 'Katastrophe,' 157–63, 167.
 62. For many detailed examples of the use of 'catastrophe' in support of the claims made below, see Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit,' 194–98.
 63. See the letters of the Roman aristocrat and Bishop of Clermont, Sidonius Apollinaris, † 479.
 64. The engineer Heron in the first century.
 65. Sophronius Eusebius Hieronymus, *De viris illustribus* 111, ed. Aldo Ceresa-Gastaldo (Firenze: Nardini, 1988), 214.
 66. Schenk, 'Dis-Astri,' 68–69n132 and Schenk, 'Vormoderne Sattelzeit,' 195nn98–99.
 67. Rosen, *Dislocating*, 6–11; Briese and Günther, 'Katastrophe,' 164–65.

68. Briese and Günther, 'Katastrophe,' 164 (my translation).
69. Briese and Günther, 'Katastrophe,' 172–95; Jan Marco Sawilla, 'Zwischen Normabweichung und Revolution—"Krise" in der Geschichtswissenschaft,' in Meyer et al., *Krisengeschichte(n)*, 145–72.
70. Reinhart Koselleck, *Formen der Geschichtsschreibung* (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1982), 627–28.
71. On the concept *Sattelzeit*, see the programmatic statement in Reinhart Koselleck, 'Introduction' in *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, ed. Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, and Reinhart Koselleck (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1972), I: XIII–XXVII and later reflections in Reinhart Koselleck, 'Hinweise auf die temporalen Strukturen begriffsgeschichtlichen Wandels,' in *Begriffsgeschichte, Diskursgeschichte, Metapherngeschichte*, ed. Hans Erich Bödeker (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2002), 29–47. On further approaches, Jörn Leonhard, 'Grundbegriffe und Sattelzeiten—Languages and Discourses: Europäische und anglo-amerikanische Deutungen des Verhältnisses von Sprache und Geschichte,' in *Interkultureller Transfer und nationaler Eigensinn: Europäische und anglo-amerikanische Positionen der Kulturwissenschaft*, ed. Rebekka Habermas and Rebekka von Mallinckrodt (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2004), esp. 84–85. On Koselleck's awareness of the problems with *Sattelzeit*, cf. Kari Palonen, *Die Entzauberung der Begriffe: Das Umschreiben der politischen Begriffe bei Quentin Skinner und Reinhart Koselleck* (Münster: Lit, 2004), 246–50.
72. Cf. Christian Rohr, *Extreme Naturereignisse im Ostalpenraum: Naturerfahrung im Spätmittelalter und am Beginn der Neuzeit* (Köln, Weimar, and Wien: Böhlau, 2007), 553 makes use of the "'Sattelzeit" des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts' with regard to the perception and interpretation of natural disasters. But it also has relevance for the era of great church synods, the Reformation and the formation of nation states.
73. On the Arab influence see Sylvain Piron, 'L'apparition du resicum en Méditerranée occidentale aux XIIème-XIIIème siècles,' in *Pour une histoire culturelle du risque: Genèse, évolution, actualité du concept dans les sociétés occidentales*, ed. Emmanuelle Collas-Heddeland, Marianne Coudry, and Odile Kammerer (Strasbourg: Éd. Histoire et Anthropologie, 2004), 61–68.
74. Leon Festinger, *A theory of cognitive dissonance* (Evanston, IL: Row, Peterson and Company, 1957).
75. Schenk, 'Dis-Astri,' 73n140.
76. Schenk, 'Dis-Astri,' 73nn141–42. For the divine *causa remota*, Sabine Krüger, 'Krise der Zeit als Ursache der Pest: Der Traktat *De mortalitate in Alamannia* des Konrad von Megenberg,' in *Festschrift für Hermann Heimpel zum 70. Geburtstag am 19. September 1971*, ed. Sabine Krüger (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1972), 862.
77. Fried, *Aufstieg*, 183–95.

Disaster, Apocalypse, Emotions and Time in Sixteenth-Century Pamphlets

Charles Zika

Apocalyptic thinking—the belief that the Last Days are imminent and will bring massive destruction and suffering—was widely held and at times publicly championed and embraced during the sixteenth century.¹ A frequent stimulus for such thinking was a natural or social disaster or an awe-inspiring event considered to be a portent for future disaster. The collective emotional impact and social disruption caused by disaster demanded a search for meaning, then as it does now; and in early modern Europe the Apocalypse provided a potent meaning-making system rooted in Scriptural prophecy and past history.

The general approach to apocalyptic thought is to work out from the theological or prophetic system elaborated by individuals or groups. We take a key figure like Luther or Bullinger,² Joachim of Fiore or Petrus Olivi,³ and explore their particular elaborations of the Apocalypse; or perhaps an artist like Albrecht Dürer, a particular Book of Hours, or a genre like English manuscripts or Dutch block books.⁴ Or we interrogate a tradition such as the Lutheran or Puritan and see what different manifestations of the Apocalypse were supported or promoted over time, and how they

C. Zika

ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, The University of Melbourne, Australia

were received and acted on in response to particular social and political conditions.⁵ Alternatively, we might look at the various forms that apocalypse or the millennium takes in different periods and places; and its different manifestations within different types of societies—tribal, agrarian or industrial.⁶ In this article I do not intend to explore the apocalyptic ideas promoted by particular theologians or confessions and locate them within a theological system or exegetical tradition. I want to explore how apocalyptic ideas, and in particular the emotional resonances embedded in those ideas, circulated through cheap forms of print in order to give meaning to the extreme events in nature that we label disasters. My concern is not a system of thought, how apocalyptic ideas fit within a broader theology and cosmology, but how apocalyptic rhetoric operated as a strategy to establish a particular feeling, environment or emotional state that would reinforce the conviction that the apocalyptic disasters had either arrived or were imminent. In that way I would hope to suggest how the emotional experiences provoked by a range of human and natural disasters could be so readily framed within the larger cosmic and divine outpouring of emotion and destruction that we know as the Apocalypse.

The source material for this exploration of the emotional registers of the religious and cultural economy of later sixteenth-century Europe has been drawn from the collection of the Zurich pastor Johann Jakob Wick—over 900 printed pamphlets and illustrated broadsheets, and literally thousands of handwritten documents amassed by Wick between 1560 and 1587, when he was second-in-charge of the Zurich church.⁷ This collection includes large numbers of reports of natural and social disasters such as storms, earthquakes, floods, avalanches, bitter cold, famine and fires, celestial visions, terrible crimes, murders and wars, often considered to be direct and incontrovertible signs of the apocalyptic end-time.

Even in Wick's lifetime, this collection of contemporary reports was referred to as a 'Wonder Book'.⁸ Its purpose was to elicit in its readers emotions of wonder, mixed with anger, penitence, grief and fear; to have readers wonder at the awesome, and also terrifying, events that Wick, his correspondents and other reports include. While many of these reports might appear as simply sensational, such a characterisation fails to take into account the intentions of their authors and collectors. They need rather to be seen as the products of intense uncertainty and anxiety, a fundamental anxiety experienced by Wick and a whole network of contemporary theologians and scholars from the Zurich region, concerning the progress, and even survival, of the Reformation.⁹ The seriousness of the enterprise lay

especially in one of the key messages it conveyed, a growing sense of the immanence of the Last Days.¹⁰

There are numerous reports in Wick's collection that give direct expression to such beliefs. One report, for instance, by the Lutheran pastor and superintendent in Bischofswerda, Saxony, Hieronymus Opiz, describes the sighting of the phenomenon we know as the northern lights or aurora, on the Feast of the Holy Innocents on 28 December 1560.¹¹ An hour before daylight the town of Bischofswerda was lit up as though it were on fire. Many people became fearful, because they had often suffered damage from fires in this town. So they ran out to the streets with their buckets, shouted, and rang the fire bell. But then they realised the fire was simply an apparition in the sky. It was in the north—streamers like in summer, when the sun draws water up, vertical and separate from each other, not all of them reaching to earth. They were unequal in width, some combining or changing widths along their length. And a large dark cloud appeared from the west, which released a wind; and so the fiery clouds moved over the whole of the northern horizon towards the east. There they stayed, bloody and fire-red, light and then dark, for about one hour until eclipsed by the rising sun. At the end of the report, Opiz inserts his interpretation: such an apparition had never been seen in human memory; and fiery signs in the heavens are certainly premonitions of the Last Day—a time when the world will be cleansed by fire.¹² In order to strengthen Opiz's interpretation even more, Wick then inserted three crucial biblical references: Isaiah 66:15–16—which refers to the Lord coming to assuage his anger with fire and his threats with flaming fire; Matthew 25:41—in which the wicked are cursed and damned to eternal fire; and 2 Peter 3:7–12—which tells of the Day of Judgment, when the earth and all that it contains will be burnt up, the sky will dissolve in flames and the elements will all melt.¹³

Opiz's description presents a graphic case of how the fear associated with presumed and imminent disaster, a fear of disaster rooted in previous experience, is transformed into the cosmic destruction and disaster of the Last Days. The description begins with action and confusion on the streets; it then moves to a detailed description of the meteorological events in the sky; these celestial events are then understood as signs, premonitions of larger cosmic and supernatural realities—which are in turn confirmed by scriptural references to the destruction of the Last Days. The latent fear generated by actual fire in the past combined with the religious significance encoded in the appearance of a fiery-red sky combine to signify an understanding of this experience as an outpouring of God's anger

and fury and also an apprehension about the certainty and imminence of far more extensive cosmic destruction. The natural and supernatural ultimately collapse into each other; time also collapses and the future becomes virtually synonymous with the present. The state of heightened anxiety at the end of the report is about avoiding, or at least delaying, this process. Readers are encouraged to collect tears in their buckets and pails through repentance for their sins, and with those tears to extinguish the fire of God's anger. Only an outpouring of repentance will neutralise the outpouring of divine anger. The apocalyptic scenario represents a profusion of human and divine emotion.

Another document in Wick's collection that demonstrates how apocalyptic thought can collapse the realm of natural experience into the supernatural is a pamphlet describing an earthquake that struck the village of Hornung, in the vicinity of Homberg on the Ohm in the territory of Hesse, in 1571 (Fig. 4.1).¹⁴ The author is only identified as LM, but significantly he is a cleric; and the subsidence created by this 'unusual' and 'terrifying' earthquake is immediately identified in the title as a *Wunderzaichen*, 'a wondrous sign'. The physical impression on the earth, considered almost as a material imprint of ongoing divine action and its profound emotional impact, is further underlined in the verses below the woodcut. These play on comparisons between the trembling of fear and the trembling of the earth, and how the bewilderment created by such earth movements produces both physical panic and moral blindness. The 'astounding fear' and 'deep anger' created by these events blinds humans, the verses tell us, from recognising that these are the terrible consequences of their own deeds.

Any tendency to see these Latin verses on the title-page as the expression of immediate and personally felt experience would be quite mistaken of course.¹⁵ They largely draw on a traditional religious rhetoric associated with such disasters. Yet this does not diminish their rhetorical power. Even though these verses would have been intelligible only to a learned Latin reader with an eye and ear sensitive to alliteration and allusion, they do give expression to the emotional response and religious reflections of at least one cleric. Yet for those ignorant of Latin, and also lacking sufficient literacy to read the German title and text, the wondrous meaning of the earthquake and land subsidence would have been made clear in general terms by the title-page woodcut. The specific reference to the account of the two witnesses of John's vision in Apocalypse, who were devoured by the beast and taken up to heaven after three and a half days, after which an extremely destructive earthquake struck (Revelation 11:7–13), might



Fig. 4.1 ‘The two witnesses of Rev. 11, who were devoured by the beast and taken up to heaven after three and a half days, and the destructive earthquake in Hornung in 1571’, coloured title-page woodcut, in L.M., *Wunderzeichen/ Eines Erschrecklichen/ Seltzamen Erdbidems ... Geschehen diss 1571. Jars/ im Hornung/ bey Homburg ...* (Frankfurt, 1571). Zentralbibliothek Zurich, Ms. F. 19, fol. 251r

certainly have been obvious only to those who had seen similar illustrations in contemporary bibles.¹⁶ But the presence of a devouring dragon with its long serpentine tail, together with two figures positioned above a ring of clouds, would have been immediately understood as visual cues that identified this scene with the dramas of the Apocalypse. Such cues

were not always present, of course. In the Augsburg edition of the same pamphlet,¹⁷ in which the printer Michael Manger used a title-page woodcut previously published in a pamphlet describing the destruction caused by the major earthquake that struck Ferrara and Modena in November 1570, the woodcut makes no allusions to the Apocalypse at all (Fig. 4.2).¹⁸

The unknown clerical author of this pamphlet apparently wrote it in order to set the record straight and to clarify claims made in a wholly

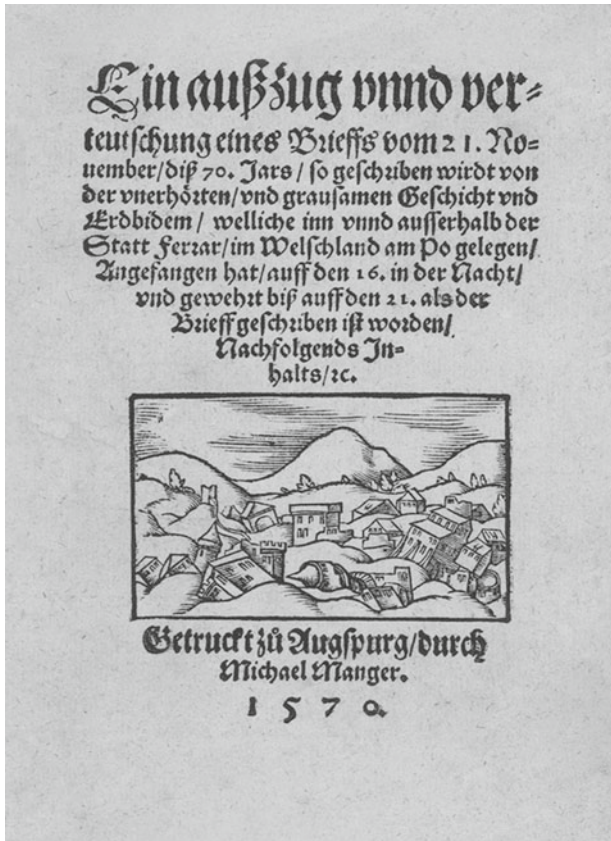


Fig. 4.2 'A destructive earthquake', title-page woodcut, in *Ein ausszug vnnnd ver- teutschung eines Brieffs vom 21. November/ diss 70. Jars ... von der unerhörten/ und grausamen Geschicht und Erbidem/ welliche inn vnnnd aussershalb der Statt Ferrar ...* (Augsburg: Michael Manger, 1570). Zentralbibliothek Zurich Ms. F. 19, fol. 167r

inadequate verse account that appeared at the previous Frankfurt book fair. In the first three pages, therefore, he describes in considerable detail how large crevices appeared as a result of the earthquake, how particular fields then subsided, the approximate length, width and depth of each subsidence (at some points the height of two men), as well as the various trees which had been upended, and the strange formations which appeared in the earth at that time and throughout the following month. Despite the precision in the account, there is a palpable sense of anxiety in the description of the earthquake's impact. The area was so devastated that owners could no longer recognize their fields; no-one could explain what had happened 'either orally or in writing';¹⁹ observers could no longer imagine how it all looked before; the events were certainly 'wondrous' (*wunderbarlich*). Moreover, the tension seems to mount towards the end of the first part of the report: these events haven't just happened once; they occurred about four times in February; they are becoming worse; something similar occurred in the same field nine years ago; it also occurred in another nearby field one year ago. The earthquake and earth subsidence are revealed to be part of a recurring pattern of events.

The second part of the pamphlet moves from description to explanation. The author elaborates the causes which 'wise, learned and experienced men' have put forward to explain this earthquake and earth subsidence.²⁰ He therefore provides explanations from nature, as given by Anaxagoras, Anaximenes, Aristotle, Seneca and Pliny. Yet as well as these natural explanations, the author claims, the fundamental and incontrovertible main cause of these phenomena is God's wish to produce this special event and miracle as a warning to humankind, just as He did with the most horrifying earthquakes and floods in the previous year in Italy and the Netherlands. Like comets and eclipses that also have natural causes, continues the author, these are 'signs and works of God, which always mean something and have consequences.'²¹ Therefore, rather than disregard these warnings, we need to examine what God means by them.

The author's answers to this question are essentially four. Firstly, God wishes to display his divine power and his justified anger (*gerechten zorn*) at human sin. Such disasters, therefore, are manifestations of that power and also of that anger, and need to be acknowledged as such. Secondly, such disastrous events occur in order that God's name (or nature) be known and that we address Him correctly. The reference to Isaiah 64 makes the meaning very clear: as the mountains quake when God makes known His name, so all need to tremble at these terrifying, visible signs

of God's power. Thirdly, Christ specifically indicated that earthquakes are signs of the Last Days (Matthew 24:7–8); and so this one surely is, given the recent frequent occurrence. They are forewarnings of Christ's Second Coming and the ultimate destruction of the whole world, which these earthquakes and subsidences indicate is in process of collapse. Fourthly, we know from philosophical writings that death, plague and distress follow such earthquakes. But since we usually ignore such things, 'the earth will open its jaws, bare its teeth, show its gullet and swallow us up.'²² In what seems to be a reference to the biblical story of the sons of Korah (Numbers 16:28–35),²³ the earth is made an actor and accomplice in a cosmic apocalyptic scenario, the gap between natural and divine causation collapses, and the earthquake that struck the village of Hornung in Hesse in 1571 achieves significance within God's divine plan.

The location of this earthquake within a teleological progression of the End Time, as one critical moment in the process of the natural world's ultimate and total collapse, heightens the sense of present disaster by reference to further disaster to come, and raises the level of the pamphlet's violent rhetoric. Indeed, the last section of the pamphlet presents a very anthropomorphic view of the natural world, as it experiences the powerful impact of God's outburst of divine anger. The author describes the world as not only quaking and trembling, but as cut up, lacerated and buried, and in deep sorrow for the lives of its inhabitants; the heavens and the air are said to pour out clouds of tears as they weep for human sin; and the crops of the earth cease to bear fruit for the same reason.²⁴ The final advice of the author, then, is that all should repent and pray that we be saved when the Son of Man comes, as described in Luke 21:8–28—one of the classical descriptions of the Last Days as a time of war, earthquakes, plagues and famine.

While the beginning of the End Time exhibits a cosmic outpouring of emotion—of God's burning and destructive anger, mankind's trembling fear and distress, and the earth's sorrowful tears—it also registers that the time for liberation and redemption is not far off. The proximity of the Second Coming or Last Judgment is a continuing refrain in numerous broadsheets and pamphlets—and it is a literal refrain in some of the printed ballads found in Wick's collection. War, plague and price rises—the three horses of the Apocalypse—are pushing us forward; but the kingdom of God is nigh.²⁵ In this pamphlet too, the reader is encouraged to await the coming of the Son of Man (Luke 21:25–28).

The imminence of Christ's Coming and the complexity of expectation stimulated by the wait for it also help create a heightened emotional climate

in which natural disasters acquire cosmic and supernatural significance. Such a process can be clearly discerned in a pamphlet of 1567 which tells of two disasters: the burial of seven towns in an earthquake in Saracena, in the vicinity of Nice, in 1564; and the terrible destruction caused by a landslide and avalanche that struck the Alpine village of Andora [Andras] in the Aosta Valley in Savoy (Fig. 4.3).²⁶ In the account of the Saracena

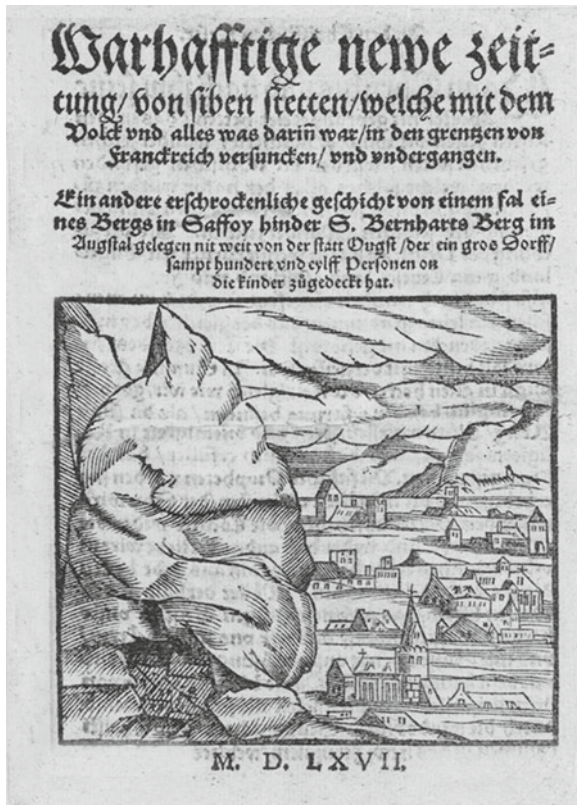


Fig. 4.3 'An avalanche in the Aosta Valley in Savoy in 1564, and the burial of seven towns following an earthquake in Saracena near Nice', title-page woodcut, in *Wahrhafftige neue zeit- tzung/ von siben stetten ... versuncken/ und vndergangen. Ein andere erschrockenliche geschicht von einem fal eines Bergs in Saffoy*, (Strasbourg: Thiebolt Berger, 1567). Zentralbibliothek Zurich, Ms. F. 17, fol. 108r

earthquake the apocalyptic framework is introduced right from the beginning, emphasising that these events are the wondrous signs prophesied by Christ and his Apostles rather than simply a natural disaster. The earthquake is framed within a series of recent disasters that demonstrate this underlying link: a plague throughout much of Europe that brought widespread mortality; the famine and inflation of 1557; war, bloodshed and religious conflict (a clear reference to the outbreak of religious war in France); the appearance of false prophets that induce sons to oppose their fathers and daughters their mothers; and now this earthquake, which has caused a local lake to break its banks and resulted in mass drownings, as well as volcanic activity that has led to the burial of seven towns. In short, the fear we experience daily is universal.²⁷ The author concludes therefore, that the Last Day must be near, as described in Matthew 24, a fundamental biblical text for the description of apocalyptic distress—war, famine and earthquakes—before the Second Coming. So Christians need to repent and stay ready for this Coming. But then the author adds a critical and curious warning: If men remain stubborn and do not abandon their sins, God ‘will shorten the days’ (*die Tage verkürzen*)—presumably meaning that disasters will increase exponentially.

The call to abandon sin and repent is a commonplace in religious responses to disaster.²⁸ Its purpose is to stay God’s anger and justice, and avoid future punishment, if not for the rest of society, at least for a small group of the good or elect—as in the stories of Noah or Lot, biblical exempla which frequently appear in these accounts. Indeed this is the most common rationale for the numerous visions and signs that are said to appear in the sky—frequently featuring rods of punishment, scenes of battle and violence, a profusion of blood or at least swathes of red which refer to blood and/or fire.²⁹ These are frequently referred to as signs of God’s love, as in the Saracena earthquake pamphlet, warning humanity how it might avoid or mitigate further punishments in the future. Indeed, the apocalyptic timetable, once begun, is rarely presented as inevitable and beyond human and divine influence. For the notion of apocalyptic time as highly flexible provides a dynamic solution: the extreme nature of the physical devastation and destruction can be recorded through the frequent use of terms such as ‘unheard of’, ‘un-experienced’, ‘beyond human memory’; the overwhelming psychological impact of the threat of such destruction can be acknowledged through the description of heightened emotional states of fear, dread and even terror; yet any passivity or trauma in the face of such devastation and terror can be overcome. The

attempt to ensure that God does not ‘shorten the days’ relates to the flexible nature of apocalyptic time and is a feature of the apocalyptic schema that does not seem to have been paid the attention it deserves.

This flexible notion of time is also underpinned by frequent references in such pamphlets to the fact that Christ’s Second Coming, as the moment of ultimate victory over the wicked and liberation from present evils, can also be hastened. For sometimes signs and portents are understood as signifying the collapse of the world during an End Time that has already arrived, rather than simply forewarnings of the approaching Last Days. Such ardent requests to hasten Christ’s Coming seem to originate especially at times of intense persecution and hardship, when that persecution is read as a sign that the Last Days have arrived. For example, in a pamphlet of 1561 concerning the terrible murder of 88 Christians in the Kingdom of Naples³⁰—of which the preface is full of references to the martyrs of Revelation and their ultimate victory—the key Scriptural reference framing the account is the breaking of the fifth seal in Revelation 6:9–11:

When he broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of all the people who had been killed on account of the word of God, for witnessing to it. They shouted aloud, Holy, faithful Master, *how much longer will you wait* before you pass sentence and take vengeance for our death on the inhabitants of the earth?’ Each of them was given a white robe, until the roll was complete and their fellow servants and brothers had been killed just as they had been.³¹

These verses, and especially the words ‘How much longer will you wait?’ are the basis for a recurring theme in this pamphlet, as the author cites a number of apocalyptic texts. 1 Thessalonians 5:1–4, for instance, refers to the Last Day coming ‘as suddenly as labour pains come on a pregnant woman’; and Luke 18:6–8 assures the reader of God’s promise that justice will indeed be done to God’s chosen, ‘who cry to him day and night even when he delays to help them’; but when justice is done, it will be ‘done speedily’. The author then ends the introductory section with the urgent cry from the end of the Book of Revelation (22:20) for Christ to fulfill his promise: ‘Yes, come Lord Jesus.’³² Anguish, pain, revenge, hope, justice and victory, are all refracted through the changing prism of apocalyptic time.

In the second half of the pamphlet, following an extremely graphic and highly emotional account of the terrible torture and murder suffered by the eighty-eight Neapolitan martyrs, whose bodies were first quartered

and then their body parts hung on pikes, the author concludes with a similar urgent cry in citing Psalm 79. This psalm includes a national lament and complaint about the murderous policies pursued against God's people, the terrible state to which they have been reduced, and a desperate cry for God to avenge them by pouring out His anger on their enemies. The verse cited by the pamphleteer from that Psalm (79:13) again raises the urgent question of divine intervention, which the previous context clearly locates in apocalyptic time: 'May the groans of the captive reach you: by your mighty arm rescue those doomed to die!'³³

The reading of events in the past to make sense of those in the present is a well-known characteristic of this pamphlet literature. Past time is considered as a series of interrelated events; and present events reveal their significance through their relationship to these recurring events in the past. Visions in the sky, for instance, are routinely described and explained by reference to the past, and to the biblical past in particular.³⁴ But for readers and viewers this also surely induces feelings of greater assuredness and confidence in reading present events, and by virtue of that, a heightened emotional response to their meanings. A pamphlet reporting a frightening storm and extraordinary apparitions seen in the sky in January 1538 over Thuringia and the mountainous region north of Bamberg, as well as other apparitions in Poland and Turkey, provides an illuminating example of this process.³⁵ The wondrous signs that were seen in the sky are clearly represented on the pamphlet's title-page (Fig. 4.4). In the right top corner is the star with the long fiery rays that created a circular disk, from which lightning erupted in the form of a blinding white light together with loud claps of thunder; the terrible wind that shook houses and created shock and fear for peoples' lives; the comet with the extra-long tail, together with a shooting star and fiery streamers. At upper left are the corpses that were also seen, a military banner and a blood-red cross; in the centre, visions of men in armour, as well as a number of swords; above them a huge star with blood-red streamers; and beneath them a fire that had the appearance of huge, thick sparks falling from the sky, as well as the group of wedding guests whose iron roasting spits have caught fire.³⁶

While various explanations for these apparitions are given, the author privileges the historical. Astrologers, for instance, claim that comets with unnaturally long tails 'stretching into the house of bloodthirsty Mars' predict the punishment of the clergy, conflict between the nobility, or the growth of different sects, all of which will rouse 'the bloodthirsty Turk' to wage war and shed blood. Yet more importantly, argues the author,

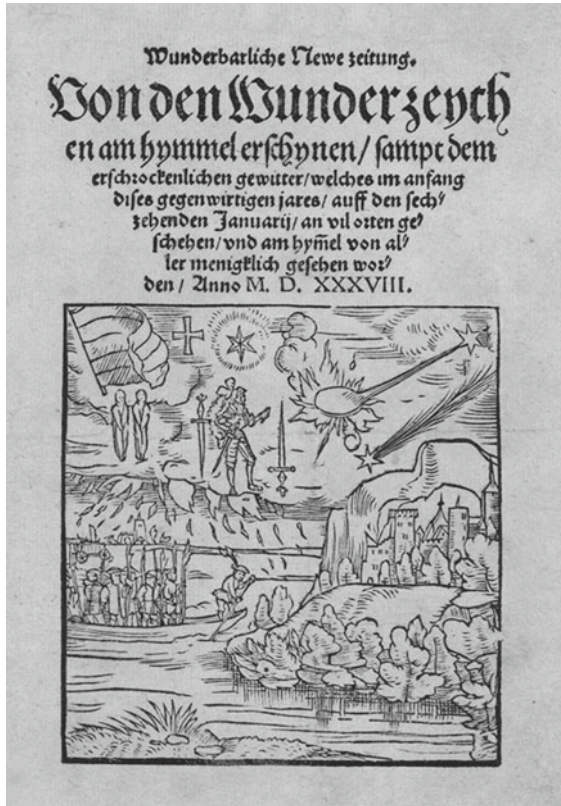


Fig. 4.4 ‘The wondrous apparitions seen in the sky and a terrifying storm on 16 January 1538’. title-page woodcut, in *Wunderbarliche Neue Zeitung. Von den Wunderzeichen am hymmel erschynen/ sampt dem erschrockenlichen gewitter/welches ... auff den sechzehenden Januarii/ an vil orten geschehen/...* (1538). Zentralbibliothek Zurich, Ms. F. 15, fol. 18r

similar signs have appeared in the past and have been followed by death, war, bloodshed or hunger—and these signs are increasing daily! Despite human stubbornness, we surely know how God can act: He destroyed the whole world with the flood, and Sodom and Gomorrah by fire. And contrary to the present, when the people of Nineveh saw God’s anger, they

repented of their sins and their city was saved. Another relevant case from the past is the large number of crosses and wondrous signs seen in the sky at the time of King Ludwig of Hungary,³⁷ which served as a warning of possible future evil if the people did not abandon their sins. Events in past time create assurance in one's understanding of the present, a sharper focus on the need to take such dire warnings to heart as manifestations of divine anger, and a greater urgency in responding in an appropriate emotional and social manner—with humility, remorse, fear of God, repentance, brotherly love and thanks.³⁸

When signs are understood to point quite explicitly to future time, however, the very concept of time is seriously challenged and a range of different, and sometimes seemingly contradictory, emotions seem to be drawn on. A pamphlet concerning a wondrous apparition in the sky above a village near Elsterberg in Vogtland on 2 May 1568,³⁹ describes how a nobleman, Caspar von Forchheim, and three of his friends went out for a walk and saw a black cloud, which looked as though there would be a massive downpour. But as the cloud came closer they saw the visions that are depicted on the pamphlet's title-page (Fig. 4.5). Christ first appeared with huge arms outstretched as though he was hanging on the cross, as we see at top left in the woodcut. Then he was seen seated on a chair, holding an unsheathed sword and surrounded by angels blowing trumpets. Below him a large number of ancestors could be seen,⁴⁰ with arms upraised invoking the Lord; while on Christ's left was the Devil, recognisable by his clawed feet and his 'terrifying, horrible form'; and amongst the crowd he had gathered together were horse riders, including other devils, and behind them a powerful glow, as though everything was on fire (presumably a reference to the fires of hell, represented by the dark hatching within the clouds on the right). But what especially brought 'great fear and horror' (*grosser furcht und schrecken*) to the onlookers was the Devil, who rode into the people seen between the two crowds in the centre, dragged some of them out by their hair, and while still riding the horse, pulled them over to the devils' side.

This vision of the Last Judgment, concludes the author, was meant to be a fatherly warning that all need to take to heart. Readers need to keep their gaze focused daily on this judgment at the end of time, he writes, no doubt by experiencing the same fear and horror of the Vogtland nobles at seeing the aggression of the Devil at that critical moment. But the inclusion in the pamphlet of a report of a second vision in the same year—this time in the city of Basel where the pamphlet was printed—shows how

**Wunderbare aber
Warhaffte Gesicht vñ erscheinung
in Wolcken des Himmels auff den andern
tag Meyens in diesem lauffenden acht
vnd sechzigsten Jar.**



**Sampt angehenckter geschicht/ inn dem
vergangnen LXVII. Jar auff den vij. tag
Aprellens auß dem luffte geöffnbarer/
beyde vorhin niemalen/ aber jets
under zür warnung im
truck außgangen.**

Fig. 4.5 ‘A wondrous vision of Christ on a cross and as judge at the Last Judgment, seen in the sky on 2 May 1568’, in S. C. B., *Wunderbare aber warhaffte Gesicht und erscheinung ... auff den andern tag Meyens in diesem lauffenden acht und sechtzigsten Jar ...* (Basel: Samuel Apiarius, 1568). Zentralbibliothek Zurich, Ms. F. 18 fol. 75r

this contemporary apparition of the Last Judgment in distant Saxony, could help make sense of the Basel vision.⁴¹ The vision seen in the city and region of Basel by many members both of the nobility and of the common people, involved a fire that fell to earth in the shape of a long lance and then changed its shape into a massive ball. The author rejects the view of

some that this is a sign of a more fruitful year, for fiery lances, a sword⁴² and balls, seldom signify wellbeing. He draws on Josephus to argue that comets preceded the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish people at the time of Titus and Vespasian, and fire from lances appeared in the first Roman Civil War. Then in an apparent allusion to the figure of Christ in the earlier Vogtland vision (Fig. 4.5), the author questions whether Christ's 'outstretched arms' (which he also refers to in Isaiah 14:26–27—to be used against the arrogance, pride, tyranny and capriciousness of Babylon, 'which we have before our eyes in France and the Netherlands'),⁴³ might not also be used to target contemporary Christians' lack of repentance with 'the fire of misery'. He therefore advises that we pray that this is simply a punishment, rather than a case of divine rejection and abandonment to the fire of hell. In this highly graphic and complex passage, the author brings together the outstretched arms of Christ in the Vogtland vision, the fireball in the Basel vision, the biblical prophecy of God's destructive power in Isaiah, apocalyptic allusions to the Last Judgment and also to the contemporary religious wars in France and the Netherlands. Time and place have been collapsed, and it is unclear whether the visions and wars are instruments of warning and divine punishment, or direct signs of judgment in an apocalyptic End Time that has already begun. It is within such a space of confusion and uncertainty, I would suggest, that emotional responses can become extreme and even contradictory.

To conclude: many of the sixteenth-century pamphlets that include accounts of disaster demonstrate a multiple and layered understanding of the origins and significance of such events, an understanding that ascribes to them both natural and supernatural meaning. It is this very ambiguity—even if it is momentary—that elicits layered and conflicting emotional responses such as fear and wonder. This would seem to represent a response to the nature of events that are difficult to categorize, that allows them to be considered as beyond or outside human experience: they are 'unheard of', or 'unimagined', as accounts generally claim, incapable of clear description. I would suggest that this momentous out-of-time experience of disasters, one which is deeply emotional, confusing or at least conflicting, creates favourable psychological conditions for a willingness to look to apocalyptic ideas to give meaning to these cataclysmic events. For strong emotional feelings of being out-of-time can soon make sense if time is equated with the End Time.

For that reason it is critical to gain a much better understanding of how writers and artists conceptualise apocalyptic time. As Richard Landes puts

it, ‘timing lies at the centre of all apocalyptic rhetoric.’⁴⁴ Chronological time first helps define the meaning of particular moments as apocalyptic, gives them a place in the teleological movement towards the End, and helps situate the proximity of those events to the End. Then once the End Time is proximate, once one is within what seems to be this new time dimension, the regularity of linear time collapses and becomes highly flexible. It seems now to be subservient to a moral rather than a temporal logic and is invested with hyperintensity: it can be quickened, lengthened, or shortened. This gives the recognition of the End Time an intense urgency, and with that urgency comes anxiety, dread and anger, but also hope and longing, as well as an ardent zeal that justice be carried out, and an intense joy and comfort at this ultimate prospect. It demands remorse, repentance and abandonment of sin in order to avoid further punishment; but it also calls for a hastening of the Last Day, a quickening of the Second Coming, in order to bring about the ultimate victory of the good and the delivery of vengeance on the wicked. Within such a framework, as many pamphlets of the later sixteenth century demonstrate, although disasters bring suffering, that suffering can be more easily borne; disasters can act as instruments of terrifying warning, but also as signs of fervent hope and longing, even joy and vengeance. Through an apocalyptic reading of time, new emotional registers can transform the understanding, and presumably also the experience, or at least the memory, of physical disaster. Ultimately, the emotional power and deep-felt conviction of Apocalypse drives individuals and groups to action.

NOTES

1. Frances Carey, ed., *The Apocalypse and the Shape of Things to Come* (London: British Museum Press, 1999); Elaine Pagels, *Revelations: Visions, Prophecy, and Politics in the Book of Revelation* (New York: Viking, 2012); Robin Barnes, *Prophecy and Gnosis: Apocalypticism in the Wake of the Lutheran Reformation* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988); Richard Landes, *Heaven on Earth: The Varieties of the Millennial Experience* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Caroline Walker Bynum and Paul Freedman, eds, *Last Things: Death and the Apocalypse in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000); Bernard McGinn, *Apocalypticism in the Western Tradition* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1994).
I thank Charlotte-Rose Millar and Julie Davies 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. Irena Backus, *Reformation Readings of the Apocalypse: Geneva, Zurich and Wittenberg* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
3. Marjorie Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages* (1969; repr., Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993); Marjorie Reeves, *Joachim of Fiore and the Prophetic Future* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977); E. Randolph Daniel, 'Exodus and Exile: Joachim of Fiore's Apocalyptic Scenario,' in *Last Things*, ed. Bynum and Freedman, 156–187.
4. Peter Parshall, 'The Vision of the Apocalypse in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,' in *The Apocalypse*, ed. Carey, 99–125; Jonathan Alexander, 'The Last Things: Representing the Unrepresentable. The Medieval Tradition,' in *The Apocalypse*, ed. Carey, 43–63.
5. Barnes, *Prophecy and Gnosis*; Richard Bauckham, *Tudor Apocalypse, Sixteenth Century Apocalypticism, Millenarianism and the English Reformation: From John Bale to John Foxe and Thomas Brightman* (Oxford: The Sutton Courtenay Press, 1978); Bryan Ball, *A Great Expectation: Eschatological Thought in English Protestantism to 1660* (Leiden: Brill, 1975).
6. Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages*, (1957; repr., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970); Richard Landes, *Heaven on Earth: The Varieties of the Millennial Experience* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Laura A. Smoller, 'Of Earthquakes, Hail, Frogs, and Geography: Plague and the Investigation of the Apocalypse in the Later Middle Ages,' in *Last Things*, ed. Bynum and Freedman, 156–187.
7. For Wick and his collection, see Franz Mauelshagen, *Wunderkammer auf Papier. Die Wickiana zwischen Reformation und Volksglaube* (Zurich, 2008), and works cited in Charles Zika, 'Visual signs of Imminent Disaster in the Sixteenth-Century Zurich Archive of Johann Jakob Wick,' in Monica Juneja and Gerrit Jasper Schenck, eds, *Disaster as Image: Iconographies and Media Strategies across Europe and Asia* (Regensburg: Schnell und Steiner, 2014), 43–53, at 43, n.1. The collection of 24 folio volumes of an average 600 pages each is held in the Zurich Zentralbibliothek: Johann Jakob Wick, 'Sammlung von Nachrichten zur Zeitgeschichte aus den Jahren 1560–87,' Zentralbibliothek Zürich (hereafter Wick), F. 12–19, 21–29, 29a, 30–35.
8. See Zika, 'Visual signs,' 45, n. 9. For the genre of the wonder book, see Jennifer Spinks, 'Print and Polemic in Sixteenth-Century France: The *Histoires prodigieuses*, Confessional Identity, and the Wars of Religion,' *Renaissance Studies* 27.1 (2013): 73–96; Jean Céard, *La Nature et Les Prodiges: L'Insolite au XVIIe Siècle* (Geneva: E. Droz, 1996).
9. Franz Mauelshagen, *Wunderkammer*, 60–77.

10. By 1568–69, Wick was convinced that all the biblical signs of the Last Days had been fulfilled and he was living in the End Time. See Barbara Bauer, ‘Die Krise der Reformation. Johann Jacob Wicks Chronik außergewöhnlicher Natur- und Himmelserscheinungen,’ in *Wahrnehmungsgeschichte und Wissensdiskurs im illustrierten Flugblatt der Frühen Neuzeit (1450–1700)*, ed., Wolfgang Harms and Alfred Messerli (Basel: Schwabe & Co. AG Verlag, 2002), 193–236, at 204–5.
11. ‘Von dem grosen fhürigen gsichten welches an der unschuldigen kindlinen tag gesähen,’ in Wick, ‘Sammlung,’ fol. 12, 135v–136r. Also Matthias Senn, ed., *Die Wickiana: Johann Jakob Wicks Nachrichtensammlung aus dem 16. Jahrhundert* (Küsnacht: Raggi Verlag, 1975), 58–9; Wiebke Schwarte, *Nordlichter: Ihre Darstellung in der Wickiana* (Münster: Waxmann, 1999), 119–20. Two versions of the report were published with the same title, by Valentin Neuber in Nuremberg, and by an unknown printer: *Von dem erschrecklichen vnnd grossen fewrigen zeichen, welches am himel am tag der unschuldigen Kindlein, im Jar nach der geburt Christi, MD LXI...* accessed 20 February 2015, http://reader.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/fs1/object/display/bsb10203608_00005.html.
12. Wick, F. 12, fol. 136r: ‘Fhürige gsichten bedeutend offt Gottes zorn und straff, mit schwert, bluoet ververgiesen, verhergung der landen.’ Also Senn, *Die Wickiana*, 58; Schwarte, *Nordlichter*, 120.
13. These biblical references are omitted from Senn, *Die Wickiana*.
14. *Wunderzeichen/ Eines Erschrecklichen/ Seltzamen Erdbidems/ da in einem Feldt/ die Aecker eines langen Spiess tieff sind eingesuncken/ und etliche Aecker unnd Wisen/ dreissig/ fuenff und dreissig/ Item/ sechtzig Schuch lang/ an ein ander stet fort gerückt seindt/ Geschehen diss 1571. Jars/ im Hornung/ bey Homburg auff der Ohm/ Im Landt zu Hessen/ unnd durch L.M. Pfarrherrn daselbst gantz fleissig beschrieben* (Frankfurt, 1571): Wick, F. 19, fols 251r–256v.
15. For recent references to discussions on ‘experience,’ see Chap. 7 by Sigrun Haude in this volume, at notes 2–6.
16. The illustration is very similar to that of Tobias Stimmer in his *Neue künstlicher Figuren Biblischer Historien* (Basel: T. Gwarin, 1576). See Carey, ed., *The Apocalypse*, 185, fig. 95.
17. L.M., *Wunderzaichen. Eines erschrücklichen Seltzamen Erdbidems... geschehen diß 1571. Jars/ im Hornung bey Homburg auff der Ohm/ Im Landt zu Hessen ...* (Augsburg: Michael Manger, 1571), accessed May 13, 2015, http://books.google.com.au/books/about/Wunderzaichen_Eines_Erdbidems_da_in_eine.html?id=_aRNAAAaAAJ&redir_esc=y. The earthquake is also later reported in Matthäus Merian: *Topographia Hassiae* (Frankfurt am Main: Matthäus Merians Erben, 1655), 93, accessed 13

- February, 2015, http://de.wikisource.org/w/index.php?title=Seite:De_Merian_Hassiae_135.jpg&oldid=1010558 (version of 27.01.2010).
18. For Manger's pamphlet on the Ferrara and Modena earthquakes, see Wick, 'Sammlung,' fol. 19, 167r–169v: *Ein ausszug unnd verteutschung eines Brieffs vom 21. November/ diss 70. Jars/ so geschriben wirdt von der unerhörten/ und grausamen Geschicht und Erbidem/ welliche inn unnd ausserhalb der Statt Ferrar/ im Welschland am Po gelegen/ Angefangen hat/ auff dem 16. in der Nacht/ und gewehrt biss auff den 21. ...*(Augsburg: Michael Manger, 1570). For literature on the Ferrara earthquake, and also its disputed apocalyptic readings, Zika, 'Visual signs,' 46–8.
 19. Wick, F. 19, fol. 253r: 'Summa man kan es keinem mit mund oder feder erklären'.
 20. Wick, F. 19, fol. 254r: 'es seien viel mehr zu hören weise und gelehrte erfahrene Menner/ welche von diesen dingen fleissig geschrieben und gelehrt haben.'
 21. Wick, F. 19, fol. 255r: 'Nichts destoweniger/ seinds zeichen unnd wercke Gottes/ welche allezeit etwas bedeuten und mit sich bringen.'
 22. Wick, F. 19, fol. 255v: 'darumb muss also die Erdt ihren mund auff thun/ und mit iren scharpffen Zeenen herfür blecken/ auff dass sie uns ihren Schlund weise/ damit sie uns etwan zu sich schlurcken wirdt.'
 23. See Chap. 14 by David Lederer in this volume.
 24. Wick, F. 19, fol. 256r: 'Die Erdt trawret/ dass sie so manchen bösen Büben tragen und nehren sol/ unnd von so Gotlösen Leuten zurgraben unnd zerhacket wirdt/ derhalben schüt sie sich/ wirdt unfruchtbar/ und bricht uns in allen gaben ab...Der Himmel und Luft/ giessen gantze wolcken und unerhörte Regen und Wassergüsse herab/ damit sie unser Sündtlich leben beweinen...' For the similarity of this to recent ideas of disasters as a response to human relationships and the environments, see Anthony Oliver-Smith and Susanna Hoffman, ed., *The Angry Earth: Disaster in Anthropological Perspective* (New York and London: Routledge, 1999), 5–12; Susanna Hoffman and Anthony Oliver-Smith eds, *Catastrophe and Culture* (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 2002); Monica Juneja and Franz Mauelshagen, 'Disasters and Pre-Industrial Societies: Historiographical Trends and Comparative Perspectives,' *The Medieval History Journal* 10 (2007): 1–31, at 17–20.
 25. See for instance the refrain at the end of each verse of the ballad headed *Das lied Im thon Gott hatt das Evangelium gegeben das wir werden frumb* (Tübingen: Ulrich Morhart): 'Thüt Büss das Himelrieich ist nah.' (Wick, F. 17, fol. 5r-v).
 26. *Wahrhafftige neue zeitung/ von siben stetten/ welche mit dem Volck und alles was darinn war/ in den grentzen von franckreich versuncken/ und undergangen. Ein andere erschrockenliche geschicht von einem fal eines Bergs*

- in Saffoy binder S. Bernbarts Berg im Augstal gelegen nit weit von der statt Ougst/ der ein gros Dorff/ sampt hundert und eylff Personen on die kinder zügedeckt hat.* (Strasbourg: Thiebolt Berger, 1567) in Wick, F. 17, fols 108r–111r. An account of the Aosta valley avalanche is also found in a report by the Bern reformer, Johannes Haller, in Wick, F. 16, fols 155v–156r; also Senn, 138–39.
27. Wick, F. 17, fol. 108v: ‘In Summa grosse Angst in allen hecken der welt/ gleich wie wir/ got bessers/ täglich bey der erfahrung befinden...’
28. See Chap. 2 by Alex Walsham in this volume.
29. For some examples in Wick’s collection, see Zika, ‘Visual signs,’ 48–50.
30. *Zeitung. Warhafftiger bericht/ von dem erschrocklichen Mordt/ an acht und achtzig Christlichen/ unschuldigen personen/ umb des Evangelions willen/ zu Montalo/ im Königreich Neaplis began. gen/ den 11. Junii/ 1561. Aus Welscher inn die Teutsche sprache gebracht.* (Nuremberg: Johann von Berg and Ulrich Neuber, 1561), in Wick, F. 12, fols 40r–44r. A different edition of the pamphlet is found in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Munich, accessed 20 February 2015, http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=QrVSAAAACAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gb_s_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false.
31. Revelation 6:9–11, in the translation of the Jerusalem Bible. The italics are mine.
32. Wick, F. 12, fol. 42v: ‘Ja, komm Herr Jesu.’
33. Wick, F. 12, fol. 44v: ‘Lass für dich kommen HERR/ das seüffzten der Gefangenen: Nach deinem grossen Arm behallt die Kinder des Todes.’ The translation is from the Jerusalem Bible. This verse features in a number of pamphlets dealing with cases of religious persecution, as in a 1568 report that on the order of the Duke of Alba, two Antwerp parents and their child were executed by burning after the parents had baptized the child according to the Reformed rite (Wick, F. 17, fol. 278v).
34. Bauer, ‘Die Krise der Reformation,’ 215–16.
35. *Wunderbarliche Neue zeitung. Von den Wunderzeychen am hymmel ershynen/ sampt dem erschrockenlichen gewitter/ welches im anfang dises gegenwirtigen jares/ auff den sechzehenden Januarii/ an vil orten geschehen/ und am hymmel von aller meniglich gesehen worden/ Anno M.D. XXXVIII,* in Wick, F. 15, fols 18r–23r.
36. Although Thuringia and the Bamberg region were the main locations where the signs were seen, others were seen in Poland and Turkey.
37. This is likely to be a reference to King Ludwig (or Louis) II of Hungary, who was killed at the Battle of Mohács in 1526.
38. Wick, F. 15, fol. 23r.

39. *Wunderbare aber warhafftige Gesicht und erscheinung in Wolcken des Himmels auff den andern tag Meyens in diesem lauffenden acht und sechtzigsten Jar. Sampt angehenckter geschicht/ inn dem vergangnen LXVII. Jar auff den vii. Tag Aprellens auss dem lufft geoffenbaret/ beyde vorhin niemalen/ aber jetzunder zuer warnung im truck aussgangen.* (Basel: Samuel Apiarius, 1568), in Wick, F. 18, fols 75r–77r.
40. The text locates them ‘behind Christ’s seat’.
41. Wick, F. 18, fols 77r–78r.
42. The mention of a sword is curious here, as the description of the vision does not include a sword. It may be a reference to the sword of judgment held by the figure of Christ, and another indication that the author is conflating the two visions, as I suggest below.
43. Wick F. 18, fol. 78r: ‘den wir inn franckreich unnd Niderlandt vor augen sehen’.
44. Landes, *Heaven on Earth*, 18.

PART II

Violent Upheaval: Unleashed
Emotions

Fear, Indignation, Grief and Relief: Emotional Narratives in War Chronicles from the Netherlands (1568–1648)

Erika Kuijpers

The Revolt of the Netherlands that broke out in 1568 was the beginning of a long and violent war. From the Reformation movement and its repression by the Spanish Habsburg king, Philip II, it developed into a civil war and would eventually end with the recognition of two separate states in 1648: the Dutch Republic in the North and the Habsburg Netherlands in the South. About four generations lived through these eighty years of war. The first ten years were probably the most violent and devastating for the highly urbanised areas of Flanders, Brabant and Holland. From the 1580s onwards the war moved to the zones around these areas in the north and east, and to the frontier zone in Brabant. People's experience varied according to when and where they lived, and according to their social status and their political or religious sympathies. Still, many people experienced violence, atrocities, hatred, fear and devastation. How did these people cope with their memories? Early modern texts that describe these memories, such as life accounts and unpublished chronicles and local histories, are renowned for their factual character and terseness. They are

E. Kuijpers

Faculty of Humanities, VU University Amsterdam, The Netherlands

hard to decode as a source of information for what people subjectively experienced and remembered, or for the expression of their emotions. Moreover, they tend to focus on survival and resilience, on the triumph of good and the punishment of evil, on heroes and martyrs, on miraculous escapes and thanksgiving.

The tendency to frame war and disaster as crimes against humanity with long-lasting social and psychological effects is a relatively recent phenomenon. Sociologist Frank Furedi has observed that until recently reports on disasters focused on the solidarity and resilience of communities, while individuals remained silent about their personal experiences. This was still the case during the 1952 and 1953 floods in England and in the Netherlands in which many people were killed. At the time, not one reporter asked the survivors about their feelings. Nowadays the focus has shifted to the psychological state of the individual, creating a cultural narrative of vulnerability.¹

The perceived senselessness of victimhood seems to be a key problem in modern mental health care. From therapeutic practices in modern post-war societies across the globe we have learned that the production of a comprehensible and meaningful narrative of what happened, in either oral or written form, is a very effective way of coping with traumatic memories and the negative emotions associated with them. Most successful are narrative therapies that connect painful and emotional memories to a more cognitive perception of the past—putting events in the right order and creating a distance in time by doing so—as well as framing them in a narrative that gives a sense of direction by, for example, underlining moral achievements and personal growth.² The neurological explanation for the positive effect of doing this is that the memories no longer activate only the emotional brain, but also instantly connect to the cognitive networks that fit the memories into a more rational story, one that people can bear to think about. This may stop so-called unwanted intrusions of these memories and the emotions that may come with them. Victims also need narratives to help them reconnect to their social environment and to provide social meaning for their experiences. Narratives are meant for sharing. They explain the causes and consequences of experiences in a way that makes sense to contemporaries and establish the meaning of the events within the cultural—often religious—framework that they share.³

The psychological need for framing and understanding war experiences through writing seems universal. In considering war chronicles, diaries, memoirs and manuscript histories in the early modern Netherlands, I

would argue that our ancestors seem to have had far fewer difficulties in telling their stories than we do, even if the war they lived through was a form of hell. Many authors write that their experiences are ‘indescribable’. Nonetheless these authors, laymen, and citizens—Catholics and Protestants alike—found ways to order their experiences, to ascribe clear meanings to their memories and to frame their fears, despairs, and sorrows in religious narratives about the purpose of suffering and endurance. Constancy, resignation and trust in a good Lord, divine providence or eternal rewards for the just were some of the accepted ways of dealing with violence, insecurity and social disruption. Casting these experiences in existing narratives of martyrdom and suffering was common practice.⁴

Yet, while the memory of the fear and horrors as well as grief usually dominate narratives of suffering and salvation, here and there we find emotions of another order. These include, for example, indignation or anger about specific people, often locals, who are blamed for complicity in what happened, and accused of cowardice or betrayal. These are tales about fellow citizens who turned into enemies. While authors describe the war in eschatological terms and attribute the events to God’s will, they may blame specific individuals or groups for their role. The indignation that pops up in many accounts is usually strikingly socio-political in nature, and therefore seems to be a less dignified part of the grand narrative of suffering, resignation and mercy. For the modern reader this seems to reflect a double agenda. Some texts may switch from a highly religious narrative of sin, suffering, repentance and salvation (within which the war experience can be framed), to the rather banal details of local politics, social relations and precise accounts of who took what from whom. How do the close descriptions of the here and now fit in with the narrative of a soul on its road to salvation?

APOCALYPTIC AND PHYSICAL FEAR

In many war chronicles and histories, fear was typically presented as fear of the wrath of God, or of the End Time. The Last Judgment would be announced by wars, earthquakes, famines, plagues, false prophets and hatred, as had been foretold by Christ (Matthew 24:3–13). In the summer of 1566, the number of those attending illicit field sermons around cities in the Netherlands rose exponentially, and in August of that year, amidst eruptions of anger and violence, churches and monasteries were attacked. This upheaval caused confusion and fear among the population. Marcus

van Vaernewijck, a respectable citizen of Ghent, wrote that the people of Ghent were actively looking for signs in the sky in the hope of confirmation that God was still in control of what was going on. Other people fell ill because of fear, and in bed at night people ‘sighed and wept, and lay with folded hands, both man and woman.’⁵

In many other places, the troubles and the Revolt had indeed been foretold. The disaster of war was predicted by the appearance of a ‘horrific’ comet, or other divine signs like whales washed ashore, eclipses, or even large-scale battles seen in the sky.⁶ In the context of the early sixteenth-century Reformation, the appeal to the Apocalypse gained particular popularity among Protestant circles.⁷ By the end of the sixteenth century cosmic signs and natural disasters had become an effective weapon in the war propaganda produced by Catholics as well. The disastrous ‘All Saints flood’ of November 1570, which killed thousands of people in the North Sea coastal area, was interpreted by those loyal to the Spanish king as a clear punishment for image-breaking and the revolt. In this situation, Protestants were the first to argue that the Netherlands had always suffered from frequent inundations and that floods were a natural phenomenon in this region, a natural condition of the land, as it were. As Raingard Eßer argues, the interpretation of the flood became part of a political debate from the late sixteenth century onwards.⁸ In many of the chronicles and histories of the Dutch Revolt, the authors stress that they saw these signs with their own eyes. As a counter-point to Protestant examples, the appearance in the sky of a cross of Burgundy, as well as fighting men, three coffins and a red sword were reported retrospectively to have been witnessed in the Brabant town of Weert in the winter of 1566.⁹

Andreas Bähr rightly argues that fear in such instances is often not described as an inner feeling of the individual but rather as a sensation through which the working of divine or cosmic powers can be sensed.¹⁰ Subjects are, as it were, infected with fear, which is often described as a bodily experience.¹¹ The appropriate reaction was considered to be a religious one: faith, repentance and steadfastness. Texts by clerics, in particular, stress the sin that is omnipresent. An anonymous sister of a Tertiary monastery in Den Bosch (Bois le Duc) writes:

O Lord, how all your creatures suffer! Shall this apprehensiveness last any longer? O, Lord, I have deserved it: forgive me that I have sinned so grievously against thee.¹²

She and her sisters prayed day and night.

By contrast, many chronicles also record another type of fear: ordinary mortal fear, the fear of violence and rape, the fear of treason, of the loss of property and the agony of death. From August 1566 onwards the clergy in the Netherlands live in constant fear of a threat from the so-called Beggars, the rebel army of the prince of Orange, who were said to sack convents and maltreat and chase away their inhabitants.¹³ The rumour was spread and mentioned in all convent chronicles that the Beggars would rape nuns and kill clergymen. Since important sections of the local populations sympathised with the Beggars, the threat of violence was uncomfortably close to home. In many convents the nuns reported spending long nights awake, praying and crying in the dark, fully dependent on the protection of male citizens, usually relatives.¹⁴ The tension was felt in the summer of 1566 more generally across the entire populations of towns. According to Godevaert van Haecht, an artisan in Antwerp who presumably sympathised with Lutheranism, people started to buy weapons, hoping that they could defend their homes if necessary.¹⁵ The words fear, fearful or fearing appear in nearly every single page of his chronicle describing the period from 1565 to 1574 (285 instances in total).¹⁶ Carpenter Pieter Joossen from Middelburg describes the years of religious troubles as the time when townsmen became one another's enemies, and neighbours started to fear each other.¹⁷

Collective fear was fed by war propaganda and rumours that spread all over the country.¹⁸ While in 1566 most authors spoke of general confusion and worries, the media conjured up enemies that became more evil and cruel in the course of the following years. The Habsburg regime soon gained a reputation for exceptional harshness because of its persecution of heretics and punishment of the iconoclasts of 1566. Indignation at ruthless executions by the newly established Council of Troubles was widespread. Even those who did not sympathise with the Calvinists at all found the measures taken by the authorities out of proportion.¹⁹ In the following years (1572–75) when the regime began to sack and plunder rebellious cities, the public image of the Spanish governors further deteriorated. Propagandists for the Revolt started to invoke images of Spanish tyranny, cruelty and satanic fury. Horror and disgust were expressed in descriptions and news-sheets of the so-called 'Furies', in which innocents were killed in cold blood: even children, the old and sick, and pregnant women.²⁰

The rebel armies created Catholic martyrs in their turn. In 1572 Beggar commander Lumey had 19 priests killed in cold blood, who became known as the Gorcum martyrs.²¹ An anonymous nun in Den Bosch commented:

Oh the evil and wickedness which the Beggars committed there and in all cities! So we cannot thank the Lord enough that he has so far spared us, and that he does not let us all sink together as He did with the Sodomites. Because those who don't have feelings and don't know God, live as if they are animals.²²

In this fragment the personal responsibility of individual Beggars to the crimes they committed, might not seem very clear. Yet in the passages of the chronicle that concern the events in the town of Den Bosch during the rebel regime in 1567, our nun is quite clear about which men were to blame for the suffering of the Catholics. She is not the only author to be so direct. As the Dutch Revolt was a civil war, many authors blamed their fellow citizens for what happened or at least accused them of complicity.

A similar combination of religious narrative and very clear criticism of fellow citizens can be found in the chronicle of a Brabant priest, Father Godfriedus van Thienwinckel, the pastor of the Brabant town of Zichem. In 1616, he felt forced to recount his memories of horrors and deprivations he had been through some thirty years before.²³ They show how much he sacrificed to protect and maintain church and faith. But in his text, he also settles accounts with fellow-citizens who sided with the enemy, such as Jan van Sier, the 'wild mayor of the town of Zichem' who refused entrance to the army of Juan of Austria in 1578.²⁴ This led to a violent assault on the city, and the army killed over a hundred innocent citizens within an hour. The soldiers who sought refuge in the castle when the sacking began were thrown into the river Demer until it was so full of bodies that the sluices of the various water mills would have crashed had they not been opened in time. The mayor was later hanged from a window of the castle (see Fig. 5.1). The notice of the execution is immediately followed by this entry:

At that time also our two largest church bells were cast from the tower and confiscated. But before those events occurred, so sad and bitter that one can hardly find such in the annals from the beginning of the world, they were predicted by a huge and cruel comet flaming in the sky, that for three months, as was told, had been visible, and which I witnessed myself.²⁵



Fig. 5.1 Frans Hogenberg, *Punishment of the town of Zichem*, etching on paper, 1578. Rijksmuseum Amsterdam: object nr. RP-P-OB-78.784-173

Apparently, the sack of the city, the misgovernment by the magistrate and subsequent execution of the mayor, and the loss of the church bells, are of equal importance and could all be part of a single providential narrative. The terrible emotions generated by war—the hate, blame and indignation—were all elements in this story in which God was the ultimate arbiter, and humility and resignation needed to be preached.

RAGE AND BLAME

Trust in the Lord and ultimate justice in the hereafter did not take away the deep indignation some felt about the many misdeeds of their fellow citizens. The bitterness and wounds of a civil war can live on and continue to divide societies for centuries.²⁶ Although this did not happen in the Netherlands, there was still plenty of blame for the misery allocated to specific individuals or groups.

The citizens of Naarden had been intensely divided in the summer of 1572. Twice, sympathisers with the Beggars closed the gates on Spanish troops against the will or orders of the magistrates. When the Spanish

army under the command of Don Fadrique Álvarez de Toledo headed to the north after sacking the rebel town of Malines in early October 1572, the tension in Naarden rose. Various members of the elite were personally harassed as they were inclined to stay loyal to the king. A number of them had to flee the town—and some later believed that these men had incited the Spanish not to spare their compatriots.²⁷ Meanwhile the populace had invited in a rebel garrison, which, however, would by no means be able to resist a Spanish attack. In the following weeks this ‘garrison’ started to raid the surrounding countryside for their forage. On 16 November, the Spanish army sacked Zutphen and headed for Amersfoort, not far from Naarden. Messengers were sent to other rebel towns and to Beggar troops in other parts of Holland to plead for assistance, but with no result. Meanwhile the magistrates tried to persuade the angry citizens to negotiate and offer to surrender, but the rebels closed the gates and forced the garrison to stay.²⁸ Auxiliary troops did not come, and when the town finally decided to surrender it was too late. On the morning of 1 December 1572 seven representatives sent by Naarden set out for the Spanish camp. Half-way there, they met the Spanish Lieutenant-Colonel Juliano Romero, who was on his way to take the town with explicit orders to kill all troops and citizens by way of punishment. The representatives offered him the keys of the town and Romero shook hands with the rector of the Latin School, Lambert Hortensius, thus seemingly accepting the surrender of the city. Allegedly he also gave a verbal promise that he would not kill or injure any of the citizens.²⁹

Once the soldiers had entered the city, however, and had called the male citizens together to swear a new oath to the king, they turned on Naarden’s unarmed inhabitants and killed almost all males in the city. Pieter Aertsz, the author of an eye-witness report and personally sympathetic to the Beggars, managed to hide and survive in the cellar of his burning house. His wife, who had given birth the day before the massacre, managed to escape. She walked through the snow, barefoot and dressed in just her underlinen, with her newborn baby and one-and-a-half-year-old toddler to the town of Huizen. Pieter Aertz estimated that 900 male citizens had been killed. There were 50–60 male survivors, 40 of whom had escaped. The others had been able to ransom themselves.³⁰ The learned rector Hortensius was saved at the order of the Governor of Holland, the Count of Bossu. Some women and children were also killed in the fury, but apparently were not targeted systematically. Subsequently, the town was plundered and set on fire. Peasants from the surrounding countryside

were commanded to demolish the walls and fill the moats, and the corpses were to remain in the open until 21 December. When the hiding place of one of the burgomasters was betrayed five days after the killing, the man was sentenced by Don Fadrique, hanged in the doorway of his house, and his quartered corpse subsequently exhibited on the town gates. In the following days inhabitants from the nearby towns of Muiden and Weesp and the surrounding villages came to carry away what was left in the ruins. The bailiff confiscated the remaining grain stock. Some people from neighbouring towns did not refrain from adding to the misery of the widows and orphans by mocking them in song.³¹

We have two extensive eyewitness accounts of what happened, and their divergence reflects the highly contested character of the memory of the sack. One is written by Pieter Aertz, referred to above, who belonged to a family of local city officials and councillors. He sided with the rebels, and after the sack joined the troops under the notoriously violent Beggar leader, Diederik van Sonoy. Later he became the town's secretary, an office he held from 1586 to 1624. His account, in an anonymous pamphlet published soon after the events, served to free the Beggars from blame: firstly, by stressing that the Spanish captain Romero had broken his word of honour; and secondly, by reporting widely on the atrocities committed by the Spanish troops, who supposedly drank the blood of their victims, cooked and ate their hearts, raped and killed pregnant women, and murdered their unborn children. These stories became widely known when the text was reprinted in a popular work on the Revolt in 1616.³² The text also seems to have been an attempt to rehabilitate the name of Gerrit Pietersz, presumably an uncle of Pieter Aertsz. This Gerrit Pietersz, an alderman, played a heroic role in risking his life to get assistance from rebel troops; on his difficult journey he fell into a hole in the ice and almost drowned. He then travelled to the Spanish camp in an attempt to negotiate a handover of the town in exchange for the survival of its inhabitants. Pietersz returned to Naarden to be with his family after this attempt failed, even though everyone knew that the town would be punished mercilessly and despite the urgent pleas of relatives that he not return and thereby save his life. Yet Pietersz remained loyal to his compatriots and his commission: he assisted in the final negotiations with Romero, and subsequently became a victim of the massacre.

The other eyewitness account of the Naarden events was written by the head of the Latin School, Lambertus Hortensius, and it is far more nuanced. It also includes an implicit apology, as Hortensius was himself one

of the delegates who vainly tried to negotiate peace on the morning of the massacre. He therefore also stresses the appalling Spanish betrayal and the atrocities that followed; but at the same time is very critical of the role of various citizens, and does not spare either side. According to Hortensius, the bailiff of Naarden and the sheriff of the region, both officials of the Stadtholder in the Bailiwick of Het Gooi,³³ were personally responsible for the cruel execution of Burgomaster Hendrik Lampertsz five days after the massacre.³⁴ Hortensius blames the Naarden town officials for cowardice, their inability to resist the foolish aims of the Beggars, and their failure to stay in power when their wisdom was most needed. From a 1596 letter by a former student of Hortensius, Theodorus Thesschen, it becomes even more clear how seriously contested the memories of the summer of 1572 were in Naarden. First of all Thesschen accuses Pieter Aertz of having destroyed Hortensius's manuscript because it was not sufficiently 'in favour of the Beggars'.³⁵ Thesschen himself, by contrast, describes at some length the misbehaviour of the rebel garrison in and around Naarden and the lack of discipline they exhibited. When Don Fadrique came to claim the city on 30 October some of the Beggars were foolish enough to fire a cannon from the walls, thus spoiling the last chance for a peaceful settlement. Furthermore, Thesschen accuses another uncle of Pieter Aertsz, Jan Peter Aertsz, of the usurpation of the position of bailiff.³⁶ The accounts of Pieter Aertz and Hortensius and the letter by Thesschen, represent the conflicting ways people experienced and interpreted the events in 1572. There is no way to assess the 'historical truth' 450 years later, yet what we do see are the intense emotions involved in civil conflicts: resentment, anger, grief—and perhaps underlying and hidden beneath these, personal remorse and mourning.

GRIEF

Sadness and grief about the damage done to the community is present in all Dutch war chronicles. Authors lament the destruction of their town or convent, the loss of prosperity and peace, or the dispersion or death of inhabitants. The image is one of desolation, disintegration and the loss of honour and pride. This is symbolised by the destruction of town walls, churches, town halls and belfries, the removal of bells and the breaking of altars. In 1583, after the Spanish army recaptured the towns of Diest and Zichem, Van Thienwinckel came home after three years of exile to assess the damage. He found the town largely destroyed and desolate, and 'ridiculed by all passing by'.³⁷

Lists of communal material losses are also typical of the memoirs of lay authors. The loss of status, honour, and freedom is sometimes accentuated by either the mocking of outsiders or the nakedness of victims and refugees. Typically, victims are robbed of their clothes and shoes. Those who offer them refuge have to literally cover their shame. Yet, whereas grief about communal losses is an accepted topic in chronicles and local histories, the authors seldom write about their personal grief. Van Thienwinckel, who does write extensively about the violent attacks on his person as a priest, does not mention the death of any friend or relative, even though it seems unlikely that there were no casualties in his own circle. Similarly, no personal mourning can be found in the account of Lambertus Hortensius. We know from other sources that he had a bastard son who was allegedly killed before his eyes.³⁸ Yet, even when it would have been a legitimate son, writing about personal grief in a chronicle might have been considered inappropriate. Hortensius describes in detail what happened to him personally, and to his library, and how he was maltreated, feared for his life and was finally rescued. But he does not write about his personal relationships with the people who were killed: ‘Five people were killed before my eyes in my house and yard, and among these there was one who was not alien to me. Yet, this should be more than enough about what happened to me personally at the downfall of Naarden.’³⁹ Grief and agony are described by him—as by most other authors—as representative of shared feelings that concern the fate of the town as a whole. In fact, nobody seems to write about personal loss or grief. One explanation may be that public opinion on good behaviour was strongly inspired by Stoicism, ideas on *constantia*, the superiority of reason over emotions, firmness and self-control, as well as the Christian command of resignation to one’s fate and subjection to the will of God.⁴⁰ Another possibility is that the emotions that were shared collectively were indeed dominant. Individual casualties that could be mourned openly were those that were of particular value to the community because of their civil virtues or piety: those involving their heroes, nobles or martyrs.

RELIEF, RESIGNATION AND THANKSGIVING

In the later Dutch Republic the period of revolt and civil war would be remembered as the Spanish ‘tyranny’ that offered a test for the true believers, amongst whom the former exiles were the most fervent.⁴¹ Already in 1578, after his return from exile, the Amsterdam merchant Laurens Jacobsz Reael fitted the events of the war into a longer context of battle between Christianity and Satan from the time of the Apostles on.

It is very useful work to explain at all times God's honour, power and goodness, and to praise Him always, that one can truly sense that He never fails, not only in the promises He made to the Christian church, but also in the threats He has voiced against the realm of Satan and his godless underlings.⁴²

In the southern Netherlands the narrative ended with the triumph of both the lawful ruling dynasty and the one and only holy church. In Zichem, the Habsburg archdukes had restored Catholicism and unity and invested generously in the erection of an impressive baroque basilica in nearby Montagu (or Scherpenheuvel), where a miraculous statue of the Virgin had shown her bountiful powers and had joined forces in the battle against the enemy. The Calvinists were expelled and the experiences of the inhabitants were framed in a convenient narrative of good and evil, heroes and cowards, true believers and heretics. Van Thienwinckel ends his chronicle by listing his own efforts to restore the church to its former glory. He survived the plague and claimed to be the founder of the first sanctuary of the thriving pilgrimage to the virgin of Montagu.⁴³

In Naarden, finally, the massacre of 1572 was remembered annually with a sermon, and in 1604 the town magistrates ordered a memorial painting to be hung in the town hall.⁴⁴ Moreover, during the Twelve Years' Truce (1609–1621) three memorial tablets were ordered for the building where the town's men had been killed (a former chapel that had functioned as a town hall at the time of the massacre) (Fig. 5.2). The middle tablet showed what happened. The right tablet admonished passers-by to remember this event: 'Do not forget the day when Spain broke its word, sacked and burned this town and killed its citizenry.' Yet, the text on the left tablet thanked God and the house of William of Orange and Nassau: 'O Lord / only to you comes the honour / of this building / keep this city / and the house of Nassau / from adversity / in the year 1615.'⁴⁵



Fig. 5.2 Gable stones, Spanish House in Naarden, Turfpoortstraat 27 (Photo: Mart Hagenbeek, www.gevelstenen.net)

In 1660 one Jan Gansneb Tengnagel, then bailiff of Naarden, published a rather dreary theatre play about the 1572 massacre. The cruelty of the Spanish had become a platitude. By this point Spanish soldiers were routinely portrayed as rapists who joyfully drank the blood of innocent children. For the more abhorrent the image of the former enemy, the more impressive was the moral superiority of his victims. In his afterword the bailiff concludes:

Citizens of the Gooi, do as thy Saviour taught thee,
 Who for thy sins humbled himself on Calvary.
 Pray for the murderers too, for they were God's
 Scourge, burying Naarden's sins with ashes and with blood.
 For like the phoenix thou wast born once more,
 In soul and body so much greater than before.⁴⁶

CONCLUSION

From modern therapeutic practices with war victims we learn that the social and psychological functionality of narratives about traumatic memories does not depend on the expression of emotions at all. It is rather the implicit framing of emotions in a rational, logical, culturally and socially meaningful and acceptable narrative that is helpful. The expression of the emotions themselves, in fact, has no direct effect on resilience after a traumatic event and is in no way automatic or natural. On the contrary, the expression of emotions is subject to strict social and cultural rules, and depends upon the social setting, the identity of the narrator, and in the case of written or artistic expression, on the artistic or literary rules of genre or format.⁴⁷ The many manuscript accounts of the Dutch Revolt that were preserved locally clearly reflect a common understanding of how to express and frame emotions. Fear and grief could be expressed, especially when evoked by threats to either religious or collective civil values. The war represented fear for one's soul as well as fear for the destruction of religious and social order. Feelings of panic and attempts to find meaning in unfolding events are both clearly reflected in many of the narrative accounts.

Most war chronicles and memoirs from this period reflect a psychological need to fit war experiences into a logical sequence of events, and thus include names, places and dates, and in some cases, an enormous amount

of dry facts. In this way memories become part of a more rational story that can be thought about and discussed. Apologetic elements are also found in almost all of these sources. Finally, they categorise experience and emotion according to existing narratives, attempting to explain causes and consequences in ways that make sense to contemporaries. They achieve this by using narrative schemes that are familiar to their audiences or readers. These are partly religious, but may contain other elements as well: ideas about loyal citizenship, civic pride, shame at defeat, and a strong tendency towards the ‘othering’ of enemies by portraying them as ever more devilish and cruel. The winners are vindicated by the outcome of the war. For the losers, justice will come on the Day of Judgment. In a religious framework traumatic experiences become meaningful. Many chronicles end with expressions of gratefulness for the community’s survival and recovery. This gratefulness was also expressed in many commissioned works of art and memorabilia in both the public and private sphere, from baroque churches to gable stones and theatre plays. In this way the emotional narratives of the war were shared and remembered for generations.

NOTES

1. Frank Furedi, ‘From the Narrative of the Blitz to the Rhetoric of Vulnerability,’ *Cultural Sociology* 1 (2007): 235–54; Frank Furedi, *Therapy Culture: Cultivating Vulnerability in an Uncertain Age* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004). Research for this article was funded by an NWO VICI grant for the research project Tales of the Revolt. Memory, Oblivion and Identity in the Low Countries, 1566–1700, carried out at Leiden University. I would like to thank Judith Pollmann, Charles Zika and Jenny Spinks for their warm support and useful comments on earlier versions of this paper.
2. The number of studies on narrative therapy as well as manuals for therapists is immense. Well documented and critical studies include: James W. Pennebaker and Janel D. Seagal, ‘Forming a Story: The Health Benefits of Narrative,’ *Journal of Clinical Psychology* (1999): 1243–54; Crystal L. Park and Carol Joyce Blumberg, ‘Disclosing Trauma Through Writing: Testing the Meaning-Making Hypothesis,’ *Cognitive Therapy & Research* 26 (2002): 597; Matthew D. Lieberman et al., ‘Putting Feelings into Words: Affect Labeling Disrupts Amygdala Activity in Response to Affective Stimuli,’ *Psychological Science: A Journal of the American Psychological Society / APS* 18 (2007): 421–8.

3. Donald E. Polkinghorne, 'Narrative Psychology and Historical Consciousness. Relationships and Perspectives,' in *Narration, Identity, and Historical Consciousness*, ed. Jürgen Straub (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2005), 9–11; Kenneth J. Gergen, 'Mind, Text, and Society: Self-Memory in Social Context,' in *The Remembering Self: Construction and Accuracy in the Self-Narrative*, ed. Ulric Neisser and Robyn Fivush (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 78–104.
4. See for instance Markus Meumann, 'The Experience of Violence and the Expectation of the End of the World in Seventeenth-Century Europe,' in *Power, Violence and Mass Death in Pre-modern and Modern Times*, ed. Joseph Canning, Hartmut Lehmann and Jay Winter (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 141–59; or the collection of articles in Matthias Ilg, Matthias Asche and Anton Schindling, eds., *Das Strafgericht Gottes* (Münster: Aschendorff, 2001).
5. 'Ander werden daerof zieck, ander laghen snachts in haer bedden ende zuchten ende en weenden, ende laghen met ghevauden handen, mans ende wijfs.' Marcus van Vaernewyck, *Van die Beroerlicke Tijden in die Nederlanden en Voornamelijk in Ghendt 1566–1568* (Leiden: DBNL, 2007), ch. 15, 188.
6. This was a general European phenomenon. See Andrew Cunningham and Ole Peter Grell, *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse: Religion, War, Famine, and Death in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 11–14; Kaspar Greyerz, *Vorsehungsglaube und Kosmologie: Studien zu englischen Selbstzeugnissen des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), esp. ch. 5.
7. Cunningham and Grell, *The Four Horsemen*, 11.
8. Raingard Eßer, 'Fear of Water and Floods in the Low Countries,' in *Fear in Early Modern Society*, ed. William G. Naphy and Penny Roberts (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 68–71.
9. Christiaan Creemers, 'Kronijk Uit Het Klooster Maria-Wijngaard Te Weert 1442–1587, Gevolgd door eene Bijdrage tot die Kronijk op het Jaar 1566 en een Vijftal Stukken Betrekkelijk de Hervorming te Weert 1583–1584,' *Publications de la Société Historique et Archéologique dans le Limbourg* 12 (1875): 165.
10. Andreas Bähr, *Furcht und Furchtlosigkeit. Göttliche Gewalt und Selbstkonstitution im 17. Jahrhundert* (V & R Unipress GmbH: Göttingen: 2013), 192–227.
11. Gail Kern Paster, Katherine Rowe and Mary Floyd-Wilson, 'Introduction. Reading the Early Modern Passions,' in *Reading the Early Modern Passions: Essays in the Cultural History of Emotion*, ed. Paster, Rowe and Floyd-Wilson (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 2004), 1–20, 16.

12. 'O Heer, wat lijd al van u creatueren! Sal dese bangicheit noch langer dueren? Och Heer, ic hebt verdient: vergevet my, dat ic soe dick gesondicht heb tegen die.' H. Van Alfen, *Kroniek eener Kloosterzuster van het Voormalig Bossche Klooster 'Mariënburch' over de Troebelen te 's-Hertogenbosch e.e. in de Jaren 1566–1575* (Den Bosch: Provinciaal Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen in Noord-Brabant, 1931), 12.
13. Van Alfen, *Kroniek eener Kloosterzuster*, 167.
14. Creemers, 'Kronijk Uit Het Klooster Maria-Wijngaard Te Weert,' 145–248, 181–182; F. Boerwinkel, *Cronyk van Sint Aagten Convent: een oude Kloosterkroniek uit de 15–17e eeuw* (Amersfoort: Knottnerus-Kramen, 1939), 31.
15. Godevaert van Haecht, *De Kroniek van Godevaert van Haecht over de Troebelen van 1565 Tot 1574 Te Antwerpen En Elders*, ed. Rob van Roosbroeck (Antwerp: De Sikkel, 1929), 63.
16. Van Haecht, *Kroniek*, 63.
17. R. Fruin, 'De Kroniek van Pieter Joossen Altijt Recht Hout,' *Archief. Mededelingen van het Koninklijk Zeeuwsch Genootschap der Wetenschappen* (1909): 65–96, at 74.
18. Louis Peter Grijp, 'Van Geuzenlied tot Gedenck-Clanck: Eerste Deel: Het Geuzenliedboek in de Gouden Eeuw,' *Zeventiende Eeuw* 10, no. 1 (1994): 118–32. Richard Verstegan measured out the misdeeds of the Protestants in the most explicit depictions of cruelties in his *Theatrum Crudelitatum Haereticorum Nostri Temporis* (Antverpiae: Adrianum Huberti, 1592). The newsprints by Hogenberg in Cologne were very influential, see Ramon Voges, 'Macht, Massaker Und Repräsentationen: Darstellungen Assymetrischer Gewalt in der Bildpublizistik Franz Hogenbergs,' in *Gewalträume. Soziale Ordnungen im Ausnahmezustand*, ed. Jörg Baberowski and Gabriele Metzler (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 2012), 29–70.
19. Judith Pollmann, *Catholic Identity and the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1520–1635* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 87.
20. Jasper van der Steen, *Memory Wars in the Low Countries, 1566–1700* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2015), esp. ch. 1; Wolfgang Cilleßen, 'Massaker in der Niederländischen Erinnerungskultur: Die Bildwerdung der Schwarzen Legende,' in *Bilder des Schreckens. die Mediale Inszenierung von Massakern seit dem 16. Jahrhundert*, ed. Christine Vogel (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2006), 93–135; Erika Kuijpers and Judith Pollmann, 'Why Remember terror? Memories of Violence in the Dutch Revolt,' in *Ireland: 1641: Contexts and Reactions*, ed. Micheál Ó Siochrú and Jane Ohlmeyer (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 176–96.
21. Pollmann, *Catholic Identity*, 151, 159–61.

22. 'Och die quaetheit, die boesheit, die die Gosen daer en in alles steden bedriven! Soe dat wy God niet genoch en connen gedancken, dat hy ons dus lange gespaert en dat hi ons niet tesamen en laet versincken, als hy die Sodamyten deden. Want sy en leven niet anders dan off beesten en waren, die geen synnen en hebben noch geenen God kennen.' Van Alfen, *Kronick eener Kloosterzuster*, 46.
23. Godefriedus van Thienwinckel, 'Eenige Aanteekeningen over Onze Zeer Ongelukkige Tijden, van Voorvallen Vol Bitterheid en Smert in de Stad Sichem. (1576–1616),' ed. H. van Leemputte, trans. H. Clerinx, *Hagelandse Gedenkschriften* 5 (1911): 17–27.
24. Van Thienwinckel, 'Eenige Aanteekeningen,' 18.
25. 'Toen ook wierden onze twee grootsteklokken uit den kerktoren geworpen en aangeslagen. Doch eer die feiten, ok zoo droevig en bitter, dat men nauwelijks in de jaarboeken vanaf het begin der wereld, er zulke kan aantreffen, zijn voorgevallen; wierden ze voorspeld door die schromelijke en wreede komeet, in de lucht vlammend, die gedurende drij maanden, gelijk men verhaalt, te zien geweest is, en waarvan ik zelf ooggetuige geweest ben.' Van Thienwinckel, 'Eenige Aanteekeningen,' 19.
26. See for instance on the Irish case: Ethan H. Shagan, 'Early Modern Violence from Memory to History,' in Ó Siochrú and Ohlmeyer, *Ireland: 1641*, 17–36.
27. Lambertus Hortensius, *Hortensius over de Opkomst en den Ondergang van Naarden*, ed. P. Hofman Peerlkamp and A. Perk (Utrecht, 1866), 86–97, 101–116, 152–153.
28. Hortensius, *Hortensius over de Opkoms*, 124–30.
29. From the perspective of the Spanish policy and logic, however, it seems very unlikely that Romero was either authorised or willing to make such a promise. Raymond P. Fagel, *Kapitein Julián: de Spaanse Held van de Nederlandse Opstand* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2011), 47–50.
30. [Pieter Aertsz], *Moort-dadich Verhael vande Gheschiedenissen, Moort ende Destructie vande Stede van Naerden ... op ten i. Decembris ende andere daer aen Volghende Daghen* (n.p.: n.d.), at 10. Parts of the text were reprinted in 1616 as 'Cort Verhael van de Moort ende Destructie der Stadt Naarden,' in Johannes Gysius, *Oorspronck ende Voortgang der Neder-Landscher Beroerten [...]*, (Leiden: Henrick Lodewijcxsoon Haestens, 1616), 480–92.
31. [Aertsz], *Moort-dadich Verhael*, 15.
32. Gysius, *Oorspronck ende Voortgang der Neder-Landscher Beroerten*.
33. 't Gooi is the region around Naarden.
34. Hortensius, *Hortensius over de Opkomst*, 152.
35. I doubt this, because Hortensius left Naarden after the sack and must have written his account in Utrecht, yet Thesschen suggests that Aertz searched

- Hortensius's papers in his abandoned house in Naarden. Thesschen's letter is published by P.W. Lange, 'De Uitmoording van Naarden in 1572,' *Tussen Vecht en Eem : Historisch Tijdschrift van de Stichting Tussen Vecht en Eem, Centrale Organisatie van Vrienden van de Historie van het Gooi en Omstreken* 2, no.10 (1972): 170.
36. Lange, 'De Uitmoording van Naarden,' 166
 37. Van Thienwinckel, 'Eenige Aanteekeningen,' 21.
 38. Hortensius, *Hortensius over de Opkomst en den Ondergang van Naarden*, 161. Although Hortensius was a priest and thus his son a bastard, I do not believe that shame prevented him from describing the fate of his son. The son was the organist of the main church in Naarden, and everyone knew about the family relationship. Hortensius's student Thesschen writes that Hortensius deeply mourned the death of his son in the last years of his life and did not overcome the loss. Lange, 'De Uitmoording van Naarden,' 170.
 39. 'Vijf menschen werden er in mijn huis en op het erf voor mijn oogen om het leven gebragt en onder dezen een die mij als bloedverwant niet vreemd was En dit is reeds meer dan genoeg over hetgeen mij in persoon bij den ondergang van Naarden wedervaren is.' Hortensius, *Hortensius over de Opkomst en den Ondergang van Naarden*, 161–2.
 40. Justus Lipsius, *De Constantia Libri Duo: Qui Alloquium Præcipuè Continent in Publicis Malis*, 1st ed. (Leiden, C. Plantini, 1583).
 41. Johannes Müller, *Exile Memories and the Dutch Revolt: The Narrated Diaspora, 1550-1750* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).
 42. 'T'is van seer dienstelyck werck om tot allen tijden Gods eere, macht ende goedicheit te verclaeren, ende daerom alletijt met ernst te looven, dat men inder waerheit ende metter daer bespeurt, dat hij niet en faelgeert, niet alleen inde beloftenissen, die hij zijne Ch. kercke gedaen, maer oock inde dreijgemeijnten, die hij tegen het Rijcke des Satans, ende zijne goddelose ondersaeten uijtgesproocken heeft.' Municipal Archive Amsterdam, Archive nr. 231, Huisarchief Marquette, inv.nr. 130: Manuscript by Laurens Jacobsz Reael, 'Gedenkschriften' (Amsterdam, 1578), fol. 1.
 43. Van Thienwinckel, 'Eenige Aanteekeningen,' 26. About Van Thienwinckel and his role in the development of the sanctuary see Luc Duerloo and Marc Wingens, *Scherpenheuvel: Het Jeruzalem van de Lage Landen* (Leuven: Davidsfonds, 2002), 24–28.
 44. Marianne Eekhout, 'Material Memories of the Dutch Revolt. The Urban Memory Landscape in the Low Countries, 1566–1700' (dissertation, Leiden University, 2014), 57. A number of sacked cities ordered this type of memorial paintings of the event, see Marianne Eekhout, 'Furies in beeld. Herinneringen aan gewelddadige innames van steden tijdens Nederlanden Opstand op zeventiende-eeuwse schilderijen,' *De Zeventiende*

- Eeuw. Cultuur in de Nederlanden in interdisciplinair perspectief* 30 (2015): 243–66. For an image of the painting see ‘De grote stadsbrand van Naarden op 1 december 1572’ accessed 10 October 2014, http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bloedbad_van_Naarden#mediaviewer/File:Naarden_stadsbrand_1572.jpg.
45. See Fig. 5.2. These gable stones are still in place. For a picture of the entire building, see http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lijst_van_rijksmonumenten_in_Naarden#mediaviewer/File:20100621_Naarden_Turfpoortstraat_27_001.JPG, accessed 2 February, 2015.
46. ‘*Hooft-borgers van het Goy, doet als u Heylant leerde.
Doen hy voor uwe sondt hem aen het Kruys vermeerde,
Bidt voor de Moorders oock, haer hant Godts gesel was,
Die Naerden om haer sondt, bedolf in bloedt en as.
Hier syt ghy wederom als Phenix uyt herbooren,
Veel heerlijcker naer ziel en lichaem als te voeren.*’
Jan Gansneb Tengnagel, *Verwoestingh des Stadts Naerden*, trans. Han van der Vegt (t’Amsterdam: by Nicolaes van Ravesteyn, 1660), 101.
47. Eric Shiraev, *Cross-Cultural Psychology: Critical Thinking and Contemporary Applications* (Boston: Pearson Education, 2007) 177–9.

Civil War Violence, Prodigy Culture and Families in the French Wars of Religion

Jennifer Spinks

On his deathbed in 1574, French king Charles IX reportedly saw a vision of an eviscerated and decapitated child, its body parts being used in a black mass. Addressing the king directly, the child's severed head declared in Latin 'I suffer violence'. Charles IX reputedly interpreted this vision as a reference to the St Bartholomew's Day massacre of 1572. Reported in Jean Bodin's demonological treatise of 1580, this vision speaks to the trauma of the unfolding French Wars of Religion (1562–1598).¹ It also thematises the special trauma of civil war, which saw the body of the kingdom dismembered.

This chapter addresses violence, civil war and prodigy culture in France in order to unpack how they intersected in new ways during the Wars of Religion. It examines how reports of extraordinary and extreme events in printed prodigy collections (known as wonder books) incorporated narratives of violence and cruelty towards human bodies.² Violent acts in the Wars of Religion—and specifically religious riots—have been a rich field of study since Natalie Zemon Davis' ground-breaking 'Rites of Violence' article of 1973, but the connection between representations of violence and the profound experience by many of the prodigious signs of a dis-

J. Spinks
School of Arts, Languages and Cultures, The University of Manchester,
UK

ordered world is much less well understood.³ This chapter accordingly addresses the ways that cultural understandings of violence during the Wars of Religion, as reported in wonder books, were shaped by the fear and experience of *civil* war as opposed to other sorts of war. It also examines how this civil war violence, in order to achieve maximum emotional impact, was framed in terms of inter-familial violence, including particularly shocking violence towards children.

The second part of this chapter analyses wonder books by Pierre Boaistuau, Jean de Marconville, François de Belleforest and Simon Goulart, and argues that extreme violence and cruelty were treated in these works as prodigies. Paying attention to violence shifts the emphasis away from the natural disasters and related phenomena that have dominated recent scholarship on early modern prodigy culture, a trend discussed further below. This chapter therefore aims to broaden, and in important respects to reconceptualise, early modern understandings of prodigies. Extreme violence appeared in these books as a terrible thing in itself, a portent of worse to come, and a sign of the world in disorder. It was fundamentally connected to apocalyptic signs of the type unleashed in the Book of Revelation. The natural world in disarray prefaced the Last Days, with water turned to blood, earthquakes and terrible storms, the well-poisoning death-star Wormwood, the beasts of the Apocalypse, and the sky ‘rolling up like a scroll’. But so too did the actions overseen by Death, the rider of the pale horse, the harbinger of violence who would be ‘given authority over a quarter of the world, to kill by the sword, by famine, by plague and through wild beasts’ (Revelation 6:7).

In his essay ‘On Cruelty’, Montaigne wrote: ‘I live in a season when unbelievable examples of this vice of cruelty flourish because of the licence of our civil wars; you can find nothing in ancient history more extreme than what we witness every day.’⁴ Images of violence pervaded the print culture of France in the second half of the sixteenth century. The Wars of Religion saw the production of well-known illustration cycles that dwelt with new detail and force on the violent disordering and indeed dismembering of the human body in the context of contemporary warfare. These were scenes that did not glorify war or frame it in terms of magnificence and power, as many artworks depicting battle scenes or military leaders were intended to do. Rather, these printed images dwelt on the horrors of violence and atrocity, in order to draw moral messages, to act as warnings, to create, publicise and memorialise martyrs, and to generate responses through images that tapped into the emotions of horror, disgust and fear.

The *Wars, Massacres and Troubles* of 1569/70 by Jacques Tortorel and Jean Perrissin comprised a series of 40 prints produced in the Calvinist stronghold of Geneva. Many scenes depicted literally graphic massacres, and while some showed Catholics being attacked, the great majority depicted Calvinists being assaulted by Catholics.⁵ The book depicted events going back to 1559, including massacres from the early 1560s (notably one in Vassy in 1562) that were decisive in escalating violence and polemical discourse between Catholics and Calvinists. It built upon the unillustrated *Livre des martyres* of Jean Crespin that first appeared in 1554, and in turn, prompted responses such as Agrippa d'Aubigné's early 1570s poem *Les tragiques*, in which scenes involving violence towards children took on special pathos.⁶

English Catholic exile Richard Verstegan's 1587 *Theatre of Cruelty*, in comparison, represented atrocities perpetrated upon Catholics in the British Isles, the Low Countries, and France. It similarly included scenes of extreme cruelty, as in a game of *boules* in which victims' heads become targets (Fig. 6.1).⁷ It combined violence with iconoclasm and sacrilege: in one typical image, a monk is tied to a life-size crucifix, and both are fired upon.⁸ The book found a receptive audience in France, where it appeared in translation in 1588. But neither Verstegan's book nor the *Wars, Massacres and Troubles* included disasters or wonders as part of its scenes of disorder; they formed part of a growing trend towards the graphic depiction of violence, but not its intersection with prodigy culture.⁹ It is necessary to look elsewhere for this important shift, returning to the start of the civil war and to the genre of the wonder book, which to date has not been adequately incorporated into analyses of the violent and polemical aspects of print culture in civil war France.

PRODIGIOUS VIOLENCE IN THE FRENCH WARS OF RELIGION

France leading up to and during the Wars of Religion paid special attention to the signs of the disordered natural world, as some historians have demonstrated. On a broader scale, Denis Crouzet has influentially argued for the development of an apocalyptic 'anguish' in sixteenth-century France.¹⁰ Natalie Zemon Davis noted that God's wrath could lead to prodigious events like terrible storms.¹¹ Philip Benedict developed the concept of 'prophetic politics', in which a minority made use of biblical tropes in order to self-identify as a chosen people.¹² More recently, Susan



Fig. 6.1 Playing *boules* with human heads as targets, engraving in [Richard Verstegan], *Theatrum crudelitatum haereticorum nostri temporis* (Antwerp: Adrian Hubert, 1587), 63 (Photo courtesy of the John Rylands Library, University of Manchester. Shelfmark Special Collections 17800. Copyright 2016 of the University of Manchester)

Broomhall examined how natural disasters and other prodigious events were recorded and interpreted in journals, addressing transmission across print and manuscript culture.¹³ My own work has examined how religious polemic about natural disasters and monstrous births, fundamentally shaped by the Wars of Religion, played out in one cycle of wonder books that shifted from Protestant to Catholic authorship.¹⁴ Civil war violence forms an important larger context for all these studies. But the meaning of violence within prodigy culture remains untested in key ways, as does the

centrality of emotionally loaded material. Wonder books were filled with multiple examples and thus urgently suggested to readers that they were surrounded by wonders and disasters proliferating both in intensity and in number. For many authors and readers, this implicitly or explicitly fostered the conclusion that such signs were heralds of the Last Days. Wonder book authors demonstrated a fearful but now little-understood fascination with violence as signs of God's providence.

What was the conceptual place of violence within sixteenth-century French understandings of prodigies? Early modern prodigies are now to a large extent retrospectively defined by what recent scholars of this material choose to emphasise: natural disasters, monstrous births, meteorological phenomena, and the like. Conceptually, acts of human violence are often kept separate from historians' treatment of the history of wondrous disasters, which rely heavily on modern conceptions of 'natural' disasters and reflect the important and productive intersections of the history of science, religious history and cultural history over the last several decades.¹⁵ Yet this misrepresents the full scope of phenomena that concerned authors of wonder books. For their concern with the disordered natural world mirrored civil war, which set communities against themselves and thereby disrupted the natural order. It is thus no surprise that wonder books included many examples of exceptional violence, although these examples have received relatively little attention from scholars.

This chapter turns now to an analysis of these themes sampled across material from the four most significant authors writing on prodigies around the time of the Wars of Religion. As Jean Céard has argued, the mid 1550s saw an intense growth of interest in prodigies.¹⁶ The most important publications mapped almost entirely on to the Wars of Religion from 1562 to 1598. These were books that appeared against the backdrop of the fearful anticipation and reality of civil war. Pierre Boaistuau referred back to classical and early Christian models; Jean de Marconville utilised early biblical and classical models that drew upon a geographically wider range of contemporary sources; François de Belleforest was particularly concerned with elite politics and specifically French historical identity; and Simon Goulart deployed a Calvinist focus on human sin and self-scrutiny by reporting shocking crimes of violence which set aside larger political arenas for the smaller domestic world of the family. These sources moved across different temporalities of violence—from its anticipation to its reportage to its memorialisation.¹⁷ In doing so, they evoked and deployed emotions in a complex range of ways, culminating

in Simon Goulart's explicit attention to the emotional dimensions of prodigious human behaviour. Emotions were central to the ways that people recorded, managed and formed expectations about their own experiences of a violently disordered world during times of war.¹⁸ Wonder books offer rich source materials for thinking about the emotional dynamics of the Wars of Religion. Collectively and cumulatively, these authors demonstrate the key arguments underpinning this chapter: that civil war violence and prodigy culture were intertwined; that inter-familial violence (especially towards children) was regarded as perhaps the most unnatural (and hence prodigious) form of violence; and that violence itself could and should be treated as a prodigy.

PIERRE BOAISTUAU, HISTORICAL MODELS AND PRODIGIOUS CRUELTY

Pierre Boaistuau's 1560 *Histoire prodigiense* was a ground-breaking and highly successful wonder book. After the preparation of a manuscript version presented to Elizabeth I in 1559, a revised, printed version went through multiple editions, extended in sequence by five other authors in the wake of Boaistuau's death until the appearance of the last updated French edition in 1598.¹⁹ During this time it changed from a polemical Protestant publication to one that reflected hard-line Catholic views. The *Histoire prodigiense* reflected the amplification of civil war anxieties, with a growing tendency to foreground the emotions of fear, misery, hatred and anger, and to become more polemical in tone as the wars progressed.²⁰ It was divided into illustrated chapters addressing particular phenomena, such as earthquakes, famines, snakes, monstrous births, ghosts, and even prodigious feasts. It also included many stories concerned with atrocity, often framed in historical terms but with contemporary relevance and emotional resonance. Martyrologies, saints' lives and records of crime had been concerned with exceptional violence prior to this period. But Boaistuau's integration of violence into a new type of discourse about prodigies that included reports of natural disasters and wonders, was one of the many ways in which his work was new.²¹

France was teetering on the precipice of civil war when Boaistuau's *Histoire prodigiense* appeared, and the book provided a profusion of examples of the natural world in disarray. While apocalyptic fears informed much French culture of the sixteenth century, French printed

sources that dealt with the intersections of the violent, wondrous and disastrous were less overtly apocalyptic than most of their German counterparts. Nonetheless, Boaistuau was deeply concerned with the actions of the Devil in the world.²² Boaistuau's work was pious and looked to contemporary morality, but as a humanist scholar he also gave particular weight to classical, early church and historical examples that shored up his presentation of the world at its most extreme. He drew upon sources like the early Roman Christian authors Orosius and Obsequens—both particularly concerned with war, prodigies and disasters—as well as upon pagan historians such as Livy and Appian, particularly their writings on the period of civil war in Rome around the first century BCE. Antoine Caron's famous 1566 painting of the massacre of the Triumvirate would blend the most famous Roman civil wars with the unrest in contemporary France.²³ The work of humanist scholars like Boaistuau, deploying these events for educated but wide audiences in vernacular printed books, was surely part of the development of that mindset in France. For Boaistuau the wonder book was a means of harnessing humanist work and giving it contemporary polemical urgency. For while he reported many contemporary disasters, these chronologically early materials in the *Histoires prodigieuses*—framed through visual images—are often the most disturbing in their representation of extreme violence. Their depictions of flesh and bodies were intended to generate strong emotional and accompanying visceral responses, with images—such as the gruesome, chopped up body parts of an infant cut from its dead mother's womb²⁴—foregrounding the pathos of children's bodies sullied by violence. The examples most pertinent to this chapter concern two connected themes: cruelty to religious dissenters, and the act of eating children. These emotive topics seemed—for French Protestant Boaistuau—to typify the unnaturalness of civil war, an unnaturalness that was amplified by the division in western Christendom set in motion by the Reformation.

Early Christians are attacked by dogs in one scene, part of a chapter specifically devoted to the persecution of Christian martyrs (Fig. 6.2).²⁵ According to a notorious legend, men were dressed in the skins of wild animals on the orders of the Roman Emperor Nero, in order to incite the bloodlust of dogs who were then set upon them. In another illustration a man is ripped apart as he is tied to branches, about to be quartered, in a chapter devoted to prodigious cruelties.²⁶ In telling his readers about early Christian martyrs persecuted by Roman Emperors such as Trajan



Fig. 6.2 Early Christians attacked by dogs, woodcut in Pierre Boaistuau, *Histoires prodigieuses, extraictes de plusieurs famevx aythors ...* (Paris: Hierome de Marnef and Guillaume Cavellat, 1566), fol. 67v. Special Collections, Baillieu Library, The University of Melbourne. Shelfmark 39A/19

and Maximinius, Boaistuau subtly draws parallels with his own ‘new’ true faith of Protestantism, and what he sees as its persecution by the Roman Catholic church.

Two further scenes thematise what was, for Boaistuau, evidently one of the most terrible and unnatural acts a human could commit: eating human flesh. Accounts of New World cannibalism circulated during this period, and so too did tales of desperate Europeans reduced to the same act.²⁷ Boaistuau situates his tales within a biblical chronology. One image represents a king who is eating the flesh of a child from a dish (Fig. 6.3).²⁸ This illustrated the story of Arpalus (or Harpalyce), who was incestuously abused by her own father, King Astiage, and bore him a child. Inflamed with a desire for revenge, and in a trope typical of classical literature, she slaughtered the child—her own brother and son—and fed it to her father, who did not know what flesh was on the dish until he had eaten it. Another



Fig. 6.3 King Astiage eats his own child, woodcut in Pierre Boaistuau, *Histoires prodigieuses, extraites de plusieurs fameux avthors ...* (Paris: Hierome de Marnef and Guillaume Cavellat, 1566), fol. 166r. Special Collections, Baillieu Library, The University of Melbourne. Shelfmark 39A/19

scene represents a woman of Samaria eating her own child during a famine caused by a military siege (Fig. 6.4).²⁹ With all food gone, she had made an arrangement with her neighbour that they would share and eat their children together. She killed her own child, but her neighbour went back on the deal. This tale demonstrates the potential for inhumanity and the crossing of taboos in times of warfare. For Boaistuau, these stories evidently gave expression to fears of betrayal and atrocity at a time of crisis, prompting emotional responses by using ancient stories given new relevance.

The horror of the imagery is compounded by the fact that it is children who are eaten. People are pushed to a limit in which they eat, quite literally, their own flesh and blood. As such, these narratives of adults eating their own children seem legible metaphors for the dangers and the sinful unnaturalness of civil war, which destructively turned communities and families upon themselves, rather than focusing on external enemies.



Fig. 6.4 A woman of Samaria eats her own child, woodcut in Pierre Boaistuau, *Histoires prodigieuses, extraictes de plusieurs fameux authors ...* (Paris: Hierome de Marnef and Guillaume Cavellat, 1566), fol. 155r. Special Collections, Baillieu Library, The University of Melbourne. Shelfmark 39A/19

Boaistuau provided an intellectual but accessible lineage to this extreme form of human desperation and depravity. Perhaps in this period leading up to civil war (which was by no means inevitable), he sought to keep extreme events in the safer but still cautionary and moralising space of the distant past, where parallels could be inferred but not explicitly stated.³⁰

Through his book's textual and visual representations of bodies hacked up, tortured and eaten, Boaistuau showed the horrors of religious division and civil war. The emotional intensity of these scenes was clearly fundamental to their effect, and the repeated re-editing and reprinting of the *Histoires prodigieuses* over the following decades demonstrate its relevance and impact. Whether the emotional sensibilities of audiences were heightened or blunted by the extreme imagery of disaster, massacre and cruelty in sixteenth-century France is an open question. Boaistuau's work at least demonstrates how extreme violence and prodigy culture could be meaningfully entwined.

JEAN DE MARCONVILLE AND THE POLEMICS OF CIVIL WAR PRODIGIES

While Boaistuau is the best known of the French wonder book authors, a neglected work by Catholic author Jean de Marconville titled the *Memorable collection of marvellous events of our times* offers a remarkably rich set of insights into the intersection of civil war violence and prodigy culture.³¹ Catholic Jean de Marconville is best known for his writing on women. His unillustrated wonder book has generally been characterised as unsuccessful and excessively derivative of Boaistuau.³² Yet the work was republished several times, indicating a receptive audience.³³ It was certainly more innovative than has been suggested, for it drew extensively on northern German stories and sources and brought a number of these into a French-language context for the first time. Marconville did this not because he was sympathetic to German concerns, but in order to present the political and emotional conflict and divisiveness of recent German experiences as an ominous example of where France might be headed.

The very first chapter of Marconville's wonder book tells the reader about the horrors engulfing France in the form of civil war, while the second examines recent civil conflicts in German lands. Marconville commences this chapter with the emblematic case of a pregnant woman from a village near Frankfurt am Main, who gave birth to a child in 1547 and was then discovered, marvellously and terribly, to also have a sword within her womb to which she likewise gave birth. Marconville presents this woman as a clear portent of the Schmalkaldic War between German-speaking territories, itself a form of civil war, and as such a sign to which French readers would also be wise to pay attention. In a crucial phrase at the outset of the book, Marconville reminds his readers that the civil war in France was 'the most prodigious thing ever to have happened in this flourishing kingdom'.³⁴ He connects it to tyranny—a hot topic in a France beset by broken-down loyalties—and describes all the different groups that suffered, stressing the conflicts and divisions between sections of the community that should be in harmony. Above all, he writes, civil war alters people in a terrible way, transforming humans (and in particular, soldiers) into beasts.³⁵ The war would be better called 'criminal' than 'civil', he maintains.³⁶ It forms part of God's providence, and a punishment for sin.³⁷

Other cases of disastrous wonders from German lands feature in the book, including various comets, and notably one that had appeared

over Saxony in 1547 which Marconville explicitly connects to hostilities between the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V and the duke of Saxony.³⁸ Here and throughout, Marconville pays close attention to violence. In general terms, he writes, ‘such things signify and presage wars, plagues, famines, treason, murder, sedition, and popular uprisings, by the will of God’.³⁹ They are intended to warn against and to punish sin. The natural disasters of plague and famine in this list are set alongside warfare, murder, and other expressions of human violence and social disorder. Marconville certainly understood civil war—his overwhelming focus—as something ‘against nature’, an undermining and indeed disintegration of the natural order, which unnaturally set neighbour against neighbour, sibling against sibling, parent against child.

Marconville did not set aside the humanist context that was important to the *Histoires prodigiuses*. His work includes many references to classical texts, and he also pays special attention to early Christian authors, notably the third-century author Lactantius—who partly wrote against Diocletian’s persecution of Christians, which Lactantius framed in apocalyptic terms.⁴⁰ Overall, however, Marconville’s wonder book, and its accompanying sense of moral urgency, was rooted in current and domestic French events. In his examination of human violence and especially cruelty as fundamentally prodigious, Marconville ranges across events in past history, but was readier than Boaistuau to use emotionally rich contemporary examples as well. Military violence frames his work as blood-lust without dignity or legitimacy, pushing humans to bestial limits.⁴¹ As Richard Verstegan would do again more than a decade later, Marconville tells the gruesome story of oats poured in the cut-open stomach of an enemy and fed to horses.⁴² When writing about disasters of the natural world, like floods, blood rain and plague,⁴³ he demonstrates a particular concern with famine. This leads him to the case of the woman of Samaria eating her own child during a military siege.⁴⁴ He almost certainly borrowed this from Boaistuau’s *Histoires prodigiuses*, and evidently found the story compelling for the same reasons. He ratchets up the horror by describing the digging up of buried bodies to eat.⁴⁵

Marconville took a geographically wider view of violence in a way that demonstrated anxieties not just about Christian ‘others’ within France but also about the Turkish threat, discussed in terms of barbarous and inhuman cruelty, with the Ottoman Turk compared to the persecutors of early Christians.⁴⁶ He also added a new dimension to the theme of familial cru-

elty with an extended description of the unjust execution of Mustafa, son of Sultan Suleiman I, in 1553.⁴⁷ Blaming Suleiman's wife Gulbahar (here referred to as Rose) for the death, and also Suleiman himself, Marconville uses this case to explore the relationship between fathers and sons, and the perversion of that relationship through violence.⁴⁸ He frequently focuses on physical cruelty in the book, and especially upon cruelty that rendered humans sub-human. When writing about the case of Mustafa he uses a religious 'other' to speak about extremes of family violence in an elite court setting, demonstrating how the wonder book could locate fears of violence in a wider contemporary context.

FRANÇOIS DE BELLEFOREST AND ELITE CIVIL WAR PRODIGIES

François de Belleforest was another significant author writing on prodigies during the Wars of Religion, and he prepared new sections for updated versions of the *Histoires prodigiennes* after Pierre Boaistuau's death in 1566. But while Boaistuau was a Protestant, albeit a discreet one, Belleforest was polemically and overtly Catholic and as such had much more in common with Jean de Marconville. He sometimes looked to the past when describing and analysing prodigies, but his work for the *Histoires prodigiennes* was predominantly concerned with contemporary events. Floods in Lyon in 1570, Belleforest writes, were a warning to Calvinists to repent and return to the Catholic Church, and he attaches similar warnings to terrible weather patterns over Paris, amongst many other examples.⁴⁹

In 1568 Belleforest wrote a lengthy pamphlet on what he referred to as the 'presages and miracles' to have occurred in France during the ongoing reign of Charles IX. It was directly addressed to the king, with occasional asides to Catherine de Medici, the queen mother.⁵⁰ This publication also demonstrates the nexus of violence, families, disasters and wondrous signs found in Boaistuau and Marconville. But it frames these topics through a rather different concern with elite domestic politics, and demonstrates a greater willingness to present some prodigies as positive in meaning. Belleforest, for example, suggests that the new star that accompanied the birth of Charles IX had in fact been a positive omen reminiscent of the star that appeared at Christ's own birth.⁵¹ But his moderate tone sometimes descends into invective, as when he writes of the 'satanic doctors ... vomiting blasphemies learned in the school of

Calvin'.⁵² And while Belleforest did not adopt an explicitly apocalyptic standpoint, he does write about the Antichrist, God's vengeance, and the growing presence of Satan in the world.⁵³ He wrote still more angrily about massacres, iconoclasm, and the contemporary disasters that had turned humans into 'beasts'.⁵⁴

Much of Charles IX's reign was conducted during his minority, and he was still only 18 years old in 1568 when this publication appeared. His childhood is thematised in the work, and Belleforest reflects at key moments in the text on the vulnerability of the king's position during the early years of his reign, and on the great promise that he had already demonstrated despite his youth.⁵⁵ Charles IX is implicitly compared to other kings in history who had been 'vicieux, & cruels'.⁵⁶ Belleforest reminds the reader of the shocking biblical violence of the massacre of the innocents in a point intended to underscore the pathos and unnaturalness of violence towards children.⁵⁷

Families divided by civil war and by matters of religion are at the heart of this pamphlet. Belleforest's close attention to the disarray of the natural world is backed up by a range of historical and biblical examples. When compared to Boaistuau and Marconville, however, he pays less attention to ancient Rome and the early Christian persecutions. Instead, he looks more often to narratives from French history. In one important example, he describes the 'impious' sixth-century Merovingian king of Soissons, Chilperic, his land-grab across other parts of France, and the ways that this had put him in conflict with his brothers, particularly over the rulership of Paris.⁵⁸ Not just discord and violence, but also plague, blood rain and famine were the fruits of this earlier civil war, Belleforest warns.⁵⁹ He connects this to the onset of civil war in France, and manifestations of plague and famine around 1562.⁶⁰ But he also describes a more subtle form of disorder in the natural world, and one attuned to elite symbols such as heraldry: the unseasonal blooming of roses in winter.⁶¹ In the past, Belleforest writes, this had pointed to civil war, and he ominously adds that he had seen the same phenomenon that very year.⁶² Civil war and prodigies were thus fundamentally interwoven for Belleforest, just as they were for Boaistuau and Marconville, and in ways that likewise paid special attention to children and to families. Belleforest was at pains to draw explicit connections to the violence and destruction of civil war, particularly when it was not just a kingdom at war with itself, but also war fought between members of the community of nobles and their extended families.

SIMON GOULART AND THE EMOTIONAL DYNAMICS OF THE DOMESTIC MASSACRE

The final, and one of the most original, French wonder book authors working in the second half of the sixteenth century was Simon Goulart, a French-born exiled Genevan pastor. His well-known *Mémoires*, first published in 1567, recounted key early events of the Wars of Religion from a Calvinist perspective.⁶³ Later in his life, Goulart compiled a multi-volume unillustrated wonder book published as the *Admirable and memorable histories of our times*.⁶⁴ This work on prodigies, published from 1600, was important not least because he frequently connected prodigies directly with emotional states. His wonder book appeared in the immediate aftermath of the Wars of Religion, and was fundamentally shaped by them. The work was published in French, but—like Marconville’s wonder book, even if from a very different confessional perspective—utilised many German-language Protestant sources.⁶⁵

Goulart’s book demonstrates how thoroughly the themes of violence, cruelty and family division were incorporated into French prodigy culture by the close of the century. In particular, Goulart paid even more attention than his earlier French wonder book peers and German sources to matters concerning families, and the disordering of normal family relationships is one of his most central concerns. His presentation of violence in this wonder book is clearly shaped by the experience of civil war, but is expressed through narratives of violence set in the domestic sphere.⁶⁶ Harsh self-scrutiny, and a simultaneously personal and communal sense of moral responsibility, underpin this Calvinist presentation of the meaning of prodigies.

The terror, pathos and moral dimensions of violence within families evidently gripped Goulart. His wonder book brought such stories sharply to the fore for French-speaking audiences, making them a prominent, lengthy and early section of his book. A series of heart-rending descriptions of murdered family members, especially children, is titled ‘Strange, horrible and very pittifull Accidents’.⁶⁷ Tales of murdered children crossed over with reports of adulterous wives and husbands, the whole adding up to a litany of tales of broken families. Murdered children as well as cases of suicide are sprinkled throughout this larger section, which concludes with the tale of a son who had killed his father. In another case reminiscent of some of Boaistuau’s stories, a father in Hesse murdered his child in a rage after an ill-cooked dinner and then taunted his wife to

cook the child, or more precisely to ‘go rost it’.⁶⁸ Goulart dwells upon the innocence of children strangled by a mother, and—presented as even more heart-rending—children killed by a father and found by the mother covered in blood in the cradle, with such scenes sometimes explicitly described in the French editions as a ‘massacre’.⁶⁹ Neighbours frequently featured as horrified witnesses, framing these stories as communal events. They are not presented as solitary aberrations but rather as signs of larger disarray, and thus they implicitly suggest the accumulating signs of the Last Days.

With such reports, firmly set within a contemporary framework and for the most part ignoring the longer historical dimension that had been so important for prodigy authors at the start of the Wars of Religion, Goulart built upon the tales of unnatural family violence that Boaistuau had proffered in 1560, when civil war was imminent, and the anxieties about families from all levels of society emerged in prodigy literature. Although Boaistuau certainly included many recent stories, his most compelling discussions of violence tended to be located in the distant past. Goulart, on the other hand, completed the shift to the contemporary sphere that had got underway in the work of Belleforest and especially of Marconville. By this point of the century, the emotional dimensions of a disintegrating natural order appear fundamental to Goulart’s conception of prodigies and their significance for humanity. His reports of murders, earthquakes, floods and accidents focus heavily on human behaviours, fears and desires, with sections on ‘The Heart of Man’, ‘A Violent compassion’, ‘Guilty consciences’, ‘Desperate persons’, ‘Melancholike, Madd, Franticke, Furious and Enraged Persons’, and ‘Vehement Paßions of Sorrow, Ioy, Iealousie, Feare and Heaviness’.⁷⁰ Violence—and the extremities of human experience—are here fully incorporated into prodigy literature in a way that is fundamentally grounded in the trauma of civil war and a society turned upside down by religious reform and its aftermath.

CONCLUSION

Simon Goulart exemplifies the conceptual entanglement of prodigiously disastrous events, dismembered families, and violent civil conflict at this time and place in Europe. As his attention to emotional states demonstrates, the emotions sustaining family relationships and their brutal disordering were central to his conception of prodigies. Civil war violence, as the most unnatural form of war, infected and perverted the natural order.

Print cycles, pamphlets and books produced for French and Genevan audiences reported and depicted sensational phenomena such as brutal massacres and terrifying but wondrous natural signs. Likewise, tales from the Bible, classical antiquity and the early Christian era concerning plagues, terrible storms, human cannibalism, and other fearful events, took on visible new currency and relevance in a country divided by the Wars of Religion. Boaistuau, Marconville, Belleforest and Goulart showed how actively French prodigy culture—both Calvinist and Catholic—addressed and incorporated extreme violence, establishing it as a prodigy, and appropriating the distinctive and disturbingly familial aspects of civil war violence.

Tracing the trajectory from Boaistuau to Marconville, Belleforest and Goulart demonstrates the place of the unnatural and the astonishing in a print culture that drew upon texts and images from many parts of Europe, but was shaped in particular ways by the French-speaking experience of religious violence. This chapter's analysis of the symbiotic relationship of violence and prodigy culture builds upon Denis Crouzet's work on the eschatological fears haunting sixteenth-century France. But it also proposes the need to rethink more specifically aspects of prodigy culture through a new conception of the growing significance of violence for authors writing in this popular, widely circulated genre. When Jean de Marconville wrote in the early 1560s that civil war was the most extreme sort of prodigy ever experienced in France,⁷¹ he sought to convey a frightening and compelling truth about the era in which he lived.

NOTES

1. Jean Bodin, *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (Paris: Jacques du Puys, 1580), book 2, chapter III, fol. 71v. For a discussion of this passage, in which the king's identity is only contextually established, see Neil Cox and Mark Greengrass, 'Painting Power: Antoine Caron's *Massacres of the Triumvirate*,' in *Ritual and Violence: Natalie Zemon Davis and Early Modern France*, ed. Graeme Murdock, Penny Roberts and Andrew Spicer, *Past and Present Supplements* 7 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 241–74, at 248. Research towards this chapter has been supported by an Australian Research Council Discovery Project Postdoctoral Award and an Arts and Humanities Research Council UK Early Career Fellowship (AH/

- L015013/1). I am grateful to Susan Broomhall, Charlotte-Rose Millar, Ourania Karapasias and Charles Zika for help.
2. I leave aside short pamphlets and broadsheets in order to focus on longer publications that specifically addressed the meaning of prodigies on a larger scale.
 3. Natalie Zemon Davis, 'Rites of Violence: Religious Violence in Sixteenth-Century France,' *Past and Present* 59 (May 1973): 51–91, especially 62 and 83. For one of the most significant discussions of extremities of violence see Denis Crouzet, *Les Guerriers de Dieu. La violence au temps des troubles de religion (vers 1525—vers 1610)*, 2 vols in 1 (Seysssel: Champ Vallon, 1990), especially vol. 1, 320–411, and Denis Crouzet, *La Nuit de la Saint-Barthélemy. Une rêve perdu de la Renaissance* (Paris: Fayard, 1994), which includes a discussion of extreme violence as a paradigm, 39–50.
 4. Michel de Montaigne, *The Complete Essays*, trans. M. A. Screech (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993), 472–88 ('On Cruelty'), see 484. Montaigne wrote and revised his essays between 1570 and 1592.
 5. Philip Benedict, *Graphic History: The Wars, Massacres and Troubles of Tortorel and Perrissin* (Geneva: Droz, 2007).
 6. Benedict, *Graphic History*, 182, and Kathleen Perry Long, "'Child in the water": The Spectacle of Violence in Théodore Agrippa d'Aubigné,' *Dalhousie French Studies* 81 (2007), 155–65.
 7. [Richard Verstegan], *Theatre des Cruantez des Hereticques de nostre temps* (Antwerp: Adrien Hubert, 1588), 63.
 8. Verstegan, *Theatre des Cruantez*, 45.
 9. There are some examples of this in the *Tristibus Galliae* manuscript of 1567, although they fall outside the scope of this article focused upon print. *Tristibus Galliae*, Lyon BM MS 1056.
 10. Crouzet, *Les guerriers de Dieu*. Crouzet's work on eschatology and violence forms an essential background to this essay, but he did not approach the material from the perspective of prodigy culture or examine the works by Marconville and Goulart that are pivotal here.
 11. Davis, 'Rites of Violence,' see 59.
 12. Philip Benedict, 'Prophets in Arms? Ministers in War, Ministers on War: France 1562–74,' in *Ritual and Violence*, ed. Murdock, Roberts and Spicer, 163–96, at 181–93.
 13. Susan Broomhall, 'Disorder in the Natural World: The Perspective of the Sixteenth-century Provincial Convent,' in *Religion, the Supernatural and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe: An Album Amicorum for Charles Zika*, ed. Jennifer Spinks and Dagmar Eichberger (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 240–59.

14. Jennifer Spinks, 'Print and Polemic in Sixteenth-century France: the *Histoires prodigieuses*, Confessional Identity, and the Wars of Religion,' *Renaissance Studies* 27 (2013): 73–96.
15. On French wonder books see J. Céard, *La Nature et les Prodiges. L'Insolite au XVIe siècle, en France* (1977; repr. Geneva: E. Droz, 1996); Rudolf Schenda, *Die französische Prodigienliteratur in der zweiten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: Max Hueber Verlag, 1961); and Spinks, 'Print and Polemic in Sixteenth-century France'. On German wonder books see Philip Soergel, *Miracles and the Protestant Imagination: The Evangelical Wonder Book in Reformation Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Rudolf Schenda, 'Die deutschen Prodigiensammlungen des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts,' *Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens*, 4 (1963), 637–710; and Jennifer Spinks, *Monstrous Births and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Germany* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2009), 81–104. See also Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature, 1150–1750* (New York: Zone Books, 1998).
16. Céard, *La Nature et les Prodiges*, 159.
17. The memorialisation of violence has received considerable treatment. See in particular Philip Benedict, 'Shaping the Memory of the French Wars of Religion: The First Centuries,' in *Memory before Modernity: Practices of memory in early modern Europe*, ed. Erika Kuijpers, Judith Pollmann, Johannes Müller, and Jasper van der Steen (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 111–125. In the same volume see Susan Broomhall, 'Disturbing Memories: Narrating experiences and Emotions of Distressing Events in the French Wars of Religion,' 253–68. See also Barbara B. Diefendorf, 'Memories of the Massacre: Saint Bartholomew's Day and Protestant Identity in France,' in *Voices for Toleration in an Age of Persecution*, ed. Vincent P. Carey (Washington, DC: The Folger Shakespeare Library, 2004), 45–62.
18. See especially Chapter 5 by Erika Kuijpers in this volume.
19. Pierre Boaistuau, *Histoires prodigieuses les plus memorables qui ayent esté observées, depuis la Natiuité de Iesus Christ, iusques à nostre siecle* (Paris: Vincent Sertenas, 1560). On this work see Stephen Bamforth, 'Introduction,' in Pierre Boaistuau, *Histoires prodigieuses (édition de 1561). Edition critique*, introduction by Stephen Bamforth; text edited Stephen Bamforth and annotated by Jean Céard (Geneva: Droz, 2010), 7–273.
20. Spinks, 'Print and Polemic in Sixteenth-century France.'
21. See Charles Zika's argument about the ways that sixteenth-century German broadsheets reporting violent crime looked back to models such as saints' lives and inflammatory accusations of child murder by Jews. Charles Zika, 'Violence, Anger and Dishonour in Sixteenth-Century Broadsheets from the Collection of Johann Jakob Wick,' in *Violence and Emotions in Early*

- Modern Europe*, ed. Susan Broomhall and Sarah Finn (London: Routledge, 2015), 37–58.
22. The Devil opens the book, forming the subject of chapter 1.
 23. Cox and Greengrass, ‘Painting Power: Antoine Caron’s *Massacres of the Triumvirate*.’
 24. Boaistuau, *Histoires prodigieuses*, fol. 136r.
 25. Boaistuau, *Histoires prodigieuses*, fol. 64r.
 26. Boaistuau, *Histoires prodigieuses*, fol. 156v.
 27. See, for example, Montaigne, ‘On the cannibals’ in *The Complete Essays*, 228–41. On symbolic rather than actual French cannibalism as part of the civil wars (involving apocryphal reports of aggressive and symbolic cannibalism, rather than cannibalism prompted by famine) see Penny Roberts, ‘Peace, Ritual and Sexual Violence during the Religious Wars,’ in *Ritual and Violence*, ed. Murdock, Roberts and Spicer, 76–99, see 80–81. See Davis, ‘Rites of Violence,’ for Protestant and Catholic tit-for-tat polemic about eating babies, 68, and Gerhild Scholz Williams, *Defining Dominion: The Discourses of Magic and Witchcraft in Early Modern France and Germany* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995), 140–41, for Jean de Léry’s commentaries on cannibalism in the New World and France.
 28. Boaistuau, *Histoires prodigieuses*, fol. 159r.
 29. Boaistuau, *Histoires prodigieuses*, fol. 148v.
 30. This would fit with Boaistuau’s generally cautious approach in the printed edition of his book. See Spinks, ‘Print and Polemic in Sixteenth-century France.’
 31. Jean de Marconville, *Recueil memorables d’aveyns cas merueilleux aduenuz des noz ans* (Paris: Ian Dallier, 1564).
 32. On Marconville, see Richard A. Carr, ‘Introduction,’ to Jean de Marconville, *De la bonté et mauvaistié des femmes*, edited and annotated Richard A. Carr (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2000). For a new reading see Jennifer Spinks, ‘Signs that Speak: Reading the 1556 Comet across French and German Borders,’ in *Religion, the Supernatural and Visual Culture*, ed. Spinks and Eichberger, 212–39, at 232–5.
 33. According to the Universal Short Title Catalogue the work first appeared in 1562, but I cite the more accessible 1564 edition.
 34. ‘la chose plus prodigieuse qui soit jamais aduenue en ce tresflorrisant Royaume.’ Marconville, *Recueil memorables*, fol. 1r. He presented rage as a prodigy. Marconville, *Recueil memorables*, sig. iij verso, and see also fol. 6v.
 35. Marconville, *Recueil memorables*, fol. 4v. See also fol. 6v and following.
 36. Marconville, *Recueil memorables*, fol. 6r.

37. Marconville, *Recueil memorables*, fol. 11v.
38. For the religious polemic around his discussion of the important 1556 comet, see Spinks, 'Signs that Speak,' 234–235.
39. Marconville, *Recueil memorables*, fol. 46v.
40. Marconville, *Recueil memorables*. See, for example, fol. 13r.
41. Marconville, *Recueil memorables*, fol. 80r.
42. Marconville, *Recueil memorables*, sig. vij verso.
43. On floods, see Marconville, *Recueil memorables*, fol. 35v. On blood rain and plague see, for example, fol. 48v.
44. Marconville, *Recueil memorables*, fol. 20v.
45. Marconville, *Recueil memorables*, fol. 22r.
46. Marconville, *Recueil memorables*, fols 53v–56r.
47. Marconville, *Recueil memorables*, fols 56r–58r, and especially fol. 57r.
48. This segued into another chapter detailing examples of how Christians could also be cruel and debased. Marconville, *Recueil memorables*, fol. 59v onwards.
49. Spinks, 'Print and Polemic in Sixteenth-century France,' 15–17, and see 17–24 for a discussion of the sections added to the *Histoires prodigieuses* after Boaistiau's death, set aside here in order to examine other prodigy collections.
50. François Belleforest, *Discovrs des presages et miracles auenus en la personne du Roy, & parmy la France, dès le com[m]encement de son regne* (Lyon: Michel Iove, 1568). Belleforest prepared this text as an insider, for he became Charles IX's official historian in 1568. Michel Simonin, *Vivre de sa plume au XVIè siècle ou la carrière de François de Belleforest* (Geneva: Droz, 1992), 87. See also Crouzet, *Guerriers de Dieu*, vol. 2, 54–55 and 124.
51. Belleforest, *Discovrs des presages et miracles*, fols 17r–v.
52. 'Docteurs sathaniques ... vomissant les blasphemes apris en l'escole de Caluin.' Belleforest, *Discovrs des presages et miracles*, fol. 4v.
53. Belleforest, *Discovrs des presages et miracles*, respectively fol. 4r, fol. 9r, fol. 28r.
54. Belleforest, *Discovrs des presages et miracles*, respectively fol. 12r, fol. 11v, fols 12r–v.
55. Belleforest, *Discovrs des presages et miracles*, fol. 11r, fol. 15r, fol. 32r.
56. Belleforest, *Discovrs des presages et miracles*, fol. 14r.
57. Belleforest, *Discovrs des presages et miracles*, fol. 20r.
58. Belleforest, *Discovrs des presages et miracles*, fols 14r–15v.
59. Belleforest, *Discovrs des presages et miracles*, fols 15v–16r.
60. Belleforest, *Discovrs des presages et miracles*, fol. 16r.
61. Belleforest, *Discovrs des presages et miracles*, fol. 29v.

62. He seems likely to have been writing between the second and third wars, in the period of truce brought by the Peace of Longjumeau (23 March 1568).
63. On Goulart see especially Amy Graves-Monroe, *Post Tenebras Lex. Preuves et propagande dans l'historiographie engagée de Simon Goulart (1543–1628)* (Geneva: Droz, 2012). Goulart's later work—and he was a prolific author and translator—is undergoing a resurgence of interest. See Oliver Pot, ed., *Simon Goulart. Un pasteur aux intérêts vastes comme le monde* (Geneva: Droz, 2013), especially Cécile Huchard, 'Merveille et vanité. La nature et les livres dans le *Trésor d'histoires admirable*,' 205–219, the only substantial analysis to date of Goulart's work on prodigies.
64. Simon Goulart, *Histoires admirables et mémorables de nostre temps, recueillies de plusieurs auteurs...* (Paris: Iean Hovzé, 1600–1610).
65. He often drew upon German sources, notably Andreas Hondorff's collection of exempla, and Job Fincel's earlier wonder books.
66. This undoubtedly also reflects the parallel development of reports of violent crime in other parts of Europe. See Chapter 14 by David Lederer in this volume and also Zika, 'Violence, Anger and Dishonour'.
67. I cite the 1607 English translation: Simon Goulart, *Admirable and Memorable Histories, Containing the Wonders of Our Time*, trans. Edward Grimestone (London: George Eld, 1607), 113–23. See also 'Exceeding strange cruelty punished,' at 143–8; and a further extended section on children, at 214–68, which includes material on physical violence.
68. Goulart, *Admirable and Memorable Histories*, 118.
69. Goulart, *Histoires admirables et mémorables de nostre temps*, fol. 21r. It was translated as 'murther' in the English edition. Goulart, *Admirable and Memorable Histories*, 116.
70. Goulart, *Histoires admirables et mémorables de nostre temps*, respectively 123–9, 133–4, 138–42, 185–98, 370–406, and 465–501.
71. Marconville, *Recueil memorables*, fol. 1r.

Experiencing the Thirty Years' War: Autobiographical Writings by Members of Religious Orders in Bavaria

Sigrun Haude

How did people experience a disaster of such magnitude, length and severity as the Thirty Years' War? According to a *New York Times* article of November 2011 entitled 'Population Control, Marauder Style', the war makes the 'Top Ten List' in the percentage category of world population loss for any war ever fought.¹ The event as a whole, then, certainly qualifies as a disaster on a grand scale in the modern sense, although up close the experience was more diverse. The war with its disastrous repercussions—such as inflation, famine, disease, violence and exile—did not hit every region equally. Some areas off the path of troop movement, like Hamburg, even thrived during the conflict. Scholars of disasters have pointed out that catastrophes are not by nature disastrous but are defined as such depending on their impact on humans²—and, one might add, the environment. That impact depended on a variety of factors, including location, gender, social and occupational group, resources and personality. While contemporaries did not use the word 'disaster' or *Katastrophe*

S. Haude
History, McMicken College of Arts and Sciences, University of Cincinnati,
Cincinnati, OH, USA

in our modern sense, but rather understood ‘Catastrophe’ as change or alteration,³ many of them experienced the war as devastating.

‘Experience’ has been a much debated topic among historians. At the centre is the question of whether it is possible to recover or know anything about how early modern people experienced certain events or situations.⁴ Ever since studies in the 1990s with different agendas and approaches expressed concern about essentialism and constructivism, most scholars nowadays, including myself, hold the view that a careful reading that heeds the earlier methodological warnings can draw out experiences expressed in these autobiographical writings. Importantly, however, these experiences are ‘deeply embedded’ in their ‘collective context’.⁵ The experiences, especially of violence, are not only closely linked to language (Joan Scott), but, as Claudia Jarzebowski insists, are also expressed physically since they are retained in the body’s memory (*Körpergedächtnis*), which provides a space beyond language.⁶ My analysis supports the bodily dimension in expressing experience.

Reactions to the disaster are graphically displayed in personal and autobiographical accounts, which make them remarkable windows on how contemporaries experienced the disaster. In the first half of the seventeenth century, the lines between the literary forms of autobiographies, diaries and other chronological accounts were fluid.⁷ They speak of a broad range of emotions—from fear to uncertainty and restlessness, but more importantly, these testimonies talk eloquently about what these experiences meant for them and their contemporaries; what effect the disaster had and how they tried to deal with it.

The following analysis focuses on the first half of the 1630s—the so-called Swedish Intervention—and is based on a selection of narrative accounts written by members of religious orders in Franconia and Old Bavaria (today both part of Bavaria), two areas that suffered severely during the conflict. At a time when literacy was still largely confined to the upper and (upper) middle classes, some of the most prolific recorders of the days’ events could be found among members of religious orders. Their position encouraged and sometimes demanded a daily record, and a good part of these writings were preserved by their orders.

The narratives under discussion comprise (1) the *Verzeichnus*⁸ of Clara Staiger (r. 1632–56), prioress of the Augustinian convent Mariastein near Eichstätt; (2) the journal (‘Peregrinationis ... periocha’)⁹ of Veit Höser (r. 1604–34), abbot of the Benedictine Abbey Oberaltaich in Bogen near Straubing; and (3) a group of documents from the Order of St Clare at

the Angerkloster in Munich.¹⁰ This last set of documents contains: two short reports about the flight of the sisters, one by the abbess, Catharina Bernardina Graff (r. 1626–34), the other by the recorder of the convent, Anna Catharina Frölich; a war chronicle, also written by Frölich; and a rare assortment of letters from 1632 between those who stayed behind in Munich and those in exile. These testimonies span the full spectrum of autobiographical accounts, from the sparse, chronicle-like notes of Clara Staiger to the eloquent and dramatic portraits of Veit Höser.

Monks and nuns were set apart from the rest of society in important ways that influenced the manner in which they encountered disaster. Their status had advantages and disadvantages. The religious formed a community that could sustain them and in which they could find companionship. Typically these communities were linked to a wider network of monastic houses, to which they could flee or appeal for help. Many of them had resources or received alms. Women religious were often under the control and ‘protection’ of a male guardian, whatever the latter might mean. These conceivable advantages were counterbalanced by more problematic consequences of their status: the religious—indeed the clergy in general—were frequently the target of violence. In some cases, they were suspected of being more affluent; in others, they were taken hostage to extract money from cities and communities. Confessional animosities added to the antagonism toward them. To avoid harassment, monks and nuns on their flights regularly disguised themselves and travelled in secular clothes. Even though monasteries were rarely well fortified, peasants regularly flocked behind their walls for safety, which turned monasteries into crowded and hazardous places. Subjects also stored their valuables and livestock there, and thus transformed monasteries into magnets for marauding soldiers.

Almost all accounts of the war describe graphically the unbelievable losses and desolation wrought by the conflict and its consequences. Numerous areas, particularly in southern Germany, suffered excruciatingly under military invasions and the demanding presence of troops. To provide a brief sketch of the events during the first half of the 1630s: Bavaria became the target of military action and troop movement from 1631 when Gustavus Adolphus (r. 1611–1632) led the Swedes south to aid Augsburg’s Protestants. After beating the Catholic troops at Breitenfeld (17 September 1631), the Swedes marched through Erfurt, Würzburg and Bamberg to winter in Eichstätt’s diocese. In April 1632 the Swedes conquered several important Bavarian cities and eventually took Munich, from where Duke/Elector Maximilian (r. 1598/1623–1651) had already

fled. The military successes of the Protestants made Emperor Ferdinand II (r. 1619–1637) call Albrecht von Wallenstein (1583–1634) out of his retirement to head another army. After the Battle of Lützen (16 November 1632), where Gustavus Adolphus was killed, successes and failures were more evenly distributed between the enemies; however, Bavaria suffered tremendously under the stationing and foraging of Swedish troops in its countryside. Wallenstein never came to Maximilian's aid, since he could not forgive Maximilian for advocating his dismissal in 1630. Without military relief, Bavaria lay open to the ransacking armies.

The war induced two widespread reactions—fear and flight—which reinforced one another. The narratives from Mariastein near Eichstätt, the Angerkloster in Munich and Oberaltaich near Straubing reveal how contemporaries encountered and dealt with these experiences. Fear runs constant throughout these accounts, regardless of the author's gender.¹¹ Clara Staiger, of the Augustinian convent Mariastein, assumed the position of prioress in 1632 after her predecessor had just died, following the shocking news that her cloister had been plundered and her five horses stolen.¹² Over the years, her cloister was repeatedly looted and finally burned down. For Staiger, there was little that could lessen her fear, and, indeed, proclamations of alarm over the uncertainty of the roads, the safety of her nuns and their endangered livelihood permeate her diary. Her words show that even a reprieve from military action and plundering could not relieve her dread of further misery. Staiger experienced anxiety of varying intensity. Certain events almost drove her out of her mind. When the Swedes took Eichstätt in 1633 and then, for ten consecutive days bombarded St Willibald Castle, where the sisters had sought protection and from where they watched the destruction of their cloister, Staiger felt a deadly fright that threatened to overcome her: 'I am so deeply afraid that I thought I would lose my body and my life, yes even my sanity since no one knows the outcome (of the siege).'¹³ Evidently, Staiger dreaded losing control of her mind more than death itself.

The abbess of the Poor Clares at Munich's Angerkloster expressed her dread in similar terms. When the Swedes made their way toward Munich in April 1632, Catharina Graff noted that she had borne much during her seven plus years as abbess of the Angerkloster, but the worst suffering came when she and her convent had to flee. She recalled that when the commissary told her to prepare for flight, she thought her spirit would leave her (*meinen Geist bey der Windten aufgeben*). The news was particularly devastating because, as abbess, she could not share her burden

with the nuns for whom she needed to be a comforting and strong leader. 'Therefore I entrusted my heart entirely to the Lord. He alone knew how I felt.'¹⁴

The Benedictine abbot Veit Höser affords us a look at the fear he sensed and observed among his neighbours: 'Who could describe the terror, fear and dread of the horrified and stricken citizens? The silent screams of the women and children, their weeping and wailing, their moaning, their choking fear, their wild speech and how they are thrown out of their own homes.'¹⁵ Sightings of Swedes in late 1633 caused the brethren to rush restlessly from one place to the next. With great psychological insight Höser articulates the effects of terror on himself and his community: 'Already pierced by the arrows of fear and the sheer imagination of horror, and bleeding like wounded game, we immediately disappear into the thicket since we do not know what trap the enemy has set. With the night's terror still in our bones, we return alone one after another to the charcoal hut.'¹⁶ He conveys that not only concrete events but the anticipation of disaster produced fear of a kind that was equally debilitating. This dread, whether real or imagined, penetrated the body, settled there and, like a bleeding wound, affected and dominated the entire body.¹⁷

The continuance and longevity of a disaster did not make the fear less traumatic or less visceral. Over the years the looting became a familiar occurrence, but familiarity did not reduce the panic. For the Augustinian nuns of Mariastein, their frightening experience during the first half of the 1630s made the prioress and her nuns shrink back in horror at the mere mention of approaching troops.¹⁸ The continuous attacks wore Staiger down and brought her to the brink of what she could endure. In March 1648 the enemy entered Eichstätt's territory once again. Staiger and her nuns had fled via Eichstätt to St Willibald's Castle high above the city. On the way the prioress witnessed how soldiers broke into her newly rebuilt cloister.

For Höser, experiencing terror and disruption over and over again did not make them less frightening: 'For me, who had encountered such things many times, this is no longer a novelty, and yet I am nevertheless horrified because the angry assaults of the enemy repeat themselves so often and unannounced.'¹⁹ As a Benedictine abbot and renowned Catholic reformer, Höser presented an even more sought-after target than other religious and clergy; indeed, the Swedes put the price of 60 Taler on his head.²⁰ When, after many close calls, they cornered him in a house where he had taken refuge, Höser related his reaction: 'Instantly I break out in

cold sweat. I know that one moment can decide over life and death, that I am in danger of losing my liberty. Where to go in this emergency?’ While he moved into the darkest, uppermost corner of the house, the robbers hacked their way through every room.

I am right next to the robbers and hear everything; I listen to the tiniest sound and in my hideout keep as silent as a mouse, petrified, a living image. Only trembling of fear, I await the outcome. I barely dare to breathe. I would have dearly liked to silence the beat of my heart that almost burst with fear, but as long as the enemies were near me and my hideout, I could not even calm, let alone stop, the beat.²¹

He hid his purse and took off his golden cross with its relics so that they would take him for an ordinary man should they find and rob him, and called upon God, the saints and St Mary for protection.²² Plainly, for Staiger and Höser, one more attack or raid was not more of the same but tested the limits of what one could bear.

Flight was a widespread response to the threat of violence, but what did flight mean for contemporaries? For the religious communities under discussion here, their flights led to temporary exile, not permanent emigration.²³ While this was certainly the hope of those in exile, there was no certainty of the outcome, or any knowledge of how many more times they would have to flee. Contemporaries described their experience as ‘going into misery’ (*ins Elend gehen*). This standard phrase found throughout narratives of secular and spiritual men and women implied having to leave one’s place for a region that was not home. This ‘strange land’ could be a distant county or a foreign country, but it could also be as close as the nearby forest, the next city, or, in the case of the religious, another monastery or convent. In short, it was an area beyond the immediate boundaries of one’s home. The expression has its roots in the middle-high German word ‘ellende’ (old-high German: *alilanti/elilenti*) and connotes an alien country, *Fremde*, *Verbannung*, exile, as well as the notion of suffering and desolation.²⁴ Early modern narratives continue the conceptual association between exile, misery and hardship.

Höser provides close-ups of what leaving one’s home meant for the populace around him. After the Swedish troops had overthrown Neuburg on the Danube, Abensberg and Kelheim and were advancing on Regensburg while committing unbelievable atrocities, the people were so horrified that they left their ‘Heimat’ and ‘sought their salvation in flight’.²⁵ The

Benedictine abbot describes with great sensitivity the suffering of the refugees he meets and is cognisant of their burden: 'No one can see the daily and night-long treks of refugees passing before his eyes without the deepest pity.' He highlights the suddenness of the assault that made any planning impossible. People had to vacate their homes at once and had to abandon family, friends and possessions. 'Without hesitating for a second and without a glance back they had to leave for the unknown and start a miserable life (that is, a life away from home).' Helplessly Höser had to watch as parents and children were torn apart and everyone, whether elderly, half-naked, injured or crippled, wandered around aimlessly among strangers. War became the great equaliser: 'They who previously had plenty were now forced to go begging.'²⁶

If leaving one's home was experienced as alienating and distressing, how much more disturbing must this event have been for those who lived in enclosure—and worse still for the Benedictines! While enclosure was a recent measure that had been internalised to varying degrees by religious houses,²⁷ the Benedictine rule of *stabilitas loci* (stability of place) was foundational to their order. The Benedictine abbot, Veit Höser, captures these traumatic elements perfectly:

Tomorrow I have to commence my journey into misery, into exile. I have to pronounce the word again: exile, misery, banishment, because I have to leave my *Heimat*, depart from our monastic settlements, desert the house where I took my vows, where I swore lifelong faithfulness to my cloister and *stabilitas*. Now I have to abandon my brothers and sons who are dearest to me on earth... Misery, I say, because I depart in the tattered gown of a homeless foreigner, poor, needy and miserable and without any brotherly comfort. Banishment because I have been FORCED to leave home and live among strangers.²⁸

Höser's words highlight another unsettling aspect of the flights: the breaking up of the monastic community. Usually during an attack, a contingent stayed behind to look after the convent and flee only when the enemy was all but upon them, while the larger part of the group sought refuge elsewhere. Some communities were split up among other convents that still seemed safe—either because no other refuge was available or because the group was too large to sustain abroad. When Prioress Clara Staiger followed their guardian's order and fled with her nuns, she suffered agonising fear for those who had stayed behind at Mariastein: 'The

concern for my twenty sisters in the cloister made me so anxious that I did not know how I felt. I dragged myself up the mountain (to St Willibald's Castle) and thought I could not stop myself from falling down... I was then carried and guided rather than that I walked myself.²⁹ Among the Poor Clares of Munich's Angerkloster, 12 stayed behind to keep the convent going, while 48 fled to the Tyrol. Torn apart, the sisters could hardly contain the fear for one another.³⁰ Even when a flight led to a safe haven, the dread for those left behind caused agitation and restlessness.

Exile, then, not only separated one from the space one regarded as home; it also disrupted the community that shaped one's life there.³¹ Flight, however, could also foster new associations of fate. Clara Staiger noted that, in Ingolstadt, they received many alms, 'but more from the Neuburger and foreigners than from the Ingolstädter, who did not greatly respect strangers. The (natives) had neither experienced our grief nor did they understand it.'³² The experience of exile fused people together, but it also separated them from those who had little conception of what the refugees had suffered.

For the sisters who remained at home, life hardly continued as before either. These nuns also faced disruption in their familiar spaces since they often had to take in nuns from other convents and orders, which led to friction over religious lifestyle. The spatial separation within their own group (between those who fled and those who remained in the cloister) weighed heavily on them, and some felt left behind and exposed. In her correspondence, Sister Anastasia of Munich's Angerkloster referred to herself as an 'orphan': 'with regard to us poor orphans, I cannot express in words what fear and sorrow are among us. We are simply without protection (*vogelfrei*)... We need nothing more than to prepare for the blessed end.'³³ While the nuns were anxious for the safety and comfort of those who had fled, the smaller group that operated the convent at home felt overburdened with running its economy all by itself. It meant hard work and chores that many were unused to or not trained for. While some had no regrets about having stayed behind, others became heavy at heart. Sister Anastasia, with six other nuns, had not gone all the way to the Tyrol and had instead returned (from Tölz) to the Angerkloster, but she eventually regretted having done so. For her, being a nun meant being quiet in her cell with God: 'O my dear heart, it is a pleasure above all pleasures for the one who can serve God in her cell in silence.'³⁴ Instead she had to take on tasks she never wanted to and become involved in the business of running the cloister's economy. If the experience of exile led

to a form of disequilibrium—a *Gleichgewichtsstörung* in the words of the twentieth-century exile Stefan Zweig—the experience of a reconfigured home also tested one's sense of identity.³⁵ Höser, who unlike the sisters of the Angerkloster never found a long-term refuge, recounts volatility and aimlessness as central hallmarks of his life after he left the *stabilitas* of his abbey behind:

Thus I wandered constantly, waveringly without aim, and nowhere did I find a minute of peace because the daily and nightly, irregular, sudden and unpredictable attacks and persecutions of the Weimar riders and soldiers did not leave me a single corner where I could have rested with any feeling of security or even taken a short respite, let alone used it as a hiding place. O good God, how often during the course of a day or night was I forced to get up from bed, prayer, or work, after I just started something, to flee helter-skelter?³⁶

Aimlessness and restlessness did not only characterise his life, but that of the people he encountered on his flights as well. In shelters there was a continuous coming and going. Wandering refugees of every station warmed themselves for a while at a campfire to dispel the wintry cold but then left again. They changed places constantly and moved from one hiding place in the wilderness of the Bavarian Forest to the next, since they did not know where to find safety.³⁷ Even in the most inhospitable places they regularly came across wandering people. Eventually Höser and his companions trudged back to the provostry,

trembling of fear. Our heart raced when we entered. In fearful expectation we ate our evening soup and stayed overnight without finding peace. With fear and anxiety we anticipated dawn. The lords and barons of Neuhaus and Au fled to us, who were refugees ourselves. The former had crawled out of his hiding place in a cavern, which he could no longer endure. The latter wandered aimlessly for weeks since the Swedes had robbed him of his *Heimat* and everything else. Countless people from the countryside of all ages were there, who could not find safety anywhere.³⁸

The narrative accounts reveal several behaviours that became instrumental in coping with the war and in combating despondency and desolation. All of them display an eagerness for news, for being informed, and a penchant for realism. Contrary to what one might imagine about the religious, their seclusion did not make them oblivious of or disinterested in

what was going on in the world. Quite the contrary. In her correspondence with the Poor Clares' housekeeper, Michael Friedinger back in Munich, Anna Frölich expressed her eagerness for information and urged him to ask the court chamber's procurator, Dr Hieronymus Fürstetter, what he knew, and then to write to her about it.³⁹ Often the religious describe accurately the military developments of the war, which meant that they had access to news, whether they were behind walls or not. News could come through letters, messengers, people who passed on information, as well as through newspapers and reports associated with fairs (*Messrelationen*). Both male and female religious also commented on the war and passed judgment regarding its causes and outcomes. On the basis of their information and their own common sense, they assessed the situation frequently and realistically. For Höser, the fault for all the misery lay with the military and political commanders.⁴⁰ He obtained his information through *Relationen* (news reports) hot off the press, available at spring fairs.⁴¹

Being informed represented an important way to get a handle on the catastrophe of war. It was crucial, however, to obtain *reliable* news to determine from which direction the menace came, to plan the next move, and to decide when and where to flee.⁴² On their arduous journey into exile, the Poor Clares of Munich's Angerkloster were told en route that the Köslberg was already ruined. Instead of accepting the news, they sent their own envoy during the night 'to learn the truth'.⁴³

Resilience and courage were further means to counter the effects of war. This could come in the shape of plugging along despite setbacks or in spectacular shows of courage. The many losses and the constant fear could not deter Clara Staiger from investing in the future of her cloister. Even though their horses and other animals were perpetually raided and confiscated, the prioress purchased new livestock whenever possible.⁴⁴ Despite the fact that countless supplies were robbed in transit, Staiger continued to organise shipments.⁴⁵ When, in early 1634, Mariastein was finally entirely destroyed, the prioress surveyed the ruins and began to plan the construction of a new cloister; while some of the sisters moved back in between the ruins to start the spring crop.⁴⁶ Similarly, Anna Frölich of the Angerkloster worked tirelessly from the Tyrol to keep the convent's economy going and sent instructions regarding the management of the cloister's holdings, fields and peasants.⁴⁷ More dramatic were the acts of Veit Höser, who, when the Swedes had finally encircled him, disguised himself as surgeon with all the fitting paraphernalia and made a daring run through the Swedes' headquarters in Straubing. From there

he escaped to Geiselhöring, camouflaged as a herdsman, and eventually reached Landshut.⁴⁸

Two of the most essential elements for persevering, however, were the emotional and practical bonds of companionship and being able to talk through one's experiences. Before Höser and his brethren had to flee, their abbey served briefly as a refuge for everyone on the run—for the religious from other monasteries, influential secular men and assorted commoners. While this motley crew exchanged news and tried to verify information about the approaching army, the tables were set, and over 30 strangers shared a meal, 'enjoying the food, talking with one another and discussing everything they had experienced themselves as eyewitnesses'.⁴⁹ This companionship became even more important when they were in flight. Many people crossed paths at these times and were eager for company. The prelate of Windberg (Michael Fuchs) implored Höser and others: 'Let's stay together all day and share our meals, and after supper please stay overnight!'⁵⁰ At night they climbed up the mountain to take in the view of the surrounding burning villages: 'After we watched the night's spectacle (*Schauspiel*) for a while, we returned to the parsonage and ruminated on what we had witnessed but had not digested.'⁵¹ Only then did they sleep. The company and camaraderie were important for those fleeing, not only because they dispelled loneliness and provided comfort, but also because they enabled them to work through and digest what they had experienced: 'everyone told one another extensively about their own misery and mourned and lamented the common disaster (*Unglück*).'⁵² Sharing one's misfortune and talking things through at length provided vital relief and the opportunity to integrate one's own experiences into the larger events of the time.

To conclude, commonality and difference characterise contemporaries' experiences of the disaster of the Thirty Years' War. Fear was universal, and many tried to escape violence and death through flight. Some were constantly on the move and suffered the restlessness and aimlessness that marked the existence of a refugee. For others, the war brought a more moderate amount of upheaval, but notably, one never knew what the next day would bring, how many more flights one would have to endure and whether a safe haven would be on offer. The flights induced feelings of displacement, disruption and violation. While they held out hope of survival for the individual, they tore apart the community, the crucial framework through which life could be sustained and catastrophic experiences digested. But flights could also lead to chance encounters and momentary

communities of fate, which took the place of one's original circle in absorbing and dealing with what happened.

The religious fell back on a variety of strategies to survive the disaster. They sought news and information about the local military situation as well as the larger events and developments of the war. Such intelligence aided not only in making smart decisions about the next steps that needed to be taken, but also gave them a greater sense of being in control of their lives. This thirst for information went hand in hand with a keen sense of realism and pragmatism in dealing with the war. Intriguingly, in these accounts the religious, who presumably had an intensely religious mindset, did not express their experiences with disaster in religious or apocalyptic terms. The immediate culprits for the disaster were specific individuals who held political and military power. The assessment of the war by the religious revolved around military actions and decisions rather than apocalyptic meanings that signalled the end of the world. In these testimonies, religion played a role, but as consolation, not as an escape nor even as a model for interpretation.

Death and the danger of death were omnipresent for the people in these sources. Our *dramatis personae* survived the immediate ordeal of violence with ingenuity, perseverance, resilience, courage and often sheer luck. But where was safety to be found when disaster came in many different forms, like violence, expulsion, hunger and epidemic diseases? Veit Höser, who on his flights had done the impossible in escaping capture and bloodshed, died of pestilence shortly after returning home in August 1634. Twenty-four of the 40 brothers died with him that summer and fall.⁵³ There was little one could do to outsmart the plague in 1634. Still, what emerges from the testimonies is that, despite the many forms of misery wrought by the disaster, men and women tried to apply whatever resources they could muster to escape the deadly maelstrom of war. In dealing with disasters, early modern contemporaries drew from a broad spectrum of modes and explanations that coexisted easily alongside one another.⁵⁴ With the beyond clearly before their eyes, the religious coped with their experiences of the war in ways very much anchored in the here and now.

NOTES

1. *New York Times*, 6 November 2011.
2. François Walter, *Katastrophen. Eine Kulturgeschichte vom 16. bis ins 21. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2010), 19.

3. See, for example, M. Melchior Cramer's Passion and Easter sermon of 1644: 'Mortis et Vitæ Catastrophe', or 'Todes vnd Lebens Abwechsel'. Herzog-August-Bibliothek, H 312 Helmst 4^o (3). See also François Walter's discussion of the use and meaning of 'Katastrophe' in *Katastrophen*, 16–21.
4. See Paul Münch, ed., *'Erfahrung' als Kategorie der Frühneuzeitgeschichte* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2001); Fabian Brändle et al., 'Texte zwischen Erfahrung und Diskurs. Probleme der Selbstzeugnisforschung,' in *Von der dargestellten Person zum erinnerten Ich. Europäische Selbstzeugnisse als historische Quelle (1500-1850)*, ed. Kaspar von Greyerz et al. (Cologne: Böhlau, 2001), 3–31; Joan Scott, 'The Evidence of Experience,' *Critical Inquiry* 17 (1991): 773–97.
5. Kaspar von Greyerz, 'Ego-Documents: The Last Word?' *German History* 28 (2010): 273–82, here 276. Greyerz thus finds the term 'Ego-documents' inadequate in capturing the broader implications of such accounts. See also Mary Fulbrook and Ulinka Rublack's comment: '(o)ne does not have to follow down a post-modernist route to realise the significance of the fact that no account of the self can be produced which is not constructed in terms of social discourses: that the very concepts people use to describe themselves, the ways in which they choose to structure and to account for their past lives, the values, norms, and common-sense explanations to which they appeal in providing meaning to their narratives, are intrinsically products of the times through which they have lived.' 'In Relation: The "Social Self" and Ego-Documents,' *German History* 28 (2010): 263–72, at 267.
6. Scott, 'Evidence of Experience,' 793; Claudia Jarzebowski, 'Gewalt und Erfahrung. Überlegungen zu den Memoiren der Wilhelmine von Bayreuth (1709–1758),' in *Blutige Worte. Internationales und interdisziplinäres Kolloquium zum Verhältnis von Sprache und Gewalt in Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*, ed. Jutta Eming and Claudia Jarzebowski (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2008), 187–211, here 206–7.
7. See Kaspar von Greyerz, *Vorsehungsglaube und Kosmologie: Studien zu englischen Selbstzeugnissen des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), 16. Scholars debate whether one should define documents that narrate something about the self as autobiographical accounts, testimonies about or to oneself (*Selbstzeugnisse*), Ego-documents, self-narratives, personal accounts, or any variation of the above. See Greyerz, 'Religion in the Life of German and Swiss Autobiographers (Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries),' in *Religion and Society in early modern Europe 1500–1800*, ed. Kaspar von Greyerz (Winchester, Mass.: Allen & Unwin, 1984), 223–41; Benigna von Krusenstjern, 'Was sind Selbstzeugnisse? Begriffskritische und quellenkundliche Überlegungen

- anhand von Beispielen aus dem 17. Jahrhundert,' *Historische Anthropologie* 2 (1994): 462–71; and the special issue of *German History* 28, no. 3 (2010) that is dedicated to ego-documents.
8. Ortrun Fina, ed., *Klara Staigers Tagebuch. Aufzeichnungen während des Dreißigjährigen Krieges im Kloster Mariastein bei Eichstätt* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1981).
 9. Rupert Sigl, 'Wallensteins Rache an Bayern. Der Schwedenschreck'. *Veit Höfers Kriegstagebuch* (Grafenau: Morsak Verlag, 1984). The Latin original can be found in the Staatsbibliothek Munich (CIm 1326, 'Viti Hoeseri Abbatis Hist. Miscella PEREGRINATIONIS Durante per inferiorem Bauariam ...'). This is the third volume of Höser's three-volume work entitled 'Monomonastikon'.
 10. Irmgard E. Zwingler, *Das Klarissenkloster bei St. Jakob am Anger zu München* (Munich: Verein für Diözesangeschichte von München und Freising, 2009). For the original, see Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv München, Dreißigjähriger Krieg, Akten 315, and Klosterliteralien 16, München Angerkloster, 230r–39r.
 11. On fear in early modern and modern times, see Yi-fu Tuan, *Landscapes of Fear* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1979); William G. Naphy and Penny Poberts, eds., *Fear in Early Modern Society* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997); Andreas Bähr, 'Remembering Fear. The Fear of Violence and the Violence of Fear in Seventeenth-Century War Memories,' in *Memory before Modernity. Practices of Memory in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Erika Kuijpers et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2013); and Joanna Bourke, *Fear. A Cultural History* (London: Virago, 2006). Bourke argues that 'fear has a strong claim to be one of the most dominant emotions', but it is also a component of more complex emotions. Bourke, *Fear*, 8. With other scholars, Bourke distinguishes between fear or alarm and anxiety. The former is an immediate reaction to an event, the latter the anticipation of a threat.
 12. *Klara Staigers Tagebuch*, 49. Her *Verzeichnus* is one of the most detailed records of a convent's day-to-day experiences. Staiger's notes are very close to the medieval *Reihenstruktur* of a chronicle, where descriptions of chores, religious rituals, hardships, finances and the weather follow one another with no interpretive frame. She does, however, provide the occasional comment on her experiences.
 13. 'ich bin so hart geengstiget worden / das ich vermaint / es wert mir leib und leben ja sogar die vernunfft kosten da nymant den außgang gewist.' *Klara Staigers Tagebuch*, 83.
 14. 'Hab derowegen Mein Herz allein Gott verthraut. Der hat Es allein Erkhent, wie mier ist gewest, wann ich Meinen Lieben Convent hab angesehen.' Zwingler, *Klarissenkloster*, 1063.

15. 'Wer könnte hier den Schrecken, die Angst und Furcht der vor Entsetzen verstörten Bürger schildern? Die wortlosen Schreie der Frauen und Kinder, ihr Weinen und Wehklagen, ihr Stöhnen, ihre würgenden Ängste, ihr wirres Reden und wie sie aus ihren eigenen Heimen hinausgeworfen und fortgejagt werden.' Sigl, *Veit Höisers Kriegstagebuch*, 103.
16. 'Wir, die wir ohnehin wie waidwundes Wild von den Pfeilen der Furcht und den Schreckensvorstellungen getroffen, aus unseren Wunden bluteten, verschwinden im Nu und verkriechen uns alle sofort im Dickicht, da keiner weiß, welche Falle uns die feindliche Hinterlist gestellt hat. Den nächtlichen Schreck noch in den Gliedern, kehrte nacheinander jeder für sich allein wieder in die Köhlerhütte zurück.' Sigl, *Veit Höisers Kriegstagebuch*, 132–3.
17. See also Bourke, *Fear*, where she discusses the body's role in the manifestation of fear: 'The sensation of fear is not merely the ornament of the emotion: fear is "what hurts" ...' (8)
18. See also Arthur E. Imhof, *Die Verlorenen Welten: Alltagsbewältigung durch unsere Vorfahren—und weshalb wir uns heute so schwer damit tun* (Munich: Beck, 1985), who discusses the traumatisation of a local population and the difference between concrete fear and latent anxiety (here 95–96, 100–101). See also fn. 12 above.
19. 'Für mich, der ich solche Dinge schon oft erlebt, ist das keine Neuigkeit mehr, bin aber dennoch entsetzt, weil sich die wütenden Überfälle der Feinde so oft und unverhofft wiederholen.' Sigl, *Veit Höisers Kriegstagebuch*, 147.
20. Inspired by the reform movement of the Benedictine abbey Melk in Austria, Höser is known as an important reformer of his monastery in terms of its discipline and education. He also oversaw an ambitious building programme that was concluded in 1630.
21. 'Im Nu bricht mir der Angstschweiß aus. Ich weiß, daß ein Augenblick über Leben und Tod entscheidet, daß mir der Verlust der Freiheit droht. Wohin in dieser Not? ... Ich, in nächster Nähe der Räuber, höre alles, horche auf jedes kleinste Geräusch und halte mich in meinem Schlupfwinckel mäuschenstill, wie versteinert, ein lebendes Bild. Nur zitternd vor Angst erwarte ich, wie das ausgehen wird. Ich wage es fast nicht mehr zu schnaufen. Allzugerne hätte ich die Schläge meines vor Angst schier zerspringenden Herzens angehalten, aber ich konnte sie nicht einmal beschwichtigen, geschweige den anhalten, ...' Sigl, *Veit Höisers Kriegstagebuch*, 147–8 (19 December 1633).
22. Sigl, *Veit Höisers Kriegstagebuch*, 148.
23. Among the burgeoning literature on exile and migration, see especially Matthias Asche et al., eds, *Krieg, Militär und Migration in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2008); Joachim Bahlcke, ed.,

- Glaubensflüchtlinge. Ursachen, Formen und Auswirkungen frühneuzeitlicher Konfessionsmigration in Europa* (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2008); Manfred Briegel and Wolfgang Frühwald, eds., *Die Erfahrung der Fremde* (Weinheim: VCH Verlagsgesellschaft, 1988); and Helmut Koopmann, 'Exil als geistige Lebensform,' in *Exil. Transhistorische und transnationale Perspektiven*, ed. Helmut Koopmann and Klaus D. Post (Paderborn: mentis Verlag, 2001), 1–19.
24. Otto Eberhardt, 'Exil im Mittelalter. Einige Streiflichter,' in *Weltanschauliche Orientierungsversuche im Exil*, ed. Reinhard Andress (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010), 13–36, here 15; and *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob und Wilhelm Grimm* (1862; repr., Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1999), 33:406: 'Elend'—'*exilium, captivitas, miseria* ... 1) 'urbedeutung dieses schönen, vom heimweh eingegebenen wortes ist das wohnen im ausland, in der fremde'.
 25. 'Sie suchten ihr Heil in der Flucht.' Sigl, *Veit Hösers Kriegstagebuch*, 84 (Nov 1633).
 26. 'Niemand kann die täglichen und nächtlichen Flüchtlingstrecks ohne tiefstes Mitleid vor seinen Augen dahinziehen sehen, mußten sie doch bei den plötzlichen Überfällen der Feinde völlig überrascht, die eigenen Wohnungen auf der Stelle verlassen, im Nu und Augenblick aus dem Vaterhause fliehen, sich trennen von den Familienmitgliedern, Freunden, von jeglichem Besitz, mußten, ohne eine Sekunde zu zögern und sich umsehen zu können, in die Fremde ziehen, ein erbärmliches Leben beginnen. Sie, die vorher über große Vorräte verfügt, genug und übergenug hatten, mußten gezwungen bettelgehen. Wir mußten mit unseren Augen mitansehen, wie Eltern ohne ihre Kinder, Kinder ohne ihre Eltern, wie Familienväter und –mütter von einander getrennt und auseinander gerissen wurden, ... Ich sah sie und konnte nur hilflos zusehen, wie hochbetagte Greise sich auf ihren Stock stützten, wie andere mit ihrem Alter zugleich den hastig zusammengerafften Hausrat auf ihrem Rücken dahinschleppten, wieder andere, die ohne Sack und Stock, halbnackt, diese gräßlich verwundet und verstümmelt, haufenweise in der Fremde herumirrten ohne Ziel und nur zu fremden Leuten wollten.' Sigl, *Veit Hösers Kriegstagebuch*, 93–94.
 27. Among some religious, enclosure became a contested issue. See Ulrike Strasser, *State of Virginity: Gender, Religion, and Politics in an Early Modern Catholic State* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004). According to Frölich, the recorder of the Angerkloster, their nuns preferred enclosure to keeping their doors open. She mentioned unfavourably the observant nuns of Munich's Ridlerkloster, with whom they had to share their space during the Swedish attack and because of whom they had to admit secular people. Zwingler, *Klarissenkloster*, 1067.

28. 'Morgen muß ich meine Reise ins Elend, ins *Exil* antreten. Ich muß mir das Wort noch einmal vorsprechen: Exil, Elend, Verbannung, weil ich meine Heimat verlassen muß, fortgehen von unseren klösterlichen Niederlassungen, aus dem Hause desertieren muß, wo ich meine ewigen Gelübde abgelegt, wo ich lebenslängliche Treue zu meinem Kloster zu leben, stabilitas gelobt habe, meine Mitbrüder und Söhne im Stiche lassen muß, mein Teuerstes auf Erden.... Elend sage ich, weil ich im Lumpenkittel eines heimatlosen Fremdlings, arm und elend und allen brüderlichen Trostes bar und bedürftig fortziehen muß. Verbannung, weil ich *GEZWUNGEN* werde, in die Fremde, zu fremden Menschen zu gehen.' Sigl, *Veit Höfers Kriegstagebuch*, 151–2 (21 Dec 1633).
29. 'und wie ich mit etlich Schwestern auff der Höche des bergs bin / sich ich also ins Clösterle einSprengen / hat mich die sorg für meine noch 20 Schwestern im Closter so engstig gemacht / Das ich nit gewist / wie mir ist / hab am berg anheben schleiffen / und gemaint ich kündt mich Des herab fallens nit erwöhrn ... bin also mehr untter den armen tragen und gefüehrt worden als gangen ...' *Klara Staigers Tagebuch*, 316 (31 March 1648).
30. Zwinger, *Klarissenkloster*, 1058 (April 1632).
31. 'Space' is an important aspect with regard to experiencing and coping with the war, but its thorough analysis goes beyond the (spatial) limits of this article. For a more extensive discussion, see my forthcoming book-length study on the Thirty Years' War.
32. 'aber mer von den Neweburgischen und frembden / als von den ingolstettern / bei denen die frembden gar unwert geweßen / die unser ellend nit versuecht vielweniger erkhent haben ...' *Klara Staigers Tagebuch*, 142 (7 July 1634). Catholic Ingolstadt was never taken by the Swedes but many fled to the fortified city, which likely contributed to the citizens' weariness of 'foreigners'.
33. 'waß unß arme Waislein anbelangt, kan ich dirs mit Worten nit ausspröechen, ein soliche Angst und Jamer ist bey unß, mir sein halt vogelfrei.... Es ist unß nichts merers vonnethen, alß daß mir unß beraithen zue einem seligen Endt.' Zwinger, *Klarissenkloster*, 983 (3 May 1632).
34. 'O mein liebs herz, ain lust iber allen lust, der in seiner Zellen mit Still sein Gott kan dienen.' Zwinger, *Klarissenkloster*, 989 (6 August 1632) and 983n58.
35. Stefan Zweig, *Die Welt von Gestern. Erinnerungen eines Europäers*, in *Gesammelte Werke* (Hamburg: S. Fischer Verlag, 1982), 6:467–68.
36. 'So irrte ich ständig unschlüssig umher und fand nirgends eine Minute Ruhe; denn die täglichen und allnächtlichen, immer in unregelmäßigen Abständen erfolgenden plötzlichen und unberechenbaren Einbrüche, Überfälle, Verstöße und Verfolgungen der weimarischen Reiter und

- Soldaten ließen mir wirklich keinen einzigen Winkel mehr, wo ich mich mit dem Gefühl der Sicherheit hätte niedersetzen oder nur ein wenig ausruhen, geschweige denn mich hätte verstecken können. Wie oft, o du guter Gott, wurde ich im Laufe eines Tages, wie häufig während der Nacht gezwungen, aus dem Bett, vom Gebet, von der Arbeit weg, kaum daß ich etwas angefangen hatte, Hals über Kopf zu fliehen!?' Sigl, *Veit Hösers Kriegstagebuch*, 145 (18 Dec 1633).
37. Sigl, *Veit Hösers Kriegstagebuch*, 136.
38. 'Vor Angst zitternd stapften wir zur Propstei zurück, betraten sie mit klopfenden Herzen, löffelten in ängstlicher Erwartung die Abendsuppe, übernachteten, ohne Ruhe zu finden und erwarteten mit Hangen und Bangen den kommenden Morgen. Zu uns, die wir selbst Flüchtlinge sind, waren die Gutsherren und Barone von Neuhaus und Au geflüchtet. Jener war aus seinem Versteck in einer Felsenhöhle, in dem er es nicht mehr aushalten konnte, herausgekrochen. Dieser irrte seit Wochen herum, seitdem ihm die Schweden die Heimat und alles geraubt hatten. Unzählige Leute vom Lande, alle Altersstuden waren da, die nirgends mehr ihres Lebens sicher waren.' Sigl, *Veit Hösers Kriegstagebuch*, 137 (14 Dec 1633).
39. Zwingler, *Klarissenkloster*, 1071.
40. Sigl, *Veit Hösers Kriegstagebuch*, 99.
41. Sigl, *Veit Hösers Kriegstagebuch*, 122.
42. Sigl, *Veit Hösers Kriegstagebuch*, 88–89.
43. 'die warhait zue erfern.' Zwingler, *Klarissenkloster*, 1066.
44. *Klara Staigers Tagebuch*, 94, 130.
45. *Klara Staigers Tagebuch*, 97–98, 141–42.
46. *Klara Staigers Tagebuch*, 128.
47. Zwingler, *Klarissenkloster*, 1071.
48. Sigl, *Veit Hösers Kriegstagebuch*, 152–64.
49. 'Sie lassen es sich schmecken, unterhalten sich und diskutieren über all das, was sie selbst als Augenzeugen erlebt haben.' Sigl, *Veit Hösers Kriegstagebuch*, 85.
50. 'Beiben wir zusammen, speisen wir und nach dem Abendessen bleiben Sie doch die Nacht über hier!' Sigl, *Veit Hösers Kriegstagebuch*, 100.
51. 'Nachdem wir dieses nächtliche Schauspiel uns eine Weile betrachtet hatten, stiegen wir zum Pfarrhof hinab und kauten das Geschaute, aber nicht Verdaute, in unserer Unterhaltung wieder.' Sigl, *Veit Hösers Kriegstagebuch*, 100–101.
52. 'Und alle erzählten einander ausführlich ihr eigenes Elend, jammerten und bejammerten das allen gemeinsame Unglück.' Sigl, *Veit Hösers Kriegstagebuch*, 137.

53. Sigl, *Veit Höisers Kriegstagebuch*, 79 (from the editor's introduction).
Abbeß Graf of the Angerkloster resigned in 1634 and died quietly in 1644, whereas Klara Staiger (d. 1656) and Anna Catharina Frölich (d. 1659) survived the war.
54. See Chap. 8 by Dolly MacKinnon in this volume for similar conclusions.

‘Jangled the Belles, and with Fearefull
Outcry, Raysed the Secure Inhabitants’*:
Emotion, Memory and Storm Surges
in the Early Modern East Anglian Landscape

Dolly MacKinnon

On 31 January 1953 a North Sea inundation drowned just under 2,000 people along the shores of the North Sea’s European and British coastlines. In East Anglia alone, the surge caused extensive flooding, and of the 307 people who perished, a concentration occurred in the low-lying Dengie Peninsula and Canvey Island in Essex. But the night of 1953 was not a one-off event: for millennia such incursions marked themselves into the landscape, archives and emotional memories of East Anglian individuals and communities. Early modern East Anglian inhabitants with a living memory of flood constantly linked the landscape to a fear and anxiety of the North Sea’s relentless reach inland. Often under cover of darkness during the

*More Strange Newes: of Wonderfull accidents happening by the late overflowings of Water, in Summerset-shire, Gloucestershire, Norfolk, and other places of England (London, William Iggard, 1607), sig. C4. [British Museum C. 32.c.4].

D. MacKinnon
Historical and Philosophical Inquiry, The University of Queensland,
Brisbane, QLD, Australia

depth of winter, with the water's sounds masked by raging gales, the North Sea regularly reclaimed the low-lying marshlands along the coastline. With a geographical expanse of 1,528 square miles, no individual village, hamlet, or community in Essex is more than 34 miles from one of the four tidal estuarine rivers (the Colne, the Crouch, the Blackwater and Stour), and the Thames Estuary.¹ Essex has a confluence of rivers that empty into the sea, and as William Camden observed, 'the Ocean windeth itself into it'.² Perceived as a peninsula, to the east of the county its inhabitants 'encountreth the mayne Ocean [The North Sea], an infallable bounde'.³

Storm surges, and the fear they engender, are not the exclusive preserve of the East Anglian coastline, and can occur along any coastline under certain climatic conditions. In the Northern hemisphere, storm surges occur largely during the winter and spring, coinciding with high tides.⁴ A storm surge is caused by the combination of two powerful events: a dramatic drop in air pressure caused by a low pressure system followed by a high pressure system accompanied by extreme winds; the resulting displacement of the normal sea level creates humps of water, as high as 3 metres above normal high-tide levels. Accompanying winds propel these large humps of water vast distances across the North Sea, driving them over the low-lying coastlines, inundating the marshes and fens and overtopping sea wall defences in East Anglia, the Netherlands, Northern Germany and Denmark. In Essex the water level can rise between 2 and 19 feet above the high tide during a storm surge. These tides are known as 'spring tides', because they literally spring above a high tide, and in East Anglia the sea is known to rage. As a result the East Anglian coastline is subjected to inundation and reclamation, as well as erosion and accretion. As parts of the coastline are rapidly lost, other sections are built up through a process known as drift geology.⁵

For communities lying along the East Anglian coastline, the human instincts of fight or flight are automatically linked with the emotion of fear when confronted with the reality of a storm surge. 'Fear' originates from the Old English, *fæŕ*, and means not only calamity, danger, but also to revere. Here the object of early modern individual and community fear, in all its forms, was the North Sea tidal-wash, interpreted as God's anger. Communities understood that the North Sea could nourish and create fecund soils in the form of salt marshes, that offered economic bounty through the production of salt, salted beef, cattle, sheep, goats and large Essex cheeses for local and export markets. But equally by God's will, the sea might inundate and negate in equal measure, by means of flood, bringing destruction and death.

Communities understood and utilised their fears of storm surges. Early modern communities calibrated their understandings of fear based on the levels and significance of their different storm surge experiences that ranged from the expected to the exceptional. The varying power of these surges was understood as God's vengeance to a fearful nation in the case of major surges, or as God's mercy to a grateful nation in the case of minor ones. Levels of fear were emotional resources that cycled through communities, strengthening the ties that bound in times of disaster, and building community resilience in the face of inevitable disasters to come. While natural philosophy was gaining ground in seventeenth-century England, it did not eradicate the tradition of understanding storm surges as divine signs. The scientific method of collecting, synonymous with the activity of the Royal Society of London from the 1660s, was adopted by the godly, who listed and attempted to make sense of God's signs and emotions in the natural world. That 'increase in knowledge was necessary as both a sign and precondition of the imminent millennium' or End of Days.⁶ By focusing on examples from East Anglia, I analyse how these communities identified, interpreted and attempted to combat such vulnerabilities and responded emotionally to their fears. As Anthony Oliver-Smith has argued, disasters occur at the intersection of 'human populations' and 'a potentially destructive agent [in this case the sea] that is part of a total ecological system'.⁷ The early modern world understood human frailty, and storm surges, as divine. Calamitous events only appeared in pamphlet literature in an attempt to explain and link such signs with the Last Days, the Apocalypse, and God's anger. How communities understood and responded to such disasters, reflected the different calibrations of fear that drove some to action, and others to panic, and that could forge, as well as fracture, neighbourly bonds. Experience of East Anglian storm surges involved a number of inter-connected phases: the initial impact, numbness, a realisation of survival and loss, and the visceral emotions that accompany these experiences; the search for a cause, and reflection on the potential human contribution to God's anger that then marshals fear into actions; and the communal construction and performance of rituals that reaffirm loss, enable healing, and consolidate a sense of individual and collective identity and emotional memory in order to generate emotional resilience. In an East Anglian context evidence is partially recoverable in the landscape, material culture and paper archives. Fecundity, flood and fear are interconnected and embedded in the emotional repertoire of North

Sea communities as an ongoing reality.⁸ Pamphlets deal with the exceptional inundations interpreting them as evidence of God's anger towards a sinful community.

HISTORIOGRAPHY OF EARLY MODERN STORM SURGES

The dominant focus of recent studies concerning flood in early modern communities has been on the impact of the political or economic drivers of continuity and change of landownership patterns. Tim Soens's study of drainage in Flanders charts the changing pattern of funding for flood control over time.⁹ Piet Van Cruyningen describes this as an economic movement 'from disaster to sustainability' based on changes in the patterns of landholding in flood-prone areas.¹⁰ Meteorological histories have focused on changing patterns of flooding as a result of the early modern Little Ice Age.¹¹ The frequency of flood saw people experience particularly severe winters and storms in 1421, 1502, 1509, 1530, 1532, 1551/2, 1565, 1570, 1610, 1625, 1651, 1662, 1671, 1682, 1683 and 1686. For Essex, Basil E. Cracknell's study of Canvey Island and Ellen Heppell's recent study of Wallasea Island placed the formation of the marshland at the centre of their analyses.¹² James A. Galloway and Jonathan S. Potts's recent work focused on flooding in the Thames Estuary, its impact and communal responses.¹³ When considering the history of the disasters of sea inundation, however, the landscape along the coastline and the pivotal role the emotion of fear plays in early modern life has not been a focus in and of itself. Raingard Eber has concluded that early modern fear of flooding offers an alternative interpretation for the history of natural disasters and 'disaster-management'.¹⁴ Eber charts both reactions of contemporaries living in urban centres attempting to come to terms with such catastrophes, as well as their practical steps to prevent similar disasters in the future.

The early modern imagination and spirituality were imbued with biblical portrayals of the sea 'as a hostile place, inhabited by frightening and evil animals, such as serpents and whales', as Raingard Eber has argued, associated with 'disorder, chaos and death. It was that element which men [women and children] could least control.'¹⁵ It is also reminiscent of Genesis 1:2, 'And the earth was without form, and void; and the darkness was upon the face of the deep.' The Dutch dike-builder, Andries Vierlingh, said in 1603 that the North Sea 'does not rest nor sleep..., but comes, suddenly, like a roaring lion, seeking to devour the whole land'.¹⁶

Fear as reverence for the North Sea also underpins Martin Boxhorn's *Chronijk van Zeelandt* (1644), where 'The wrath of the sea can never be underestimated. The history of the previous centuries gives evidence for her unseemly lust to swallow up the land'.¹⁷ The North Sea is gendered, voracious, wanton, lustful and unbridled in her desires to consume all in her path.

Interpretations of storm surges were coloured by communal religious and political persuasions. Those who wrote about these events attempted to allay their own fears by constructing a logical faith-based narrative into which such events could be accommodated. The sea was also associated with the fear of the Apocalypse and the End of Days, for the Last Judgment in Revelation 13:1 forewarned of 'a beast coming out of the sea'. The End of Days was to be watched for, as Matthew 24:13 proclaimed that the Day of Judgment was heralded by 'the sea and the waves roar'. The Dutch Protestants thanked God for sparing them, while Dutch and Spanish Catholics saw God's actions as aimed against a heretical society that allowed iconoclasm.¹⁸ Early modern England also revered the power of providential acts, as Alexandra Walsham has ably demonstrated.¹⁹ For the Reverend Ralph Josselin of Earls Colne in Essex, 'God good to mee in his word, my heart drawn out for the good of soules heard much about the prodigiousness of the flood. in many parts.'²⁰ Josselin's spirituality, which emphasised the need to revere God's providential acts, was reflected in his weather metaphors: 'Ap: 5. a sweet raine and warme; god good in his word, my soule loveth him. a wett weeke. 11 [April] day a considerable flood'.²¹ For Josselin, 'Wett trully our hearts are not cleansed nor our ways reformed' the 'Lord goeth out against us in the season, which was wonderfully wett; flouds every weeke, hay rotted abroad, much was carried away with the flouds, much inned...; we never had the like in my memory, and that for the greatest part of the summer' [28 June 1648].²² These events are interspersed with his entries about the Siege of Colchester that would end catastrophically for the Royalist cause in 1648. Josselin feared what all of this might mean.

Penny Roberts and William G. Naphy recognise that 'fear in early modern society is a problematic subject' of study, but one, they argue, that can be studied 'as an historical phenomenon'.²³ Fear can be defined 'in relation or juxtaposition to anxiety'.²⁴ Fear is not to be confused with panic, a spontaneous and disorderly response to catastrophic events. 'Unlike anxiety, which gives expression to an uncertainty about the future, the object

of fear is concrete', argue Roberts and Naphy, and 'can be dealt with by some appropriate action' that can reduce or overcome it.²⁵ Roberts and Naphy term this process the 'logistics of fear'.²⁶ Strategies taken, both individually and collectively, mitigated and combated the fear of storm surge inundation. Exceptional circumstances, such as storm surges that overwhelmed these human defences, however, demonstrated the power of God's wrath. Only then did pamphlets call on communities to focus their attention on mending their spiritual health. As one anonymous pamphlet, recounting the catastrophic floods across England, including East Anglia in 1607, attested: 'I am sure, it both may and will profit thee by putting thee in remembrance why God doth punish others, that so thou maist thy selfe in time looke unto thine own courses, least he proceed in the same or some more grievous maner with thee'.²⁷ Fear was a calibrated process for communities living with the sea. They remembered that periodically the sea would spill over low-lying landscapes and submerge man-made defences.

Individuals and communities living by the sea could therefore be prompted to collective action through their experience of fear. The archives of the State, Church and agricultural manors involved in land-holding and farming, utilised fear, as in Roberts and Naphy's concept of the logistics of fear, to mobilise community flood responses. While existing studies have focused on urban settings, and economic changes over time, my work extends this focus to the flood-prone and less densely populated coastal region of early modern East Anglia.²⁸ Those residing along that coastline affected by storm surges lived with this fear on a daily basis, for as Roberts and Naphy concluded, 'fear was a respected but not invincible enemy'.²⁹ The emotional connection between communities and their landscapes shaped aspects of those flood-prone landscapes, creating what I call a topography of fear, with an evidentiary trail that historians can read. For example, the sea walls, causeways and ditches marked those unnatural physical features that were the product of human endeavours, motivated by fear, and aimed at stemming seasonal inundations.³⁰ Fear was made visible by the actions of generations of unknown hands that mitigated the rush of angry seas. Camden referred to the 'hillocks cast up' on Canvey Island, Essex, where shepherds, in an attempt to safeguard their sheep from the incoming tides, created 'artificial mounds' for them to clamber up.³¹ Fear was refracted into practical measures of human agency against the elements, enabling sheep farming on the East Anglian marshlands, and the 'plenty of copperas', the green crystals of hydrated

ferrous sulphate used in dyeing, textiles, tanning, fertilizer and medical ointments.³² Calculated risks could result in economic riches. Essex was also described as the English Goshen, an allusion to the fertile lands given to the Israelites as a place of light in the darkness. John Norden claimed in 1594 that Essex was ‘moste fatt, frutefull, and full of profitable thinges, exceeding (as farr as I can finde) anie other shire, for general comodeties and the plentie’.³³ Salt marshes, producing salt, salted meats and dairy products, were exceedingly profitable, but those who took the economic gamble to invest knew they risked utter ruin when a great flood periodically reclaimed the marshes.

COMMUNITIES IN FEAR AND NEIGHBOURLINESS

Neighbourliness in flood-prone areas helped to formulate a sense of community, ‘a community of interest among neighbours,’ by ‘defining their relationships not only to the lord’ of the manor, ‘but also to one another’, as a consequence of their sharing a coastal landscape.³⁴ Communities saw the failure of the dikes and sea walls not only as a warning by God, but also, as Keith Wrightson articulates, the failure of individuals in their neighbourly responsibilities and obligations. Their physical proximity to each other contributed ‘to the formulation of a sense of place and of selfhood within that place’.³⁵ The Reverend Ralph Josselin noted on 22 October 1671, that ‘the season threats, clouds gather as if trouble with our neighbours yett wee repent not, my heart resolved to preach and doe for my God’.³⁶

Any failure of neighbourly actions motivated by the logistics of fear could let the community down badly, for these types of inundations were entirely avoidable by sea wall maintenance. Those unfamiliar with these risks placed others at risk and in peril of the effects of storm surges. This was not God’s disaster, but a man-made one. A tenant of Hornechurch, who refused to maintain his sea wall, resulting in vast tracts of other tenants’ land being inundated, had his lease taken off him. It was given to another who then set about repairing the walls and producing crops. The cost of reconstruction, over the short, medium and long term, was covered by members of the community through levies for maintenance. The most devastating of floods, or great tides, then entered popular memory, and became benchmarks against which previous and future events, as well as the actions taken in response, were measured. The worst flood was the most memorable flood, an event never seen in isolation but always as

part of a recurring cycle and series. Early modern communities' levels of fear ebbed and flowed with the seasonal tides, and were calibrated by the acquisition and deployment of the necessary resources, both physical and spiritual, that could mitigate their fears through action.

Yet when calamity resulting from storm inundation took hold, it was impossible to contain, once let loose. Ralph Josselin in a rural village in Essex, some 40 miles from London, wrote in his diary that in 'Octob. [1675] South Holland esp. wonderfully deluged by the sea breaking upon them.'³⁷ Signs and wonders were noted down, and reflected upon by contemporaries in commonplace books and diaries. Macfarlane's analysis of all the weather entries in Josselin's diary, found that Josselin 'seems to have used the weather as a gauge of God's attitudes towards him and his countrymen', and local calamities appeared side by side with references to national troubles for the monarchy and parliament.³⁸ News of fearful events was spread by word of mouth by travellers and peddlers from town centres to rural hamlets, and back again, as well as through the distribution of popular printed pamphlets or ballads. Weather was a fickle creature, and as Josselin noted, in December 1671, winter weather conditions could deteriorate rapidly: 'Calme dry weather but turned to a floud.'³⁹ Here, too, the weather seemed to be a spiritual barometer of Josselin's life and parish, as well as of the nation. It was to be interpreted, and heeded, for any evidence of God's love or anger. Reading these signs, and actively correcting the moral compass of one's life, might avert, or at the very least temper, God's actions.

LOGISTICS OF FEAR IN EAST ANGLIA

Those who had lived through North Sea inundations knew that it was imperative to maintain defences. Over the course of three months in 1551, the community of Harwich, Suffolk, invested both time and money to ensure they were ready for the impending great tides of the season. Between 13 and 17 October they observed on the west side of Harwich (now Bathside) 'at the ditches end of the marsh wall next to Harry Burmans quay' damage to the defences.⁴⁰ They ensured the fault was repaired over a 48-hour period by 'a gang of four', that included a man driving in stakes, and a man and woman 'barerynge' loads of filling.⁴¹ Over a 24 hour period on 20–21 December 1551 came the 'furst gret tyde', and repair work continued until Christmas Eve. When the second 'grete tyde' came on 29 December a further 'breke' occurred that was stemmed by 30 December.

The logistics of fear drove the work that continued in the limited hours of daylight, determined and constrained by the rising and falling tides, and the defences were fully repaired by 13 January 1551. Similar examples from Dutch archives also demonstrate the time, money and resources set aside to combat inundations. In November 1577, for example, the treasurer of Walcheren ‘ordered the purchase of 935 trees worth 600 guilders for dike maintenance in the area’.⁴²

A consequence of the longer-term success of walls and ditches in stemming the inundation of medium tides was that it strained the limits of living memory as the distance between calamitous floods grew longer, and the intergenerational knowledge of these calamities perished. When fear waned, so too did the social practices that it engendered. Only the place-names hinted at the potential peril. For those too young to remember the last flood, or unfamiliar with or new to the region, the need to maintain and secure the dykes, ditches and sea walls may have appeared to be a less pressing issue until they actually experienced the calamity, fear and terror of a flood during their lifetime. Essex parish registers repeated these warnings, recording exceptional events, such as the entry for Orsett, St Giles and All Saints, near the Thames Estuary, in February 1791: ‘This afternoon appeared in the River Thames the highest flood tide that has been known (as is supposed) by the oldest Man living. It overflowed the Banks of the River.’⁴³ Those communities living within reach of what the English called the North or German Sea, and the Dutch called the Spanish Sea, understood the ferocity of its claim upon the coastline. Camden’s astute observation in 1586 warned that ‘along this shore much a doe have the inhabitants to defend their grounds with forced banks or walls against the violence of the Ocean, ready to inrush upon them’.⁴⁴ In West Tilbury in Essex, the parish register recorded ‘the names of those tynants who ou[gh]t to repaire sufficiently... the seawall’, covering a total of 6 acres and 31 roods of land. This included the accesses to those areas, for ‘all ye tenants yt have any way to ye Salt Marsh’.⁴⁵ In Norfolk the ‘Salterns’ as the Salt marshes were called, also created a by-product of the salt production through the generation of spoil heaps, that in turn reclaimed marsh land used for other purposes.⁴⁶ The combination of salt production and shepherding, for example, proved to be complementary, if risky, seasonal work in the marsh and fenland areas.⁴⁷ The period up to the 1600s saw a distribution of marsh landholding from across all socio-economic levels, which, by the seventeenth century, had radically shifted towards greater investment producing higher yields and higher rents. As Lord Willoughby

explained: 'A poor man may... make more commodity of a fen full of fish, fowl and reed, rented for little or nothing, than of ground made pasture and improved to high rent, as the charges of draining will require for cattle and kine to feed on.'⁴⁸ Concerted efforts, using Dutch Engineers including Cornelius Vermyder (1629), were employed to drain the levels in East Anglia.⁴⁹ More substantial attempts were made from 1629 onwards, using windmills, improving dykes and drainage channels. The creation of this man-made topography demonstrates the logistics of fear intended to stem the predictable seasonal inundations, with fear as the emotional response that united communities. For example, in 1546 a lease agreement between Sir Richard Wentworth and Henry Baker of Canewdon, Essex, including Grapnells Marsh, contained a covenant relating to the sea walls. It distinguished between ongoing maintenance, which was the responsibility of the tenant, and the repair the owner was required to carry out after breaches made by 'anie great outragies of waters and fluddes which be seldome sene'.⁵⁰ Here the realities of everyday life and commerce are stated plainly. The economic bargain is struck by taking into account the full knowledge of inundation in this region that living memory about this landscape provides.

The ongoing bounty and profits out-weighed the infrequent events of providential import. Yet at Foulness in 1552 the church patron, Sir William Staforde, on 20 March, 'dydde take away the bells weying by estimation viiiC to mayntayne ye wall against ye see'.⁵¹ While the repair funded by the sale of bells allayed the fear of flooding, the lack of a bell may have instilled anxiety and fear in others, for no longer could the community be roused when the sea wall next was breached. Bells were variously rung or jangled to warn of the impending danger from flood, as fires were also sometimes a product of flooding. Communities had to face their fears and decide what the best option was for the use of the limited resources available to them, as in the case of Foulness: mending the wall to prevent inundation through the sale of the bell, was a necessary evil that left the community without the bell's warning sounds should calamity occur. The North Sea storm surges bided their time until the climatic conditions were right once more to overtop that wall and claim large swaths of the coastline.

That disasters were comparative is evident in the way contemporaries discussed them. The Reverend Ralph Josselin recounted in late 1671 that 'the wrecks on the north sea and hurt at land, by high floods unexpressible'.⁵² The parish register of Salthouse, Norfolk recorded the burial of 'Henrie Staforth,... being drowned at the seashore while trying to save the men of

a ship wrecked and aground'.⁵³ Tall church towers found near the coast and along the estuaries in East Anglia served a navigational purpose, as visible 'sea marks' from the ships at sea, but not, of course, in bad weather.⁵⁴ Some of these churches were dedicated to saints associated with the sea, such as St James (the Greater) who was a fisherman, and St Nicholas the patron saint of sailors.⁵⁵ Josselin went on to record opinions circulating in Essex that 'some match the hurt to London fire'.⁵⁶ The landscape in 1671 'continued floods in a manner for 3 weeks. And though some few days dry. Yet after that ... A little floud [and then]... A great floud.'⁵⁷ Such events raised fears in the godly, like Josselin, about the state of the moral compass of those parishes at the centre of each calamity. Disasters were God's punishment to a sinful world. Yet also in 1671 a practical response to the perils of shipping and sailing appeared in the form of a map by John Seller, called *The Coasting Pilot*. It mapped the east coast of England from the North Sea, depicting sandbanks, channels and buoys, beacons and sea marks (or architectural structures on land visible from the sea).

CALAMITOUS EVENTS

In his discussion of prehistoric societies, Rodney Bradely concluded that 'however different the ways in which these landscapes were inhabited, each of them would only have been comprehensible in terms of the sequence that grew out of the ruins of the past'.⁵⁸ Fear was not clear-cut, as it was part of a series of emotions born of experience and memories that sculpted an East Anglian topography of fear. It was only when exceptional events occurred, such as the 1897 and 1953 storm surges, that communities responded to fear in different ways. At these times, the power of print culture called a nation to account. As one pamphlet in 1682 warned 'but what can we expect less, then that God should send his Judgments abroad, when as Rebellious Man perseveres in his obstinate Rebellion against him? For certain it is that the great Creator, who made what ever had beginning, can, when it pleases him, use any part of his Creation to punish his Enemies'.⁵⁹ As Alexandra Walsham has stated, 'important areas of overlap between pre- and post-Reformation mentalities', meant that 'strange aberrations in nature continued to be regarded as prodigious and admonitory and that calamitous happenings that wrought environmental havoc were interpreted as telling evidence of divine anger'.⁶⁰ These acts were 'visible sermons'.⁶¹ Take for example, the woodcut depicting the events of January 1606/7 that illustrated 'A true report of Certaine wonderfull

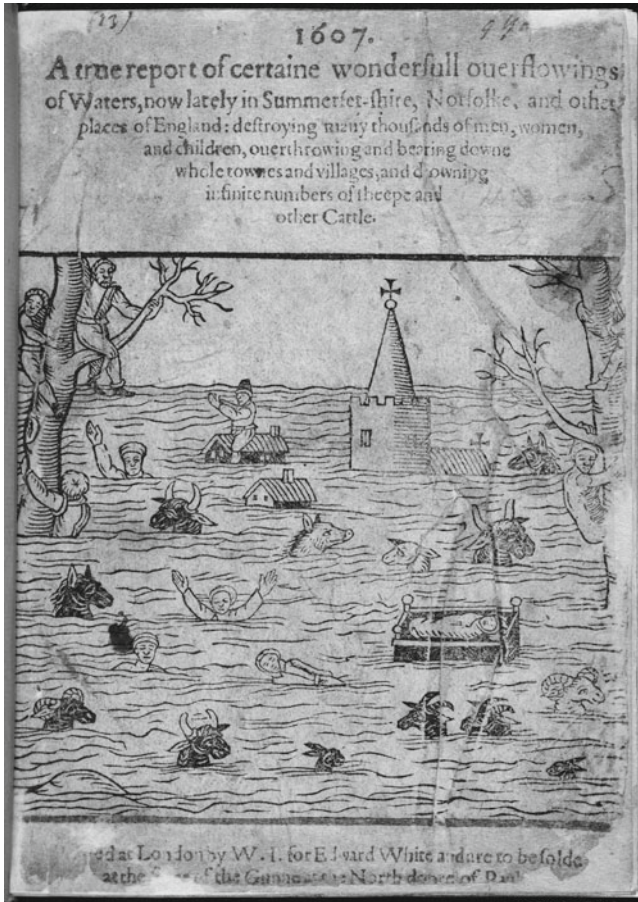


Fig. 8.1 1607. *A true report of certaine wonderfull overflowinges of Water* (London: W.I., 1607) (British Library, Digital Image Library)

overflowings of water' (Fig. 8.1). The stark reality for those men, women and children swept up or drowned by the floodwaters that had engulfed Somerset, Gloucestershire, Norfolk and 'other places of England' is depicted in this image and accompanying text. The woodcut that depicts the inundated landscape filled with struggling people and livestock acts as a trigger for the memory of any survivors of this or other floods. It is also intended to warn others of the natural perils and moral consequences of

their action or inaction. Floods inflicted an emotional scar that survivors carried with them through life.

Images were only one of a number of prompts for the emotional sensory responses to trauma, as fear could be triggered by the sound of rain, high winds or the jangling of church bells, the memory of the touch of surging water startling victims from sleep into a sudden desperate life-struggle, or just the calm of a still clear day. The section of the 1606/7 pamphlet relating to Norfolk stated 'It happened upon a night, (for when is danger more wakefull than when prevention sleeps, and not so much as dreames of his furie).' ⁶² For a landscape familiar with the sea's encroachment, either little or great, the events relating to Norfolk were couched in comparative terms. For example, 'in the county of Norfolke, not farre from Kings Lin, in a place called Marchland, happened accidents though not altogether so violent and mortall as those in Summersetshire, yet accompanied with much damage, and no little danger'. ⁶³ Here the community by the sea has a different experience of fear, shaped by the realities of everyday life by the sea, compared with those communities where it is more likely a response to a one off event.

The events of Marchland were couched as a parable in which the sinful repent in the face of God's punishment. But the practicalities of living by the sea, found in the manorial records of the period, as we have seen, are also to be found here. Two horse thieves, 'knowing the night, a gowne to cloake their villanie', steal cattle and drive them onto higher ground. ⁶⁴ But their endeavours were disrupted, for it was not the 'fearfull hu and cry' of the Constables they heard, 'but swifter followers[,] ... the water, ... having broken out at an old breach, in a ... little portion of time, overflowed the Marsh, and that with such ... violence, that they were enforced to leave their praye'. ⁶⁵ While the thieves fell to prayer, the stolen cattle 'were ... overrunne by the swiftnesse of the water, ... driven ... into Creekes, ... Bushes, & some upon little hillocks, and ... in conclusion drowned'. ⁶⁶

But fear could also arrest even a villainous life, causing individuals to reflect and mend their ways, should they choose to do so. For example, the same two thieves 'against their willes made good' arrived in a 'Towne whether the Water (had they not made the most haste) had brought the men.' They raised 'the Sexton, got the keyes of the Church doore, & (as the custome in such dangers) Jangled the Belles'. This 'fearfull outcry, rayed the secure inhabitants who imagined some house to be on fire, rose up distractedly in their shirts crying out, Water, Water: of which element (they were no sooner up,) but they perceived they had too much'. ⁶⁷ Here

fear is turned into action. It was to their fear of flood and fire that many looked to explain the jangling bells and fearful cries they heard. Flood fuelled a dual set of fears. In Norfolk, the inhabitants were ‘still various in their opinions, all fearing yet none knowing truly what to feare: some got up to the steeple, many thinking there had been theeves afot into the upper rooms of their houses, shutting’ their fear out ‘by locking themselves in’.⁶⁸ Those familiar with the cyclic and tumultuous relationships between lands and sea in East Anglia reacted differently, ‘some thinking it had beene but a slight overflowing of a spring tyde, laughed at the rest’.⁶⁹ But fear prompted a practical response to danger for ‘in a word, in this danger every man layed first hande of what he loved best, some made away with his wife some his children, some careless of both wife and children hurried away his goods’.⁷⁰ Time was of the essence for ‘the water gave them but very short warning, yet like a mercifull Conquerour, having taken the towne, it gave them their lives’. But those ‘covetous to have all, lost all, for striving to save their goodes, they lost their lives’.⁷¹ With the daylight came the extent of the floods for ‘there is for the space of ten or twelve miles compass Marshes and Fens cleane under the water’.⁷² The pamphlet’s purpose was made clear:

[As] spectators of sad and tragicall events, which now...have been presented on the Theater of the world ... [you should] looke backe upon the head of time that is gone from us: weigh therefore those miseries that were measured out in the last Queenes raigne in the year 1570 [when a storm surge hit the east coast], with these in 1607, and you shall see our punishment greater, because our treason against God is more horrible.⁷³

This linking of God’s signs, as part of the ongoing Reformation in Europe, was also made in another English pamphlet woodcut of the events of 1607.⁷⁴ The woodcut depicted a child floating in a cradle on top of the floodwaters. A similar image had been used in depictions of the Dutch All Saints Flood of 1570, during the Wars of Religion and the period of Spanish rule. Such pamphlets purposefully linked these emotional communities of Protestants along the North Sea Coast.⁷⁵

Raingard Eber’s analysis of the fear of flooding in the Low Countries, with a specific focus on the All Saints Flood, offers a valuable point of comparison with the emotional experiences of storm surges in early modern East Anglia and the range of responses to communal fear that they stimulated.⁷⁶ The overwhelming emotional response to these events can-

not be overestimated. Church bells had rung both day and night in warning.⁷⁷ Andries van der Goes in Dordrecht, merchant and royal treasurer of South Holland, writing to his brother-in-law two weeks after the catastrophic 1570 flood reflected: ‘the sufferings and the damages are so immense that words cannot describe them’. The economic cost was high, but he cautioned survivors to remember that ‘the loss of goods is not loss of life’.⁷⁸ As Eber points out, ‘further research into the reactions of the ordinary men and women, who have left little (written) evidence of their feelings and fears, would be helpful’.⁷⁹ Uncoordinated sounds of church bells in 1607, or the sounding of an Air Raid Warning in 1953, automatically communicated an alarm, triggering fear followed by individual and communal action.

CONCLUSION

East Anglia is one of a number of low-lying regions surrounding the North Sea that saw mercantile endeavours and trade routes linking its communities. The logistics of fear created the physical features, memories, and in some places memorial plaques of disaster in this area. Evidence of water engineering appeared in place names, such as marsh, ditch, bank, and sea wall, demonstrating the ongoing history of human endeavours to harness the fear of flood through the actions of reclaiming and farming low-lying coastal land. The manorial archives contained not only terms for purpose-built sea defences, such as ditches, and marshland, but also terminology such as ‘inning’ where the marsh was actively reclaimed and enclosed from sea inundation for the purposes of sheep and cattle grazing. With Dutch migration to East Anglia in the early seventeenth century came the fear and memories of inundation, and the practical experiences of more adventurous dyke building and farming that reclaimed marshland along a different North Sea coastline. Fear had both negative and positive dimensions. It was formative in a community’s neighbourly relationships, and helped them collaborate in constructing defences against the destruction the sea could bring. While pamphlet images and texts depicting sea inundations triggered fear in a nation unfamiliar with such events, for those within the North Sea’s reach, that fear was often translated into purposeful actions in dealing with spring tides. The coastal inhabitants of the North Sea regions drew strength from reading their landscape of disasters, drawing on the memories of previous events to build, rebuild and strengthen their communities, as well as their sea defences. The landscape, archives and

pamphlets each reflect an aspect of the dynamic nexus between coastline, sea, emotions, disasters, and communal memory. Communities with the experience of the fear of flooding, and the knowledge of the way that fear refracted into action, were the ones that saw the signs, and heralded a warning to others by jangling the church bells.

NOTES

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15. Eber, 'Fear of Water,' 62.
16. Cited in Eber, 'Fear of Water,' 73.
17. Boxhorn, *Chronijk van Zeelandt* (Middelburg, 1644), 200, cited in Eber, 'Fear of Water,' 73.
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27. Anon, *1607 Lamentable Newes out of Monmouthshire in Wales* (London: Edward Allde for William Welby, 1607), 'to the reader'.
28. For example, Soens, 'Flood and Money', 333–65; Piet Van Cruyningen, 'From Disaster to Sustainability'.

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PART III

Visual Media and Circulation:
Manufacturing and Managing
Emotions

God's Executioners: Angels, Devils
and the Plague in Giovanni Sercambi's
Illustrated *Chronicle* (1400)

Louise Marshall

This essay investigates Renaissance reactions to the experience of the recurring disaster of bubonic plague by analysing a series of miniatures from the chronicle of Lucchese apothecary and writer, Giovanni Sercambi (1348–1424). These represent some of the earliest visualisations of the Black Death and later epidemics. They thus offer significant insight into contemporary religious and emotional responses to a disaster that all too soon proved to be not a single cataclysm but a regularly repeated scourge. By the end of the fourteenth century, there had been five severe, pan-European epidemics, almost one a decade, each lasting between two and four years, as well as localised outbreaks in between, and the pattern was to continue until well into the eighteenth century. Hence plague's pre-eminent place in the cultural imaginary of early modern Europe as the greatest and most fearsome of all disasters.¹

Sercambi's chronicle, begun in the late 1360s, survives in two books and records the vicissitudes of his native town from republican origins to 1423, with a strong emphasis on the rise, fall and rise again of civic liberty.² As he tells us, the first book was completed on 6 April 1400 and

L. Marshall

Department of Art History, The University of Sydney, Australia

was originally intended to stand alone.³ However, whether inspired by subsequent political events, in which he himself was closely involved, or by the pleasures of authorship, Sercambi took up the tale again within a few months and continued writing a second book until shortly before his death. Original manuscripts of both volumes survive, written in a hand generally recognised as that of the author.⁴ The first book, now in the Lucca Archivio di Stato (ms. 107), is richly decorated, with an astonishing 651 pen and ink drawings, including 540 vignettes depicting key events.⁵ The second book, however, remained unfinished, the text carefully copied out but with blank spaces left for miniatures.⁶

Sercambi's purpose in creating these impressive codices remains open to debate. The magnificently illustrated first codex was in the possession of Paolo Guinigi, lord of Lucca, by 1426.⁷ The supposition that both were designed as luxury presentation copies for the Lucca *signore* (the author's death intervening to prevent donation of the second) aligns well with their lavish production and Sercambi's long history as an active Guinigi partisan, key player in Paolo's rise to power in October 1400 and long-serving member of his government.⁸ Alternatively, inclusion of Sercambi's coat of arms could indicate that both were destined for his personal library.⁹ Either way, the care and expense taken with both volumes (the use of vellum rather than paper, the profuse illustrative programme, a relative rarity in Italian chronicles of this date) and the recourse to professional illuminators—strongly suggests an envisaged audience of attentive readers beyond the author himself.¹⁰ These are likely to have been members of Sercambi's own milieu, the governing mercantile elite, present and future. Transcribing the text and supervising its extensive accompanying visual apparatus, Sercambi actively shaped the ways in which his work was received, carefully crafting his creative and patriotic legacy for his fellow citizens and for posterity.

My study focuses on the seven illustrations signalling outbreaks of bubonic plague, from the disease's first shocking appearance with the Black Death of 1348, to the equally severe epidemics of 1398–99 (Figs. 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5, 9.6 and 9.7).¹¹ Each occurrence is made noteworthy by a miniature representing a variety of supernatural agents unleashing the disease on helpless humanity. Although these drawings are not unknown to historians, they are usually treated as more or less eye-witness documents of the trauma induced in post-1348 generations.¹² Since they repeat a common visual formula, the miniatures are considered interchangeable and have not been subjected to any sustained analysis. I argue that both repetitions and divergences are revealing of contemporary understandings of the ongoing disaster and the emotional regimes elicited in response.



Fig. 9.1 1348 plague [Black Death], Lucchese, c.1400, manuscript illumination, in Giovanni Sercambi, *Croniche*. Lucca, Archivio di Stato, ms. 107, fol. 49v (Author, courtesy Archivio di Stato, Lucca)



Fig. 9.2 1363 plague, Lucchese, c.1400, manuscript illumination, in Giovanni Sercambi, *Croniche*. Lucca, Archivio di Stato, ms. 107, fol. 59r (Author, courtesy Archivio di Stato, Lucca)



Fig. 9.3 1371 plague, Lucchese, c.1400, manuscript illumination, in Giovanni Sercambi, *Croniche*. Lucca, Archivio di Stato, ms. 107, fols 95v-96r (Author, courtesy Archivio di Stato, Lucca)



Fig. 9.4 1383 plague, Lucchese, c.1400, manuscript illumination, in Giovanni Sercambi, *Croniche*. Lucca, Archivio di Stato, ms. 107, fol. 110r (Author, courtesy Archivio di Stato, Lucca)



Fig. 9.5 1390 plague, Lucchese, c.1400, manuscript illumination, in Giovanni Sercambi, *Croniche*. Lucca, Archivio di Stato, ms. 107, fol. 120r (Author, courtesy Archivio di Stato, Lucca)



Fig. 9.6 1398 plague, Lucchese, c.1400, manuscript illumination, in Giovanni Sercambi, *Croniche*. Lucca, Archivio di Stato, ms. 107, fol. 209v (Author, courtesy Archivio di Stato, Lucca)



Fig. 9.7 1399 plague, Lucchese, c.1400, manuscript illumination, in Giovanni Sercambi, *Croniche*. Lucca, Archivio di Stato, ms. 107, fol. 340r (Author, courtesy Archivio di Stato, Lucca)

Every illustration is surmounted by a rubric in red ink.¹³ Visually distinct from the text, they function as asides to the reader, like the pointing hands in the margins of many medieval manuscripts (including this one), calling attention to important events. Together, *tituli* and illuminations map the reader's progress through the pages of the book. For the weary or insufficiently engaged, the drawings could function as independent summaries allowing one to grasp the overall narrative without needing to read the text itself. Caption and image are bound together, speaking to the viewer in doubled and mutually reinforcing modes. In the case of the plague scenes, Sercambi's rubrics revolve around the term 'mortality' (*moria*); all seven outbreaks are so characterised, from the first and greatest in 1348 (Fig. 9.1, *Come fu moria grande*; 'How there was a great mortality') to the most expansive, describing the ferocious epidemic of 1398 (Fig. 9.6, *Come fu una moria in molti luoghi et moriono migliaia di persone*; 'How there was a mortality in many places and thousands of people died').¹⁴

The repeated verbal formula generates and sustains a similarly recurring pictorial trope; the mortality referred to so ominously in the blood-red *titulus* is realised in the scattered corpses below (Figs. 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5, 9.6 and 9.7). The play of repetition and slightly varied iteration in word and image sets up echoes and rhythms as the reader progresses through the chronicle.

The disease's repeated eruption into the narrative is marked by an immediately recognisable, emotionally compelling visualisation that picks up the fraught overtones of the text to confront the viewer with a vision of universal and indiscriminate mass mortality. The message is clear: heavenly agents and forms of attack may differ, but the effect on humanity remains constant. Time and again, the world is reduced to corpses, with no survivors. Yet this spectacle of disaster is carefully orchestrated to arouse a range of responses in the viewer, which cannot be subsumed within a blanket reading of negativity and despair. Despite their relatively schematic nature, the miniatures are eloquent witnesses to contemporary explanations of plague's origins and impact.

To turn first to causes, it is noteworthy that the drawings do not follow Sercambi's text exactly. In his account, plague is invariably attributed to God and viewed as a just punishment to chastise human sin. Failure to heed divine warnings only provokes more severe retribution, as in 1348, when 'omnipotent God determined to punish by means of a mortality those who denied God and persisted in evil-doing, without any remorse'.¹⁵ However, in the miniatures (Figs. 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5, 9.6 and 9.7), God never appears. Instead, the disaster is always unleashed by other, lesser beings. Such pictorial exegesis underlines the idea of an enraged God abandoning a people too far gone to merit any further consideration. As if human sin has become too offensive to gaze upon any further, the deity withdraws from the world entirely, subcontracting the unpleasant job of punishing sinners to his supernatural minions. These are variously identified and suggest unexpected alliances between normally oppositional forces of good and evil, heavenly assistance and hellish temptation.

Six of the seven vignettes show demons as propagators of plague (Figs. 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5 and 9.6). Ever since they rebelled against God and were routed by Michael and the loyal angels, the Devil and his minions have zealously dedicated themselves to the temptation and persecution of human kind, fuelled by hatred of all that is good, as well as anger and envy at the prospect of humanity's elevation to repopulate the paradisaical vacancies created by their own prideful defection.¹⁶ Never happier than when torturing sinners in hell, as seen in countless representations of the Last Judgment, demons would thus appear a natural choice as the instigators of painfully horrible death on a hitherto unimagined scale.

In most instances, the Lucchese manuscript's depictions follow long-established visual conventions.¹⁷ Like beasts or wildmen, the demons are shameless in their nakedness (Figs. 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5 and 9.6). Most are dark-skinned, a signal of evil intent (Figs. 9.3, 9.4 and 9.6). Webbed bat wings ally them with creatures of the night and remind viewers of their

normal residence in the caverns of hell (Figs. 9.1, 9.2 and 9.4). Horns, tails, talons and in some cases the suggestion of fur reveal their monstrous and bestial natures (Figs. 9.1, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5 and 9.6). In the first plague scene (Fig. 9.1), the fiery, upward-straining hair of the central evil-doer identifies him with the vice of uncontrolled fury.¹⁸ However, others take on more hybrid forms.¹⁹ Several (Figs. 9.1, 9.2 and 9.5) are more or less human-seeming, lighter-skinned, with normal faces, bodies and even feet; three retain the feathered pinions normally reserved for angels (Fig. 9.5) and two are curly-haired, cherubic infants (Figs. 9.2 and 9.5). Yet their demonic natures are never in doubt: they fly on bat wings and emerge from dark, threatening clouds (Figs. 9.1 and 9.2) or skim above the dead on definitively Satanic talons, like evil birds of prey (Fig. 9.5). Such shifting physiognomies could suggest a certain lability or parity between the deity's designated agents—a point to which we shall return. Viewers are reminded that demons are fallen angels: although cast out from heaven and forever alienated from God, they nevertheless retain their angelic attributes, even in their debased state. Like their virtuous cousins, they too are bodiless spirits, endowed with extraordinary powers over created matter.²⁰ So they can change shape at will, the better to tempt, deceive and afflict foolish humanity.

Representation of demons as plague agents emphasises the causes of the disaster in human sin. Vice, sin and punishment are their elements. Satan is the prince of the world, theologians taught, not because of any power over matter, but because he is lord of sinful human beings. By their sins, men and women give themselves over to him, becoming Satan's servants and children, members of his infernal body. As the Devil once boasted to a knight, there was no evil done in the world of which he was not aware.²¹ Elsewhere in the chronicle, Sercambi attributes the political crisis of 1392, when factional discord erupted in armed conflict, to diabolic influence. The accompanying miniatures show demons ushering trouble-makers into the council hall, whispering in their ears, fostering divisions between families and panic among citizens.²² Identification of demons as plague-sowers thus rebukes the viewer with a terrible indictment of human morals, forcing self-examination regarding the state of one's soul, inciting guilt and fear at the prospect of Satanic dominion over a world sunk in sin.

To inflict the disease, the demons deploy a variety of weapons. One pair (Fig. 9.6) are armed with the traditional scythe of personified Death (cf. Fig. 9.8), the better to cut down their victims.²³ A line extending from the tip of the scythe to an anonymous corpse (not even the head is visible) maps a vector of inevitable mortality. More shoot deadly arrows (Figs. 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4 and 9.5). This was a delivery system for divinely-ordained



Fig. 9.8 Francesco Traini (attrib.), *Triumph of Death*, Camposanto, Pisa, 1330s (Photo: Soprintendenza per i Beni Architettonici, Paesaggistici, Storici, Artistici ed Etnoantropologici per le province di Pisa e Livorno)

misfortune, disease and death familiar from the Old Testament.²⁴ Like other cultures, Judaism and Christianity used the metaphor of heavenly arrows to explain the sudden onset of disaster. The arrow's flight is silent, swift, deadly, a killing blow loosed from afar—opposite qualities for unexpected afflictions that wound or even destroy their victims. This familiar biblical symbolism meant that the arrow was never exclusively plague-specific. Well before 1348, the bow and arrow could figure as Death's weapon of choice.²⁵ Such habits of thought shaped responses to the plague in both literature and art. Writing in 1348, Piacenza notary Gabriele de' Mussis (d. 1356) imagined God unleashing the Black Death with a series of frightful maledictions and commands for human destruction: 'No one will be given rest, poisoned arrows will strike everyone, fevers will throw down the proud, and incurable disease will strike like lightning.'²⁶ Armed with death's arrows, the demons are hunters, humanity their prey.

Another weapon of mass destruction features in the first two plague scenes. In the Black Death miniature (Fig. 9.1), the rubric is simple but stark, its very brevity gesturing towards the indescribable character of the event: *Come fu moria grande* ('How there was a great mortality'). The image is eruptive and compelling, with no visible caesura between announcement of the disaster and its visualisation. The spiked bat wings of the central demon break upwards into the empty space immediately following the red letters of the *titulus*, taking the viewer with them and funnelling the eye downwards via the demon's death-dealing outstretched arms to the bodies heaped below. Three fiends are busy in the upper air. Two are armed with bow and arrow, while the central figure upends two vials to pour out a dark and sinister liquid into the air.

This striking image closely follows Sercambi's account, and both text and image demonstrate the integration of contemporary medical and religious views of the disease's causes. Following classical theory, fourteenth-century scholars identified maleficent planetary conjunctions as the immediate cause of epidemic disease, poisoning the atmosphere and generating pestiferous miasma. Given authoritative formulation in the widely-circulated *Consilium* drawn up by Parisian masters in 1348, astrological explanations circulated widely in chronicles, sermons and plague tracts. Nevertheless, the hand of God remained firmly on the controls, since it was he who set the planets in motion in the first place.²⁷ Thus Sercambi attributes the plague to a God offended beyond measure by human sin and invokes atmospheric poisoning to explain the mechanics of the disease's spread: 'the air was so corrupted that no matter where a man went,

death would find him'. The mortality was so overwhelming, he concludes, that 'some people thought it was the end of the world'.²⁸

This and the following miniature (Fig. 9.2) take up Sercambi's conjunction of astrological and apocalyptic explanations. Pouring out noxious liquid into the air, the devils are visible agents of atmospheric pollution. At the same time, they usurp the role of the seven angels of the apocalypse, charged with unleashing seven plagues to hasten the end of the world.²⁹ These plagues are contained in golden vials, full of the wrath of God. When the first is poured out on the earth, it causes 'sore and grievous wounds' on the bodies of those who have given themselves over to Antichrist and refused to repent (Revelation 16:1–2). Poisoning of the air may also be alluded to in the dark clouds from which the demons emerge in these drawings, as if they trail corruption in their wake.

Contemporary explanations regarding the plague's origins and means of transmission are here compellingly visualised. Given the prevalence of apocalyptic interpretations of the disaster, it is not surprising that other commentators, including Gabriele de' Mussis, also linked plague's spread by atmospheric corruption with the prophesied angelic destruction:

Orion, that cruel star, and the tail of the dragon and the angel hurling vials of poison into the sea, and the appalling weather of Saturn were given leave to harm land and sea, men and trees; advancing from east to west with plague-bearing steps they poured out the poisoned vessels throughout the countries of the world, leaving fiery tokens on the sick.³⁰

Gabriele's lamentations and exhortations to repent in the face of these signs may be equally apposite for viewer as for reader: 'Mourn, mourn, you peoples, and call upon the mercy of God.'³¹ Significantly, divine mercy is recalled, even in this moment of extreme crisis. As Robert Lerner and others have stressed, eschatological expectations need not necessarily produce unmitigated despair.³² In times of trial, millenarian beliefs might also offer comfort and hope. Pestilence could be understood as part of a coherent divine plan. Patient endurance of present adversities would ultimately be rewarded by the refreshment of the millennium.

Nevertheless, it remains striking that the apocalyptic vessels in these miniatures are wielded not by angels but by demons, suggesting a world out of joint. Since near-infinite numbers of devils were thought to occupy the lower airs after their fall, the association of demons with atmospheric poisoning was readily made. Certainly the image was not unique to

Sercambi and his illuminators. In an anonymous fifteenth-century plague tract, the disruption of the planets and the earth presaging Christ's second coming are attended by atmospheric corruption engineered by Satan: 'For the devil [sic], by the power committed to him, when the seas rise up high, is voiding his poison, sending it forth to be added to the poison in the air, and that air spreads gradually from place to place and enters men through the ears, eyes, nose, mouth, pores and other orifices.'³³ Demonic appropriation of the angels' apocalyptic role underscored the depth of divine displeasure against a sinful world. Satanic malice is given free rein, and the devils enlist as willing servants of Antichrist to help along the destruction of the world.

Yet even devils operate within the framework of divine omnipotence. Like everything in the cosmos, Satan and his followers are created by God and subject to his authority. Their activities are possible solely through divine tolerance. If demons harry humanity with epidemic disease, it is only because God has allowed them to do so. Moreover, omniscient God turns even the malice of devils to good effect, permitting them to tempt and assail the just to strengthen their faith by adversity. Demons are thus enlisted in the divine plan despite themselves; while they wish always to attack and destroy humanity physically and spiritually, God uses their perverted nature and evil desires to carry out his own designs. As St Francis of Assisi wryly observed after suffering a beating at their hands, 'the demons are the Lord's bailiffs, whom he sends to punish excesses'.³⁴

For Sercambi and his contemporaries, demonic involvement in the plague could not but be profoundly disturbing, a clear barometer of divine fury and measure of the enormity of human sin. Like Sercambi, Gabriele de' Mussis envisages God furiously anathematising the heedless and sinful world and literally consigning it to the devil: 'The sight of the vanities and lecheries to which you have abandoned yourself have provoked me to fury. May evil spirits arise with the power to devour you.'³⁵ Demonic ubiquity in the lower airs assured that there would be no escape: 'Cities, fortresses, fields, woods, highways and rivers are ringed by thieves—which is to say by evil spirits, the executioners of the supreme Judge, preparing endless punishments for us all.'³⁶ Sercambi's chronicle conveys a similar message in the conjunction of verbal divine agency—often invoked in the opening words of the accompanying account (Figs. 9.1, 9.2 and 9.5)—and visual demonic execution.³⁷ This is particularly clear in the second plague vignette (Fig. 9.2), where the rubric proclaims God's authority ('How God sent a mortality and especially for all of Italy') while directly

below three demons gleefully embark upon their divinely ordained killing spree.³⁸

Yet God is nothing if not an equal-opportunity employer. In the final miniature of the series, depicting the 1399 outbreak, the demons are replaced by angels (Fig. 9.7). A pile of bodies has been pierced by arrows shot by a *putto*, this time clearly angelic rather than demonic. He flies hard on the heels of another, slightly older angel, garbed in sombre brown, who has wrested Death's scythe from the demons of the previous plague scene (Fig. 9.6). Cristiani has traced the visual inspiration for this pair to the dramatic frescoes of the Pisan Camposanto, or civic burial ground (1330s) (Fig. 9.8), where harridan Death, clad in tattered brown robes, with bat wings and taloned feet, flies over a pile of corpses. Ignoring the pleas of the old and crippled for release, she threatens with upraised scythe a group of merrymakers heedlessly dallying in a luxuriant pleasure garden.³⁹ Two *putti* act as her advance guard, singling out a pair of doomed lovers with ominously downturned torches. Given Pisa's close proximity to Lucca, this connection is not implausible. However, if this was the case, Sercambi's illustrators significantly modified their Pisan source to convey a quite altered meaning, transforming Death and her classically derived spotters into exterminating angels.

The baby angel of the Luccese manuscript is heavy and unwieldy in the air, hanging low and somewhat awkwardly, legs cocked as if trying to run through the ether and unable to keep up with his streamlined older peer; altogether, a hapless and somewhat bumbling figure. The contrast between the inoffensive, even charming appearance of this chubby infant and the carnage for which he is responsible is thus all the more jarring and shocking. Beholders are forcefully reminded that their sins have turned heaven against them, for whom they are now legitimate prey. Both angels appear unconcerned by the havoc they wreak, flying calmly over the dead, not even gazing down at the bodies, their attention already elsewhere, flying fast as if off to seek new victims. The cherub almost smiles as he flies with arrow notched to his bow, ready to shoot again. Such casual slaughter vividly expresses divine displeasure at human sin: God has turned his face away from humanity.

The customary role of angels as bringers of glad tidings and supernatural assistance has here shifted to a sterner key. The punitive capacity of angels as the executants of divine punishments is encountered in the Old Testament, as for example when God sends an angel known only as 'the destroyer' or 'the avenger' to bring plague on the Egyptians (Exodus

12:23), or when the angel of the Lord is ordered to scourge the Israelites with plague on account of the sin of their king, David (2 Samuel 24:1 Chronicles 21).⁴⁰ Loyal servants of the deity, they perform their allotted task of destruction with lethal efficiency. Powerful, incorporeal creatures of wind and air, they are formidable opponents against whom humanity has no defence. Impersonal extensions of the divine will, they act solely as God directs, and can turn into licensed killers as easily as, under other circumstances, they deliver celestial messages or guide souls to their rest. Thus they frequently assist the deity in the task of punishing humanity in Renaissance plague imagery, as, for example, in a Genoese confraternity altarpiece from the 1370s painted by Barnaba da Modena.⁴¹

This alternation of death-dealing agents in the chronicle's illustrative sequence presents demons and angels on the same side. The precedent for such an unholy alliance would have been much in the minds of Renaissance worshippers in the later fourteenth century, marked by a dramatic escalation of Sebastian's invocation as a plague protector.⁴² As recounted in Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda Aurea* (c.1260), Sebastian's first miracle on behalf of plague-stricken humanity occurred during a famous seventh-century epidemic in Rome and Pavia, when a 'good angel' and a 'bad angel' joined forces to decimate the population.⁴³ Though their motives differ, both demons and angels are God's servants, consciously or unconsciously: devils because they wish to harm, angels because they know and wholeheartedly consent to divine intentions. In heaven as much as on earth, uneasy alliances of former foes can occur when they share common goals, irrespective of their opposing ideologies. Demonic and angelic cooperation turns the world upside down and forces viewers to confront unwelcome truths about the enormity of their sins and the extreme measures God is willing to sanction in order to ensure that humanity is justly punished.

Yet the chronicle's final plague scene may also contain an element of consolation, since, unlike the demons, the angels refrain from action and are shown leaving, their work now done. The contrast with the previous plague miniature (Fig. 9.6) is surely deliberate: while the demons' scythes are lowered and their deadly impact clearly delineated, in this last depiction (Fig. 9.7), the foremost angel carries his weapon upright in front of him, in a pose that seems demonstrative rather than active (in contrast to Death in the Camposanto, Fig. 9.8). The *putto's* action is more ambivalent, since he holds an arrow notched to the string of his bow, but it is noteworthy that the arrow points forward rather than down and is held, not loosed. Such visual signals could suggest that the epidemic is

over, stayed by divine command. For, as preachers constantly reminded their listeners, plague was both punitive and remedial: God desires not humanity's death but its reformation.⁴⁴ Thus this miniature could stimulate reflection on divine justice and mercy, on threat of punishment and hope of protection for the truly penitent.

In the lower registers, piled corpses are an effective shorthand for plague's lethal progress through whole populations (Figs. 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5, 9.6 and 9.7). Differentiation of victims by gender, age and clerical or lay status testifies to the disease's indiscriminate reach—none can escape. This emphasis on Death as leveller derives from the pre-existing imagery of the Triumph of Death, the earliest extant examples of which date from the 1330s (such as Pisa, Fig. 9.8).⁴⁵ As skeletal Death triumphantly proclaims as it cuts down a fashionable youth in a fresco (c.1340) on the stairs leading down to the cemetery in the Benedictine monastery at Subiaco, 'I am the one who kills all people, young and old, and leaves no one untouched; even the highest must fall to me.'⁴⁶ For the Sercambi miniatures, this is an apposite and deliberate choice of referent: with the advent of plague, the morality play of inevitable death moves from allegory to actuality, the Triumph of Death indeed. And as in the Triumph of Death, so too in these miniatures, confrontation with carnage serves a hortatory purpose, urging penance and reformation of life as the only possible defence.

Framed by the surrounding text, the drawings are endowed with the aura of documentary records (see Fig. 9.2). Showing bodies scattered on the ground, untended, unburied, they deliberately invoke contemporaries' worst fears in relation to the plague, that reverberate through almost all literary accounts, namely, familial abandonment and the death 'undesired', to invert Ronald Wieck's evocative phrase, bereft of the sacraments and with no prospect of honourable burial.⁴⁷ Given new immediacy through the very process of pictorialisation, such fears were the currency of collective nightmares if not personal experience, consciously deployed to stir the hearts and move the souls of their receptive audiences.

These plague corpses also display a degree of disorder and animation distinct from the more neatly arranged dead found in Triumph of Death imagery, as comparison with the Pisan fresco (Fig. 9.8) demonstrates. In the Lucchese miniatures, the bodies of the dead are more promiscuously entwined, as for example in the way the leg of a young man picked out in eye-catching red casually straddles the corpse of a bishop (Fig. 9.6). This is even more evident in those drawings that show the dead pierced

by heavenly arrows (Figs. 9.1, 9.2, 9.4, 9.5 and 9.7), creating a more visceral image of the disease's onset. These bodies are attacked, assaulted, wounded unto death—God and his minions have gone to war against them and there is no escape.

In the 1348 miniature (Fig. 9.1), the man dressed in purple at centre left is particularly striking. Propped up almost to a sitting position, the corpse faces upwards, his mouth open, both arms outstretched, his fingers working, as if reaching for something or clenching his fists. He seems to be calling out, perhaps for help, or railing against fate. His splayed arms command the gaze and frame the long arrow buried in his chest. To the right, the composition is closed by another gesturing corpse rising up out of the sea of bodies. Facing inwards, his right arm lifted in the air, his eyes open and an arrow piercing his throat, the dead or dying man turns the viewer's eyes back towards the piled corpses, as if morbidly reanimated to play the eremitical exegete of Italian representations of the Encounter of the Three Living and the Three Dead, where a hermit often spells out the message of mortality and necessary repentance to the living with similarly vehement gestures (as at Pisa, where the Encounter is combined with the Triumph, Fig. 9.8).⁴⁸ In the miniature, both plague victims appear transfixed in their last moments, their arrested gestures testifying to the suddenness with which they were struck down. Although it is difficult to register the exact emotions being portrayed—appeals for help, surprise, protest, anger, despair?—these energised bodies give viewers pause, catching the attention and vivifying individuals even as they succumb to death.

The arrows also inject the experience of time—the killing is still going on, with missiles about to be loosed or still aloft. In the first vignette (Fig. 9.1), time slows down to the very moment of impact, with an arrow poised in mid-air, sharp tip balanced against the forehead of a recumbent man, about to, but not yet puncturing his flesh. The scene is both suspenseful and inevitable. The man lies as if caught in the very act of fleeing, his right leg bent beneath him and his left leg straight. His right arm is raised and his eyes are open; watching the arrow's approach, he appears resigned to his fate or already dead. Either way, the viewer is made part of the action, forced to watch the unfolding slaughter in literally blow-by-blow detail. Other bodies are more than usually twisted and contorted. Immediately to the left of the figure with arms outstretched, for example, two corpses in red and green have fallen in ungainly poses, arms, legs and heads entwined at opposing angles. Here and in successive miniatures

(Figs. 9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 9.5, 9.6 and 9.7), physical dislocations testify to the violence inflicted upon these particular corpses.

Such strategies endow the seemingly formulaic image of the piled bodies with unsuspected eloquence, with the potential to incite a complex range of emotional responses from the viewer: grief, compassion, fear, horror, aversion, disgust, condemnation. At issue is the question of culpability: are these men and women sinners guilty of their deaths, or the fourteenth-century equivalent of ‘collateral damage’? Both understandings of plague dead were possible, as Sercambi himself bears witness. His text repeatedly laments human wickedness and failure to change sinful ways as the cause of the plague. This explanation is prioritised in the first line of text on the Black Death (Fig. 9.1), with the words ‘our sins’ (*li nostri peccati*) positioned directly underneath the dying man threatened by the hovering arrow. Correlation between word and image is further enhanced by twin inward-converging diagonals of red-robed corpses at left and right, figurative arrows directing the viewer to the cause of the mayhem pictured above. Yet Sercambi goes on to observe that ‘many innocents’ died in the ensuing mortality.⁴⁹ Word and image are multivalent, capable of arousing condemnation and/or compassion, as the viewer might decide.

In conclusion, I believe that these miniatures are more complex and nuanced than might first appear. Examined closely, they suggest a variety of readings that strain against any unrelievedly negative interpretations of post-plague generations. Encountered within the pages of a chronicle, the miniatures exhort the viewer with heightened immediacy and emotional impact by virtue of their truth claims as faithful records of a remembered and recounted past. Fear, grief, guilt, horror, aversion, disgust and condemnation could be accompanied or succeeded by pity, compassion, remorse, repentance or hope for salvation. Divine punishment of sin is shown to be inevitable. As the piles of dead demonstrate, there is no contesting the will of God, and the regular recurrence of the plague scenes reminds viewers of the frequency of human sin and the constant cycle of punishment it provokes. Yet while the innocent might perish alongside the guilty, their fates diverge, the one bound for damnation, the other called early to paradise.

As in the pre-plague imagery of the Triumph of Death, the horrific spectacle is designed to move the soul and bring about penitence. Moreover, as Colin Jones has suggested in relation to later plague tracts, the rhetoric of disaster incites longing for restoration of order and right relations with God.⁵⁰ And even as they compel attention, the plague pictures are set within a larger historical narrative, communicating its

own message of the inevitable passage of time. On the facing page, for example, seemingly in deliberate counter-position to the first plague miniature, a crowd of pilgrims are shown gathering before the walls of Rome for the 1350 jubilee, with its promise of extraordinary remission of sins.⁵¹ So death is followed by life and the prospect of salvation offered by the church and its treasury of relics. Plague is revealed as a recurrent disaster that nevertheless will not last forever, but passes as one turns the page. In sum, examined individually and as a sequence unfolding through the pages of the codex, set against and interacting with the surrounding words on the page, the miniatures can be recognised as fulfilling a range of commemorative, hortatory and cathartic functions for their makers and viewers.

NOTES

1. A point well made by Colin Jones, 'Plague and Its Metaphors in Early Modern France,' *Representations* 53 (1996): 97–127.
I am grateful to the Director and staff of the Archivio di Stato, Lucca (hereafter, ASL), for facilitating my consultation of the manuscript. Research in Italy was made possible by grants from the ARC Centre for the History of Emotions and the University of Sydney.
2. Giovanni Sercambi, *Le Croniche di Giovanni Sercambi Lucchese, pubblicate sui manoscritti originali*, ed. Salvatore Bongi, 3 vols (Rome; Lucca: Istituto Storico Italiano/Giusti, 1892); Alberto Dinucci, 'Giovanni Sercambi e le sue Croniche,' *Rassegna Nazionale* 57 (1927): 43–67, 93–103; *Giovanni Sercambi e il suo tempo*, exh. cat. (Lucca: Nuova Grafiche Lucchese, 1991); Duane Osheim, 'Chronicles and Civic Life in Giovanni Sercambi's Lucca,' in *Chronicling History: Chroniclers and Historians in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, ed. Sharon Dale et al. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009), 145–60; Osheim, 'Giovanni Sercambi,' in *The Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, ed. Graeme Dunphy (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 2:1352. For late fourteenth-century Lucca, see Christine Meek, *The Commune of Lucca under Pisan Rule, 1342–1369* (Cambridge, MA: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1980); Meek, *Lucca, 1369–1400: Politics and Society in an Early Renaissance City-State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978). Sercambi's chronicle is a key source for the penitential flagellant movement known as the Bianchi: Daniel Bornstein, *The Bianchi of 1399: Popular Devotion in Late Medieval Italy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 123–4 and passim.
3. Sercambi, *Croniche*, 2:433.

4. Sercambi, *Croniche*, 1:xxviii; Marco Paoli, 'I codici,' in *Sercambi e il suo tempo*, 195–6, 208–9.
5. Paoli, 'Codici,' 206–11, cat. 101. Bongi's edition includes line drawings after the illuminations, but does not reproduce the manuscript's layout. A facsimile edition has recently been published: *Croniche di G. Sercambi*, 2 vols (Madrid; Lucca: AyN Ediciones/Archivio di Stato, 2006). The illustrations are (poorly) reproduced as individual vignettes in Ottavio Banti and Maria Testi Cristiani, *Le illustrazioni delle Croniche di Giovanni Sercambi nel codice lucchese*, 2 vols (Genoa: Basile, 1978).
6. ASL, ms. 266; Paoli, 'Codici,' 214–16, cat. 104.
7. Salvatore Bongi, *Di Paolo Guinigi e delle sue ricchezze* (Lucca: Tipografia Benedini-Guidotti, 1871), 79.
8. Sercambi, *Croniche*, 1:xxviii–xxix; Banti and Cristiani, *Illustrazioni*, 1:11. For Sercambi's political career, including his letter of political advice for senior family members in the crisis years after 1392 (*Nota ai Guinigi; Sercambi e il suo tempo*, cat. 99, 199–200), see Christine Meek, 'Il tempo di Giovanni Sercambi,' in *Sercambi e il suo tempo*, 1–30; Giorgio Tori, 'Profilo di una carriera politica,' in *Sercambi e il suo tempo*, 101–8; Marina Brogi, 'Giovanni Sercambi e la signoria di Paolo,' in *Sercambi e il suo tempo*, 135–49.
9. Paoli, 'Codici,' 193, 196; Osheim, 'Chronicles,' 145–6.
10. Bongi (Sercambi, *Croniche*, 1:xxxv) hypothesised that Sercambi executed the drawings himself. However, subsequent scholarship has recognised their professional quality, technique and relationship to current artistic models: Banti and Cristiani, *Illustrazioni*, 1:14, 70–4; Maria Testi Cristiani, 'Testo e immagine, realtà e simbolo, modello e copia, nelle illustrazioni delle *Croniche* di Giovanni Sercambi,' in *I Congresso nazionale di storia dell'arte*, ed. Corrado Maltese (Rome: Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, 1980), 273–88.
11. The following list includes foliation and original rubric; presumed date (established by surrounding text); sequential illustration number allocated by Banti and Cristiani, *Illustrazioni*; (modern) chapter number (in Roman numerals) and volume and pages in Bongi's edition; and my figure number: ASL, ms. 107, fol. 49v, *Come fu moria grande* [1348], no. 30, CXXXIII, 1:95–6 (Fig. 9.1); fol. 59r, *Come Idio mandò una moria e maximamente per tucto Ytalia* [1363], no. 47, CLII, 1:117–18 (Fig. 9.2); fol. 95v, *Come la moria cominciò a Luccha e in el contado* [1371], no. 121, CCXL, 1:206–7 (Fig. 9.3); fol. 110r, *Come si cominciò la moria in Luccha e in nel contado* [1383], no. 173, CCXCII, 1:242–3 (Fig. 9.4); fol. 120r, *Come la moria fu in Luccha e in nel contado e altrò* [1390], no. 197, CCCXXI, 1:260–1 (Fig. 9.5); fol. 209v, *Come fu una moria in molti luoghi et mòriono migliaia di persone* [1398], no. 381, DXXX, 2:64 (Fig. 9.6); fol.

- 340r, *Come a Lucha e per Toschana fu moria* [1399], no. 490, DCLXVII, 2:396–7 (Fig. 9.7).
12. Banti and Cristiani, *Illustrazioni*; Joseph Polzer, ‘Aspects of the Fourteenth-Century Iconography of Death and the Plague,’ in *The Black Death: The Impact of the Fourteenth-Century Plague*, ed. Daniel Williman (Binghamton, NY: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1982), 115.
 13. In the first book (ASL, ms. 107), the rubrics were likely added after the illustrations, since they are interspersed discontinuously in the spaces between lines of text, often extend around the margins, and are visibly written over the drawings; see, for example, fol. 96r (Fig. 9.3). Cristiani concludes that miniatures and rubrics were executed in the same workshop, with Sercambi delivering folios as they were completed and closely supervising the illustrative program. This somewhat ad-hoc production process might indicate some urgency in obtaining the finished codex. By contrast, the rubrics of the second book were copied out at the same time as the text, before the never-executed miniatures. See Banti and Cristiani, *Illustrazioni*, 1:68–71.
 14. Common terminology for the period: Rosemary Horrox, *The Black Death* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), 3–4.
 15. ‘Avendo Iddio dimostrato per li nostri peccati segno della fame, chome è stato contato, e con tucto ciò li homini non pentirsi nè perdonare le ingiurie, ma di magior male fare ordinamento, deliberò la somma potentia di Dio, per modo di moria punire quelli che scredenti a Dio e pertinaci in nel malfare senza rimedio.’ Sercambi, *Croniche*, 1:95. For similar expressions, see Sercambi, *Croniche*, 1:117–18 (1363: ‘God, who knows everything...’); 1:243 (1383: ‘As it pleased God, the mortality ceased...’); 1:260–1 (1390: ‘In his wisdom God deliberated...’); 2:64 (1398: ‘divine omnipotence decreed...’); 2:397 (1399: ‘God in his omnipotence determined...’).
 16. Although theological terminology distinguished between the Devil (Lucifer or Satan) and his followers (demons, from Greek *daimones*, half-way spirits between gods and humans), in the medieval West the latter were often conflated with their leader and subsumed under the generic name of devils. Thus, in this article, I will use the terms ‘demons’ and ‘devils’ interchangeably. See Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Lucifer: The Devil in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984); Luther Link, *The Devil: A Mask Without a Face* (London: Reaktion, 1995); Charles Zika, ‘Putting the Devil Back into the History of Christianity, 1000–1800,’ in *God, the Devil and a Millennium of Christian Culture*, ed. Charles Zika and Ellen Warne (Melbourne: RMIT Publishing, 2004), 61–78.
 17. For demonic iconography, see Russell, *Lucifer*, 129–33, 209–12; Barbara Palmer, ‘The Inhabitants of Hell: Devils,’ in *The Iconography of Hell*, ed.

- Clifford Davidson and Thomas Seiler (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1992), 20–40; Danièla Salamandra, ‘Esquisse sur l’iconographie du diable au Moyen Age occidental,’ in *Le Diable en personne* (Brussels: Fondation Albert Marins, 2005), 75–90.
18. See Lester K. Little, ‘Anger in Monastic Curses,’ in *Anger’s Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages*, ed. Barbara Rosenwein (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 12–27.
 19. Noted by Cristiani, *Illustrazioni*, 1:70, without further analysis.
 20. Russell, *Lucifer*, 29–35, 172–81; David Keck, *Angels and Angelology in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 16–27.
 21. Russell, *Lucifer*, 89–90, 98–102, 206; Joan Gregg, *Devils, Women and Jews. Reflections of the Other in Medieval Sermon Stories* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 63–4, tale D15.
 22. ASL, ms. 107, fols 125r–126v; Banti and Cristiani, *Illustrazioni*, 2: figs 210–13; Sercambi, *Croniche*, 1:272–6, chs CCCXXXV–CCCXXXVIII: *Come lo dimonio misse divizione in Lucha tra padre e figliuolo, fratello e fratello...? l’dimonio sempre accende li animi de’ ciptadini a mal fare.*
 23. Louis Jordan, ‘The Iconography of Death in Western Medieval Art to 1350,’ (PhD diss., University of Notre Dame, 1980), 62–6.
 24. Louise Marshall, ‘Manipulating the Sacred: Image and Plague in Renaissance Italy,’ *Renaissance Quarterly* 47 (1994): 493–4.
 25. Polzer, ‘Aspects,’ 114.
 26. Gabriele de’ Mussis, *Historia de morbo*, ed. A. W. Henschel, ‘Document zur Geschichte des schwarzen Todes,’ *Archiv für die Gesamte Medicin* 2 (1842): 26–59, here 47; translated into English by Horrox, *Black Death*, 14–26, this quote, 16.
 27. A. M. Campbell, *The Black Death and Men of Learning* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931); Louise Marshall, ‘Plague Literature and Art, Early Modern European,’ in *Encyclopedia of Pestilence, Pandemics and Plagues*, ed. Joseph Byrne (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2008), 2: 522–30.
 28. ‘Et era si corrocta l’aire, che in qualunqua luogo huomo andava, la morte il giungea; e poco si curava di morte, vedendone tanti morire. E per ciascuno fu stimato essere la fine del mondo.’ Sercambi, *Croniche*, 1:96; for the opening comments about divine displeasure at human sin, see above, n. 15.
 29. Polzer, ‘Aspects,’ 115.
 30. Gabriele de’ Mussis, *Historia*, 47; translated Horrox, *Black Death*, 16.
 31. Gabriele de’ Mussis, *Historia*, 47; translated Horrox, *Black Death*, 16.
 32. Robert Lerner, ‘The Black Death and European Eschatological Mentalities,’ *American Historical Review* 86 (1981): 533–52; Laura Smoller, ‘Of Earthquakes, Hails, Frogs, and Geography. Plague and the Investigation of

- the Apocalypse in the Later Middle Ages,' in *Last Things. Death and the Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, ed. Caroline Bynum and Paul Freedman (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 156–87.
33. British Library, Sloane ms 965 (a compilation of medical, astrological and plague texts), translated by Horrox, *Black Death*, 193–4.
 34. Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend. Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Ryan (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 2:223–4.
 35. Gabriele de' Mussis, *Historia*, 46; translated Horrox, *Black Death*, 15.
 36. Gabriele de' Mussis, *Historia*, 51; translated Horrox, *Black Death*, 20.
 37. Above, n. 15.
 38. *Come Idio mandò una morìa e maximamente per tucto Ytalia*.
 39. Banti and Cristiani, *Illustrazioni*, 1:86. For Death as female, see Jordan, 'Iconography of Death,' 69–83. For the Camposanto frescoes, lining the route taken by funeral processions and strongly indebted to mendicant and particularly Dominican preaching, see Polzer, 'Aspects'; Millard Meiss, *Francesco Traini*, ed. and intro. Hayden Maginnis (Washington: Decatur House Press, 1983); Chiara Frugoni, 'Altri luoghi, cercando il paradiso: il ciclo di Buffalmacco nel Camposanto di Pisa e la committenza domenicana,' *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa: Classe di lettere e filosofia* ser. 3, 18 (1988): 1567–643; Lina Bolzoni, *The Web of Images: Vernacular Preaching from its Origins to Saint Bernardino of Siena* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 11–40.
 40. Keck, *Angels*, 38–9, 194, 206.
 41. Polzer, 'Aspects,' 113; Marshall, 'Manipulating the Sacred,' 506–16; Marshall, 'Confraternity and Community: Mobilizing the Sacred in Times of Plague,' in *Confraternities and the Visual Arts in the Italian Renaissance. Ritual, Spectacle, Image*, ed. Barbara Wisch and Diane Cole Ahl (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 20–4.
 42. On Sebastian's imagery and cult, see Marshall, 'Manipulating the Sacred,' 488–500; Marshall, 'Reading the Body of a Plague Saint: Narrative Altarpieces and Devotional Images of St. Sebastian in Renaissance Art,' in *Reading Texts and Images. Essays on Medieval and Renaissance Art and Patronage*, ed. Bernard Muir (Exeter: Exeter University Press, 2002), 237–60.
 43. Voragine, *Golden Legend*, 1:101. For fourteenth- and fifteenth-century representations of this miracle, see Louise Marshall, 'The Collaboration from Hell: A Plague Strike Force in San Pietro in Vincoli, Rome,' in *Religion, the Supernatural and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe: An Album Amicorum for Charles Zika*, ed. Jennifer Spinks and Dagmar Eichberger (Leiden: Brill), 19–45.

44. Cf Ezekiel. 33:11, a passage often cited by chroniclers, including Paduan judge Guglielmo Cortusio (c.1285-after 1361), *Chronica de novitatibus Padue et Lombardie*, translated by Horrox, *Black Death*, 34.
45. See Liliane Brion-Guerry, *Le thème du triomphe de la mort dans la peinture italienne* (Paris: Librairie Orientale et Américaine, 1950); Pierroberto Scaramella, 'L'Italia dei Trionfi e dei Contrasti,' in *Humana fragilitas. I temi della morte in Europa tra Duecento e Settecento*, ed. Alberto Tenenti (Clusone: Ferrari/ Circolo Culturale Baradello, 2000), 25–58.
46. 'IO SO COLEI C'OCCIDO O[M]NE PERSONA/ GIOVENE E VECCHIE [NE] VERUN NE [LA]SSO/ DE GRANDE ALTURA SUBITO.' See Brion-Guerry, *Triomphe*, 118–19; Scaramella, 'Italia,' 40–1, fig. 22.
47. Roger Wieck, 'The Death Desired: Books of Hours and the Medieval Funeral,' in *Death and Dying in the Middle Ages*, ed. Edelgard DuBruck and Barbara Gusick (New York: Peter Lang, 1999), 431–76. For these themes in plague accounts, see Horrox, *Black Death*, 14–92.
48. See Brion-Guerry, *Triomphe*, 38–57; Chiara Frugoni, 'Il tema dell'Incontro dei tre vivi e dei tre morti nella tradizione medioevale italiana,' *Atti della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei. Memorie. Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche*, ser. 8, 13 (1967), 143–51; Scaramella, 'Italia,' 25–31; Elina Gertsman, 'The Gap of Death: Passive Violence in the Encounter between the Three Dead and the Three Living,' in *Beholding Violence in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Allie Terry-Fritsch and Erin Labbie (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2012), 85–104.
49. 'posto che molti innocenti perissero della moria che Dio promise'. Sercambi, *Croniche*, 1:95.
50. Jones, 'Plague,' 111–12.
51. ASL, ms. 107, fols 49v–50r; Banti and Cristiani, *Illustrazioni*, 2: figs 30–31.

Desire After Disaster: Lot and His Daughters

Patricia Simons

This essay treats neither wars nor natural events, focusing instead on divine judgment and biblical history, remote in time yet kept alive in textual and visual discourses. Examining images, chiefly German, of the Old Testament story regarding Lot and his daughters against the setting of the utter destruction of Sodom, I hope to bring to the fore certain issues regarding visual rhetoric, particularly its mediation as well as its construction in relation to responses to disaster.¹ The distance in time and space provided by the representation of scriptural disaster is tellingly indicative of the perception and processing of catastrophe, pointing not only to how a particular event might be understood but also to the construction of a variety of interpretations regarding the divine's role in such fundamental disruptions to the natural and everyday order. Deeply disturbing and fearsome events like the obliteration of an entire city can be culturally managed by the conventionalisation and categorisation of story, image and affect. Horror is represented rather than recorded, as much invented and assuaged as heightened. Visual language does not reflect history but is part of history, constructing, refining and filtering affects and events for intelligent, attentive and varied audiences. It cannot be taken at face value; nor does it resolve into simple iconographic patterns. The visual imagery of

P. Simons

History of Art, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

disaster is manipulated and redeployed, put to numerous, even dissonant purposes, depending on function, context and occasion.

Around 1496–99, Albrecht Dürer depicted decorous, stoic Lot and his daughters escaping Sodom in a landscape set against cataclysmic destruction (Fig. 10.1).² The consummately executed, recently cleaned work is probably the first representation of the episode on a painted panel. In the late 1580s, one of Agostino Carracci's *Lascivie* engravings concentrated instead on the subsequent seduction of drunken Lot by his offspring, their nakedness and indulgence overshadowing the faintly depicted smoke and flame, indicating God's wrath meted out against sexual sin in the far background.³ This difference in narrative focus and conceptualisation of characters, this shift from disaster to desire, is not simply a tale of increasing erotic licence in images over the course of the sixteenth century. That a biblical scene of seduction offered artists a justification for the representation of erotic activity and nakedness goes almost without saying. Here, I want to think about the components and dynamics of the pictorial erotics, about what made the visualisations so popular and varied and how they changed the visual relationship between disaster and desire. Always a fraught subject, Lot's tale offered multiple, concurrent and contradictory interpretive modes, from the homophobic to the marital, the political to the aesthetic. The spectacle of catastrophe in a broad panorama is, at other times, the mere backdrop for acts of survival, resilience or sin.

The biblical sequence from universal conflagration to tribal foundation had already been depicted in extensive pictorial cycles. Annihilation and incest are both evident in the Vienna Genesis of the early sixth century, for instance, or early thirteenth-century stained glass in the choir of the Cathedral at Poitiers.⁴ Picture Bibles, like one decorated in Padua at the end of the fourteenth century, can show not only the coupling but also Lot and his daughters solicitously caring for their sons, who went on to be progenitors of the Moabites and the Ammonites.⁵ However, these early representations of incest are decorous, showing fully clothed daughters and, occasionally, the locale of a bed, whereas the later emphasis is on seduction and wiliness, befitting the rising popularity of the misogynist trope of the 'power of women'.⁶

Most commonly, the father–daughter incest had been absent, even if space was available, in favour of images of obliteration and flight, as seen, for instance, in Benozzo Gozzoli's vast fresco that was part of the Old Testament cycle for Pisa's burial ground at the Camposanto produced around 1473–77 (Figs. 10.2 and 10.3) or in the first complete translation



Fig. 10.1 Albrecht Dürer, *Lot and his Daughters*, oil on linden wood, c.1496–99. National Gallery of Art, Washington DC: 1952.2.16.b



Fig. 10.2 Benozzo Gozzoli, *The Destruction of Sodom*, fresco, c.1473–77; here reproduced from Giuseppe Rossi and G. P. Lasinio Figlio, *Pitture a fresco del Camposanto di Pisa* (Florence: Tipografia all’insegna di Dante, 1832), plate 28 (photo: author)



Fig. 10.3 Detail of Fig. 10.2



Fig. 10.4 *Lot and his daughters*, in Hartman Schedel, *Liber chronicarum* (Nuremberg: Anton Koberger, 1493), fol. 21r (Photo: University of Michigan Library)

of the Bible into German by Martin Luther, expansively illustrated by Lucas Cranach's workshop and published at Frankfurt in 1534.⁷ The foremost theme of such imagery is to confront sinners with a choice between being consumed by the force of divine wrath or to work toward deserving salvation. The focus on demolition and escape is also seen in numerous manuscripts and printed books such as the *Nuremberg Chronicle* (Fig. 10.4), printed in Dürer's hometown by his godfather Anton Koberger in 1493, a few years before the painting (Fig. 10.1). On the obverse, the painting shows the Koberger housemark along with a *Virgin and Child* image that celebrates the new era of grace ushered in by licit, indeed divine, reproduction. Since the same physical composition of paint is used on both sides, there is no need to suppose different dates for the two images, which have sometimes been regarded as discordant, but the double-sided object is coherent. It compares two kinds of abnormal births, miraculous in the case of Jesus, perverse in the instance of Lot, although the daughters' urge for regeneration suits the panel's function as an image produced for a married couple.

The marital context is indicated by the presence of the Koberger house mark and the Haller coat of arms on either edge of the front panel. The coat of arms very likely refers to the 1491 marriage between the Nuremberg

patrician Wolf III Haller (1467–1508) and Anton's daughter Ursula Koberger (1471–c.1525).⁸ Perhaps the panel was commissioned several years later as a votive prayer for the birth of children or as an offering of thanks after the welcome arrival of long-awaited progeny, and Ursula may have been the patron. While the time gap between marriage and painting does not allow a definitive conclusion regarding any connection between the two, the heraldry suggests the ongoing importance of a joint, marital household in relation to the painting's imagery. The necessity of procreating the lineage was a clear visual statement to a wife as well as a bride, as was the warning to be obedient, unlike Lot's wife.

At least some of the later paintings of Lot and his bewitching daughters, which were virtually all produced for households and not sanctified spaces, may have been nuptial and dynastic. The size of canvases by Albrecht Altdorfer, Hendrik Goltzius, Jan Massys and Joachim Wtewael, for instance, suggests that such depictions of fleshly indulgence and succulent fruits hung in large bed chambers or dining rooms.⁹ The adultery of Mars and Venus was no obstacle to their depiction in marital and respectable settings, and so, too, the biblical tale could celebrate desire under a seemingly paradoxical rubric, of moralising alongside an erotically reproductive imperative.

The dynamic of concealment intersecting with display is fundamental to textual history, too. Exegetical commentary on Genesis 19 by Augustine, Luther, Calvin and others did not omit the incest, but there was considerable unease about a patriarch worthy of deliverance who nevertheless then showed great human fallibility by becoming drunk and committing incest, twice. Thus, marginal notes in fifteenth-century bibles instruct vernacular readers to avoid the sexual passages of Lot's tale.¹⁰ This discomfort continued, resulting in the 1847 censorship of the English translation of Calvin's commentary, for example, minimal entries in lexica, and a relatively minor quantity of art historical scholarship.¹¹

Misunderstanding, confusion and censorship informed early book illustrations, which were often influenced by the early fourteenth-century *Speculum humanae salvationis*, a popular work of typology in which Lot's escape is likened to Abraham's release from Ur, Moses' deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt and the freeing of the patriarchs from Limbo.¹² Various printed editions of the *Speculum* during the 1470s disseminated the focus on Lot's salvation, misunderstanding or rewriting the tale of incest so much that the ancient patriarch sets off with only one daughter, his other child having become a son. Given the boy's young age,

procreation seems to be foreshadowed and the boy would appear to be one of his future grandsons.¹³ One of the earliest printed editions, published in Augsburg around 1473, was correct in the sex and age of its figures and set an important precedent for the Nuremberg Chronicle, with its orderly frieze of burning city, Lot's wife as a pillar, then the two daughters obediently following their father (Fig. 10.4).¹⁴ The image also informed the woodcut illustrating Hans Vintler's long vernacular poem the *Buch der Tugend*, printed in Augsburg in 1486, where misunderstandings nevertheless multiply, possibly due to textual slips or errors in oral transmission.¹⁵ Lot is there followed by two youths, he later sleeps off his drunkenness alone, and in the nearby hills his daughters eagerly procreate with longhaired youths, one of whom lies under his female partner in a submissive position frowned upon by canonists, as though his masculinity is being usurped in an 'unnatural' position that perhaps refers to the broad rubric of sodomy.

In pre-modern times, while the utter ruin of Sodom was commonly cited in religious and civic discourse directed against sinfulness, details about the cause of that punishment were vague and variable, and father-daughter incest was also condemned yet rarely mentioned explicitly in penitentials or statutes.¹⁶ Thus, the unspeakable acts of sodomy, like the incest, were at first not visualised often, or were rendered obliquely. In Dürer's case (Fig. 10.1), cities burn in the distance and incest is not yet underway, an omission that was common, and akin to the decision of the Florentine humanist and chancellor Leonardo Bruni in the 1420s to 'pass over in silence the shocking crime of Lot's daughters, the detestable filthiness of the Sodomites'.¹⁷ Bruni was defending the study and admiration of ancient literature and in that context he pointed out, as had his predecessor Coluccio Salutati in 1406, that the Bible was no more pure than the writings of the pagans. Thus, they mentioned the episodes in order to draw attention to them, while simultaneously appearing to eradicate and condemn the abhorrent tales.

Apocalyptic ruination fittingly censored the visualisation of deeds within the walls of Sodom and Gomorrah. Yet there were exceptions. Eleonora Ippolita Gonzaga's *Book of Hours* was decorated in the 1530s with a scene of the punishment that possibly harked back to the Sack of Rome in 1527, suggested by the modern city in flames at the rear.¹⁸ The suffering populace of the city of Sodom in the foreground included a bending youth who bares his backside, a clear and rare reference to sodomy. Luther's lecture on Genesis of 1539 associated sodomy with the depravity of Rome, a

vehement reformist strategy in the anti-clerical tradition which even went so far as to say that ‘the people of Sodom are saintly and righteous in comparison with the Roman Church’.¹⁹ In a sense, then, Lot and his daughters might be regarded by Protestant viewers as examples of those who were saved, while affirming that all Papists would perish. Two drawings by the Protestant Dutch artist Jan Saenredam, in his series on Lot, show lounging youths and public male nakedness within the city, enticing views that may have been designed for widespread dissemination in print.²⁰

But the most explicit and deliberately amusing sight appears in the Egerton Genesis from fourteenth-century England, in which two men grapple in sexual embrace while a single figure masturbates intently nearby (in a scene that has since been rubbed, appropriately, in an act that was censorial yet erotic).²¹ Below them, a bearded knight grasps the upper shaft of his large phallic sword that stands erect between his legs, and a fool or vassal to the right wields a long stick against beggars. Dressed in the shoes and revealing hose of a dandy, the men who are indifferent or hostile to beggars probably refer to the inhospitable, uncharitable and impious nature of the Sodomites. In sum: the motivation and visual effect of these exceptionally explicit references to sodomy varies, from political or polemical reference in Saenredam’s prints and aesthetic sensuality in the Gonzaga book to humorous ridicule in the medieval manuscript.

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, at a time when sodomy was being prosecuted more vigorously and more frequently referred to, even if as the ‘unspeakable’ act, images of Sodom’s apocalyptic demise, contrasted with the escape of Lot and his family, became more widespread, especially in printed books. From c.1508 to 1515, the burning city was still visible yet distant in northern images, and the focus was instead on the excesses of Lot and his daughters. This change perhaps first occurred in a now-lost painting by Lucas van Leyden, probably similar to a panel by a follower surviving in the National Gallery, London and recalled in an engraving produced early in the century by Monogrammist P.W. of Cologne (Fig. 10.5).²² Poised either side of their father and intent on tempting him to imbibe too much wine, the devious women evoke the sirens in contemporary images of the temptation of St Anthony, especially in the avidly craning neck and extravagant headgear of the daughter on the left of the engraving.²³ The subject of Lot and his daughters quickly became popular, especially in Germany and the Netherlands, providing viewers with an ostensibly moralising subject about womanly wiles and the salvation of the righteous after disaster, while nevertheless displaying provocative female flesh and drunken indulgence.



Fig. 10.5 The Monogrammist P.W. of Cologne, *Lot and his Daughters*, engraving, c.1515. British Museum, London: 1817,0714.3 (Photo: AKG Images)

Jan Wellens de Cock's panel in Detroit (Fig. 10.6), probably dated to 1523, is one of the striking, early paintings that brought the seduction to the fore at the expense of the instigating destruction in the distance.²⁴ It foregrounds extravagant headgear, sinuous bodies, an enticing embrace, Lot's swelling red codpiece and drunkenly flushed face, prominent wine



Fig. 10.6 Jan Wellens de Cock, *Lot and his Daughters*, oil on oak, c.1523. Detroit Institute of Arts: 25.65 (Photo: Bridgeman Art Library)

flasks and a suggestive act of pouring. The vigorous splash accentuates the transfer of fluid from one container (often depicted with an elongated neck and bulbous body, as here) into a passive receptacle, analogous to insemination of the female body.²⁵ The earlier emphasis, evident in book illustrations and Dürer's panel (Figs. 10.1, 10.3 and 10.7), was on safety for a patriarchal family obedient to the Lord's will; but the decades just preceding and during the Reformation emphasised familial and reproductive values differently, witnessing a very explicit though officially illicit scene of male–female coupling.

By 1537, Altdorfer's extraordinary treatment of the narrative (Fig. 10.7) not only relegates the burning cities to the far distance but also brings Lot's leering conjunction with one daughter to the extreme foreground. Numerous thematic strands are simultaneously invoked and uncomfortably co-exist: anti-Semitic physiognomy, misogynist feminisation of luxury and seduction, Italianate mode of reclining nude (recently popularised in several paintings of nymphs by Cranach), German fascination with the unequal coupling of an aged figure with one ideally young, and pastoral depiction of a couple secluded in the woods. Skilfully painted and near life-size in scale so



Fig. 10.7 Albrecht Altdorfer, *Lot and his Daughters*, oil on wood, 1537. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (Photo: © Heritage Image Partnership Ltd / Alamy Stock Photo)

that it is obtrusive and insistently snares the gaze, the panel is simultaneously captivating and repellent. I would argue that discomfort is central to its paradoxical effect: Lot lies behind his daughter in a manner that implies sodomitical intercourse and, furthermore, incest was often considered one of the many sins committed freely in Sodom, as Luther regarded it in 1539.²⁶ Thus, Altdorfer offers to viewers both erotic nudity and the visualisation of forbidden sins. As far as I know, this sly reference to sodomy has gone unremarked by scholars in print, but it is unmistakable, and indicative of the unease regarding both disaster and its possible causes.

The common pictorial emphasis on Lot's gluttony, with food, wine and flesh, serves a moralising point. Furthermore, it alludes to the end of time, for the gospels of Matthew and Luke drew a parallel between the ignorant days before the Flood, filled with eating, drinking and nuptials (the last a euphemism for excessive sex) with the similarly sinful period before the Second Coming (Matthew 24:37–40). The days of Noah were like those of Lot, focused on food, wine and commerce (Luke 17:26–32). The gluttony also paradoxically represents the patriarch's sodomitical gratification in that Luther condemned the 'excessive eating and drinking' of Germans who were thereby committing 'sins like those of Sodom'.²⁷ The contradictions inherent in the tale of a saintly yet sinful patriarch opened up possibilities for artists, patrons and viewers, which went beyond the

eroticisation of a biblical narrative, and entailed the exploration of such themes as temptation, hypocrisy, indulgence, desire and misogyny.

Fuelled by the rise of printed chronicles and books of piety, and also by religious reformist zeal, homophobic rhetoric and an interest in the assertive exercise of patriarchal authority, the story was especially popular from the first decade of the sixteenth century. Lot's drunkenness and his daughters' amorous ploys now formed the primary pictorial focus, partly as an admonition against such sins and as a misogynist confirmation of feminine deceit. On the other hand, as we see in Altdorfer's panel, the narrative also offered pleasures, especially through the visual immediacy of landscape, nudity and luxurious excess. In 1603–04 Karel van Mander praised one of Wtewael's versions of the subject for its 'excellently beautiful nudes' and 'a subtle fire, tree trunks and other things'.²⁸ The popular images were rarely mere moralising warnings, for they invited lingering gazes upon fruits and flesh, emphasised survival and resilience over destruction, focused on familial regeneration rather than loneliness, and addressed self-control instead of total abstinence.

It is notable that the episode of Lot rendered drunk by his crafty daughters often featured on drinking vessels, thereby warning of excess at the very same time as the users continued to imbibe, supposedly in moderation.²⁹ A strict, narrow iconographic reading of Lot's scene as moralising and negative does not take into account the way in which the commitment to probity on the part of such imagery was often shallow, for nakedness, seductive allure, pleasure and sexual conjunction remained highly visible. In a mid-sixteenth-century enamel bowl painted on copper and attributed to Pierre Reymond, sexual organs are referred to by the shapes of the overturned jug, and nearby wine flask crossing a phallic stick.³⁰ Ostensibly, sinful indulgence and disaster are mitigated or entirely averted by the influence of such imagery; yet the visual representation is repellent by virtue of its subject but *not* its visual impact. The narrative also pulls viewers in different directions. Against the well-known if nearly invisible backdrop of disastrous destruction, Lot's drunken incest is a sin with regenerative consequences as well as pleasurable visual appeal. For the large canvases produced for sites like dining halls or bedrooms emphasise luscious fruits and the enjoyment of wine. Indeed, Lot's story provides material for a variety of open-ended or even contradictory interpretations and pictorial functions, from the marital to the incestuous, the pleasing to the discomfiting.

Popular, adaptable and multivalent, Lot's indulgence usually escaped excessive moralising strictures. But in narrative and often visual terms, a

sinful, non-reproductive and destroyed Sodom in the background sets up a compelling contrast, and thus it is important to consider the spatial and emotive relationship between urban disaster and the scene of allurement. An important consequence of the more panoramic view, investigated by artists such as Dürer (Fig. 10.1), is that the disaster becomes a background cause rather than the main event. The more universalising, sweeping epic in which the chief characters only appear in relatively small form, as developed by Joachim Patinir and others like Jan Wellens de Cock (Fig. 10.6), can be regarded as a response to millenarian concerns at the turn of the century and an attempt to mitigate those worries by stressing salvation.³¹ The (possibly resultant) emerging interest in landscape and spatial recession also fundamentally altered the long-established conventional depiction of the destruction of Sodom, Gomorrah and the other three cities of the Palestinian pentapolis. Jan de Cock's panel of 1523 (Fig. 10.6) may be the earliest to combine the panorama of Patinir, a fellow painter from Antwerp, with sinful extravagance in the foreground.

Until the mid-1490s, the story preceding the incest was commonly told in a frieze composition, parallel to the picture plane, usually moving from left to right, appropriate because many of the images had been included in manuscripts and printed books.³² It was represented thus in the Vienna Genesis, and the linear movement was also a crucial narrative element in the late twelfth-century mosaics of Monreale, for example.³³ Hartmann Schedel's *Nuremberg Chronicle* (Fig. 10.4) repeats the standard formula, a city collapsing, Lot's wife already turned to salt, her daughters led by Lot, and sometimes one or two guiding angels, never looking back and soon to move beyond the frame.

On the *Nuremberg Chronicle*'s open page, as on the other pages in this section of the book tracing the *linea Christi* down from Adam, a genealogical vine runs across the gutter, indicating the continuation of history through Abraham's lineage.³⁴ That flow is halted at the bottom of the recto page by the separate illustration of Sodom, which marks the end of the Second Age. 'Unnatural', that is, non-reproductive sexual practices that might have brought history to a close are superseded by the flight at the right side of the image, and the incest is elided so that when the page is turned history recommences, with the beginning of the Third Age of the World. While the actual seduction scene is missing, the very arrangement of the pages reaffirms the daughters' reasoning that incest was essential for the production of future generations.³⁵

Typical in the Sicilian mosaic of Monreale and the German printed *Nuremberg Chronicle* is the reduction of the city to a single urban enclosure that collapses within itself, assailed by searing flames from above and further weakened by earthquake-like effects of disintegration. No residents are visible in the print, while in the Monreale mosaic five skulls accentuate the deathly punishment. They may not simply represent individuals evoking emotional response, however, for they probably signify the five cities of the pentapolis, and skulls are conventional signs of mortality as well as empathetic evocations of horror or distress.

At other times a few crushed or dismembered inhabitants encapsulate the human toll. The rain of 'brimstone and fire' (*pluit ... sulphur et ignem*) in Genesis (19.24) and also Luke (17.29) is described in a mid-thirteenth-century Picture Bible as a visitation from the heavens of literal fire and falling rocks, the volcanic activity associated with brimstone often explaining the earthquake damage.³⁶ The Latin *sulphur* of Jerome's biblical translation is sometimes understood as a noxious miasma, so that Sodomites virtually drown in fumes and smoke, perhaps to draw an analogy with the drastic eradication of the Flood, which similarly saw the survival of only one patriarch's family.³⁷ The visual effect accords with pilgrims' accounts that the cities at the Dead Sea were 'burned up with a flood of sulphurous fire and were sunk in that lake' or simply 'submerged' or 'drowned'.³⁸

Angels might be messengers of God's displeasure, aiding the collapse or, in the example of Gozzoli's fresco (Figs. 10.2 and 10.3), hurling flames upon the most populated and extensive city view of Sodom that is extant (if barely). Having suffered its own apocalyptic damage by fire and bombing in July 1944 during World War II, the fresco's details are now difficult to discern, but clearly both the heavens and the outskirts of the city are filled with punitive angels and agonised humanity. Fortunately, an early nineteenth-century engraving records the horror, as a host of angels vigorously throw flames, amplifying their power with trumpets of fire and the fierce expulsion of wind. The puffed cheeks and energetic blowing recall depictions of wind gods, but the ferocity and chaos evoke an apocalyptic storm. The raging winds, trumpets and flames suggest the End Times, when again it would rain fire and brimstone as it had during Sodom's utter annihilation.³⁹ According to Matthew, the trumpeting angels at the end of days would gather the elect from the four winds, that is, from the farthest reaches of the heavens (24:31; also Mark 13:27). The explicit link between past and future events drawn in Luke's gospel included the admonition not to turn back homeward at the moment of revelation, but to remem-

ber the dire punishment of Lot's wife (17:31–32), whom Gozzoli shows as a large figure in a prominent position at the fresco's right, turning back yet forever frozen. Earthquakes at the world's end (Matthew 24:7; Mark 13:8; Luke 21:11; Revelations 11:13) are also emphasised in most depictions of the city's demise, as they are in Gozzoli's detailed vision of a crumbling cityscape. Notably, the weaponry of Gozzoli's angels does not include arrows, which wound only one at a time. Here the annihilation is more random and totalising, attacking urban fabric as well as human flesh. The distress suggested by open mouths, and prayerful or dramatic gestures is distinctive, for nearly all other representations have either no human figures at all, or the people are crushed, limp, already dead or nearly so.

Gozzoli's more emotive rendering imagines an earlier moment, as the catastrophe unfolds, catching young and old, women and men, naked and clothed (Genesis 19.4). In the left foreground, and clinging to a burning building, naked youths depicted as classicised beauties are probably sodomites in the sexual sense, and in the foreground one suggestively stands over and upon a naked companion. To the right of the city marked on its gate as SOGDOMA, books are amongst the falling debris, and an amusing detail shows one youth with a burning pile of volumes stacked atop his head while he remains deep in thought, oblivious to divine fury. Students at the local university at Pisa are thereby encompassed by the holocaust, reminded that preoccupations of youth and of the intellect will not withstand the evaluation of Judgment Day. In the typological tradition of the *Biblia Pauperum*, the destruction is situated adjacent to the entry of the damned into hell because, as that text points out, 'when day dawns all the sinners of the earth will appear and will be destined for hell alive, and damned'.⁴⁰ Their sins were not restricted to the modern notion of homosexuality, for the errors of the Sodomites were often understood to include a broad range of corporeal excesses, those 'living according to their bodily desires, which blind their eyes' according to the *Biblia Pauperum*, and as Luther, for one, remembered.⁴¹

Gozzoli's large fresco is exceptional for its attention to the emotive details of torment and woe. Usually, the devastation is nearly complete and implacable forces have already overcome the inhabitants. This is to be expected, for the standard medieval and Renaissance convention was for nearly all represented faces to be unemotional, with occasional exceptions, chiefly of figures mourning the death of Christ, or for those condemned to hell. In a culture where broad gestures were important communicative

tools of civic oratory and preaching, that body language was also theorised as the best way to make known movements of the soul (*motus animi*) or emotions in art.⁴² What such gestures indicate in the representation of utter urban annihilation is weakness and death but rarely pain or despair. Gozzoli's rendition is relatively rare. His fresco's unusually expressive features are iconographically appropriate and visually forceful because the open mouths, heavily furrowed brows and dramatic gestures of the sinners from Sodom associate them with the damned suffering in hell. I would suggest that the effect of the more common pictorial restraint is to make it clear that punishment is inevitable and that the soul must prepare for the next life rather than focus on the emotional variables of the present. Gozzoli, in the context of Pisa's burial ground, chooses rather to concentrate on the horrors of divine judgment.

Panoramic views also stress that the punitive wrath of God offers no hope against intractable sinners and that entire cities will fall. Some manuscripts, like the early seventh-century Ashburnham Pentateuch, show a bird's-eye view, as does the *Biblia Pauperum*, while at other times the cities sit on distant mountains.⁴³ Topographical distance creates a gulf between sin and salvation in some illuminated German chronicles, where cities burn below while the family moves off to the left, climbing away from the smoke and fumes towards the safety of the mountains recommended by the angels (Genesis 19:17).⁴⁴ That locale was also the place of refuge at the end of days, another reason why Old Testament disaster could be typologically associated with the Last Times represented in the New Testament.⁴⁵ The cities are usually chillingly empty, a notational backdrop for Lot's salvation in which dense urban architecture signifies a civilisation as well as a populace that will soon disappear. Their lifelessness also describes God's distance from human particulars and the vastness of universal time. Sinners are rarely seen and there is no point to sympathy. In his commentary on Lot, Luther lingered over the harsh erasure of the whole city after worrying that 'a great and certain catastrophe is threatening Germany', a 'coming conflagration which threatens all Germany because of our sins'.⁴⁶

So generic is the view in a Chronicle (*Fasciculus Temporum*) issued on 20 February 1482 that it was reused in that book for the Burning of Troy and the Burning of Babylon.⁴⁷ Similarly, Dürer's erupting Babylon in his woodcut series on *The Apocalypse* (1498) is marked by the same flames and smoky columns as his Sodom. Gigantic plumes of smoke and fire issuing from buildings during the Sack of Rome or a generic depiction of warfare

resemble those deployed by Dürer and others, thereby dramatising the all-too-common contemporary experience of devastation and likening it to divine retribution.⁴⁸ Hence, divine punishment is pictured with immediacy, as forever immanent. When discussing the brimstone and fire raining upon Sodom, Luther was reminded of an earthquake and inundation near Naples in 1538, and a popular book of marriage advice written in the fourteenth century noted that a particular French town ‘sank for sin of pride and lechery’, akin to the obliteration of Sodom.⁴⁹ In November 1517 the secretary of a travelling Cardinal heard that the burial of a French town under a collapsed mountain was due to its practice of sodomy, a calamity that was wrought by God ‘to uphold the righteous and as an example to the ungodly’.⁵⁰ In a different vein, the burning of Sodom was the subject of a public performance at Trent in 1536, part of the celebrations during the visit by the Hapsburg king of Bohemia and Hungary, Ferdinand I, an occasion a poet associated with anti-Lutheran sentiments.⁵¹ These local and particular reminders underscored the possibility that divine wrath could strike anywhere, anytime.

Significantly, Sodom’s catastrophe more often featured in the visual culture of sixteenth-century northern Europe than the south. The latter region remained firmly Catholic and thus most of the propagandistic use of the story focused on accusations that papists practised sodomy. However, the battle for souls meant that local audiences were also warned against the sinful excesses of Sodom. On occasion, Catholic propaganda resorted to the story too. Its dramatic staging in Trent occurred nearly a decade before the Catholic council began to meet in that city to consider its response to the Protestant Reformation. The key audience in 1536 was the ruler of a region, centred on Prague, which had since the late fourteenth century experienced turmoil regarding ecclesiastical and theological reform. The reminder of Sodom’s destruction was meant to inspire Catholic Ferdinand to allow less religious freedom.

Wherever the tale was represented, by means of overwhelming scale and profusion, usually in conjunction with either unseen or puny people, the pictorial codes for urban annihilation are impersonal and distant. Individuals rarely matter, and thus personal emotional responses to such imagery tend to be subsumed under the epic scale of uncontrollable forces. During the flight, Lot and his daughters are almost as impassive as his wife, turned to salt in the background. Gluttony and lust are passions that counteract or result from shock once the seduction is underway, but these are not the behaviours or emotions to be mirrored by viewers. Numerous

distinctions and paradoxes lie at the heart of Lot's tale. In early modern culture, at a time when sexual sins were increasingly present in discourse (celebrated by some while condemned by others), and when apocalyptic events were often witnessed or disasters like war and famine experienced, the biblical tale of utter destruction gave rise to a broad range of responses: punishment is the forerunner to selective salvation, destruction co-exists with visibility, doom is overcome by safety, incest couples with sodomy, control battles with indulgence, patriarchal continuity operates against abandonment and stoicism contrasts with disaster.

NOTES

1. Genesis 19, *The Vulgate Bible*, vol. 1, *The Pentateuch. Douay-Rheims Translation*, ed. Swift Edgar (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 82–9 (with parallel Latin). Citations of the New Testament are from *The Vulgate Bible*, vol. 6, *The New Testament*, ed. Angela Kinney (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013).
2. John Oliver Hand, with Sally Mansfield, *German Paintings of the Fifteenth through Seventeenth Centuries. The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue* (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1993), 49–60; Anna Scherbaum's entry in *Albrecht Dürer*, ed. Klaus Albrecht Schröder and Maria Luise Sternath (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2003), 178–81, no. 29; Daniel Hess and Thomas Eser, eds., *The Early Dürer* (Nuremberg: Germanisches Nationalmuseum, 2012), 336–7. I am grateful to John Hand, Curator of Northern Renaissance paintings at the National Gallery of Art, Washington DC, who kindly enabled me to examine the panel in March 2012.
3. For Carracci's print see, for example, the British Museum's online collection, accessed May 15 2015, http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=1562245&partId=1&searchText=Agostino+Carracci,+Lot+and+his+Daughters,&page=1
4. Theodor Ehrenstein, *Das alte Testament im Bild: ein Illustrationswerk mit über 2000 Abbildungen von altchristlichen, mittelalterlichen und neuzeitlichen Kunstwerken* (Vienna: A. Kende, 1923), 157, figs 1–2 (Vienna Genesis); Dorothy Verkerk, *Early Medieval Bible Illumination and the Ashburnham Pentateuch* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), fig. 20 (the early seventh-century Ashburnham Pentateuch); Louis Grodecki, *Le Moyen Âge Retrouvé de l'an mil à l'an 1200* (Paris: Flammarion, 1986), 469, fig. 190 (the Poitiers incest scene).

5. Gianfranco Folena and Gian Lorenzo Mellini, eds., *Bibbia Istoriata Padovana della fine del Trecento. Pentateuco—Giosuè—Ruth* (Venice: Neri Pozza Editore, 1962), 7–8, plates 21–2. See Sandra Hindman, *Text and Image in Fifteenth-Century Illustrated Dutch Bibles* (Leiden: Brill, 1977), 75 for a Bible of c.1435 with Lot preparing food.
6. Susan L. Smith, *The Power of Women. A Topos in Medieval Art and Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995). For instance, a late fourteenth-century pyx from Münster Cathedral has reliefs showing Phyllis and Aristotle, Lot and one of his daughters, Samson and the lion, and Samson with Delilah: Max Geisberg, ed., *Die Stadt Münster*, vol. 5, *Der Dom* (Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1937), 414–18, figs 1669–72.
7. For the damaged fresco, see the engraving of 1812 in Giuseppe Rossi and G. P. Lasinio Figlio, *Pitture a fresco del Camposanto di Pisa* (Florence: Tipografia all'insegna di Dante, 1832), 28, plate 28. For the Luther Bible, see Stephan Füssel, *The Bible in Pictures. Illustrations from the Workshop of Lucas Cranach (1534)* (Cologne: Taschen, 2009), 41–2, no. 4 (fol. 11r).
8. Hand, *German Paintings*, 55; Scherbaum (n. 2 above).
9. Goltzius in the Rijksmuseum (140 x 204 cm); Massys in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (151 x 171 cm) and Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts, Brussels (148 x 204.5 cm); Wtewael in the Hermitage (209 x 166 cm) and Los Angeles County Museum of Art (162.56 x 205.74 cm).
10. Hindman, *Dutch Bibles*, 102.
11. John Calvin, *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses called Genesis*, trans. John King (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1847), 1:518, which stops at verse 31, the editor saying ‘it has been deemed necessary entirely to omit’ the remainder of the text. The near or complete silence of many iconographic manuals was noted in Joshua Benjamin Kind, ‘The Drunken Lot and His Daughters: An Iconographical Study of the Uses of This Theme in the Visual Arts from 1500 to 1650, and Its Bases in Exegetical and Literary History,’ (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1967), 4–5n7. Other chief studies consulted are: Hannelore Kunz, *Materialien und Beobachtungen zur Darstellung der Lotgeschichte (Genesis 19, 12–26) von den Anfängen bis gegen 1500* (Bamberg: Difo Druck, 1981); Anne Lowenthal, ‘Lot and His Daughters as Moral Dilemma,’ in *The Age of Rembrandt: Studies in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting*, ed. Roland Fleischer and Susan Scott Munshower (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988), 12–27 (on Wtewael); Ruth Mellinkoff, ‘Titian’s Pastoral Scene: A unique rendition of Lot and his Daughters,’ *Renaissance Quarterly* 51 (Autumn 1998): 829–63 (on a drawing); Madeline Caviness, *Visualizing Women in the Middle Ages. Sight, Spectacle, and Scopic Economy*

- (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 49–81; Lucia Casellato, ‘Le donne di Lot: il fine (a volte) giustifica i mezzi,’ *Venezia Cinquecento* 20 (2010): 135–66 (chiefly on sixteenth-century Italian paintings).
12. Avril Henry, *The Mirour of Mans Saluacioun: a Middle English translation of ‘Speculum Humanae Salvationis.’ A critical edition of the fifteenth-century manuscript illustrated from ‘Der Spiegel der menschen Behältnis’, Speyer: Drach, c.1475* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987), 39, 164–5.
 13. Not noted in Robert Koch, ‘The Sculptures of the Church of Saint-Maurice at Vienne, the *Biblia Pauperum* and the *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*,’ *Art Bulletin* 32 (1950): 151–5, figs 13–14. There is also one daughter and one younger boy in Pierre Reymond’s Limoges casket with Old Testament scenes, c.1540–45, in the Toledo Museum of Art. The representation of a boy may have been influenced by the composition of another family outside a city’s gate, the boys Mallon and Chilion following their parents Elimelech and Naomi. See, for instance, the mid-thirteenth-century Arsenal Bible, fol. 364v, in Hugo Buchthal, *Miniature Painting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 148, plate 81.
 14. Koch, ‘Sculptures,’ 115, fig. 11.
 15. Hans Vintler, *Buch der Tugend* (Augsburg: Johann Blaubirer, 1486), fol. m iii verso; Kind, ‘Drunken Lot,’ 126–28.
 16. On father–daughter incest, see Kathryn Gravdal, ‘Confessing Incests: Legal Erasures and Literary Celebrations in Medieval France,’ *Comparative Literature Studies* 32 (1995): 280–95; Megan McLaughlin, “‘Abominable Mingling’: Father–Daughter Incest and the Law,’ *Medieval Feminist Newsletter* 24 (1997): 26–30.
 17. Leonardo Bruni, *De studiis et litteris* in *Humanist Educational Treatises*, ed. and trans. Craig Kallendorf (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 120–1 (with Latin in parallel). See also Coluccio Salutati, *Epistolario*, ed. Francesco Novati, part 1 (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano, 1905), 4: 194–6.
 18. Bodl. ms. Douce 29, fol. 60v, available on ARTStor and the Bodleian Image Library.
 19. Jaroslav Pelikan, ed., *Luther’s Works* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1961), 3: 294; on sodomy as Roman, see also 251–2, 254, 257, 268, 286, 293, 294–6 passim (all citations are to *Lectures on Genesis*, ch. 19).
 20. One drawing is of Lot rescued from the men of Sodom while a semi-naked youth stands seductively in the foreground; the other drawing shows angels leading Lot out of Sodom with naked men on display in the upper right. Both are in the British Museum (1923,0113.15 and 1923,0113.16).

21. Mary Coker Joslin and Carolyn Coker Joslin Watson, *The Egerton Genesis* (London and Toronto: The British Library and the University of Toronto Press, 2001), 84–7, plate 21, no. 65 and fig. 39 (fol. 11r).
22. Kind, ‘Drunken Lot,’ 141–2. For the London work see Max J. Friedländer, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, vol. 10, *Lucas van Leyden and Other Dutch Masters of His Time* (Leyden: Sijthoff, 1973), 87, plate 125; for Lot and his daughters set in a broader landscape, in paintings attributed to Lucas or anonymous artists, see 51–2, 82, 87, plates 92–3.
23. For example, Bosch’s triptych of c.1500–16 in the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, Lisbon; the joint work by Quentin Massys and Joachim Patinir of c.1520–24 in the Prado; Jan Wellens de Cock’s panel of c.1524 in the National Museum of Warsaw.
24. Max J. Friedländer, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, vol. 11, *The Antwerp Mannerists; Adriaen Ysenbrant* (Leyden: Sijthoff, 1974), 78 and plate 92.
25. For the importance of male semen, see Patricia Simons, *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
26. *Luther’s Works*, 3: 254.
27. *Luther’s Works*, 3: 249. Similarly, the destruction of Sodomites ‘began with their idleness and an overabundance of food’: *Fasciculus Morum. A Fourteenth-Century Preacher’s Handbook*, ed. and trans. Siegfried Wenzel (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989), 629.
28. Karel van Mander, *The Lives of the Illustrious Netherlandish and German Painters, from the first edition of the ‘Schilder-boeck’ (1603–1604)*, ed. and trans. Hessel Miedema (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1994), 1:455.
29. For Lot carved on a coconut cup in silver-gilt mounts constructed in Nuremberg before 1550 see Hannelore Müller, *The Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection: European Silver*, trans. P.S. Falla and Anna Somers Cocks (London: The Vendome Press, 1986), 128–31, no. 34 (accompanied by *Moses striking water from the rock* and *Jesus and the woman of Samaria*). A Dutch coconut cup in the Walters Art Museum depicting Lot warning that ‘Drunkenness is the root of all evil’ (57.1046); and several inscriptions offer similar warnings on a coconut cup with Lot, of 1533–34, by Hans van Amsterdam in the Metropolitan Museum (17.190.622a, b).
30. Musée du Louvre, R 312.
31. Arianne Faber Kolb, ‘Varieties of Repetition: “Trend” Versus “Brand” in Landscape Paintings by Joachim Patinir and His Workshop,’ *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 28 (1998): 167–200.
32. Lot and his daughters are about to exit the left side of the frame in a Haggadah of c.1350, which would have been read in their direction. For a colour illustration see *The Sarajevo Haggadah* (Sarajevo: Rabic, 2008), 14.

- At other times, the direction of right to left might result from the copying of another print.
33. Otto Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1949), 122, 169 n.444, 249, plate 104b; Ernst Kitzinger, *The Mosaics of Monreale* (Palermo: Flaccovio, 1960), fig. 42.
 34. The *linea Cristi* from Adam begins on fol. 9v. The Second Era begins with the building of Noah's ark at the top of fol. 11r and the vine for that period starts on fol. 14v.
 35. Layout also communicates a narrative in the first few pages of the Nuremberg Chronicle, where the world's creation emerges through time as the pages are turned and illustrations of the world's sphere become more detailed.
 36. Probably decorated in Paris c.1250 and now in the Pierpont Morgan Library: Sydney Cockerell, *Old Testament Miniatures. A Medieval Picture Book with 283 Paintings From The Creation to The Story of David* (New York: George Braziller, n.d.), fol. 4r, no. 24.
 37. For example, *Aelfric's Pentateuch*, of the second quarter of the eleventh century (British Library, Cotton ms. Claud. B. IV, fol. 32v); an English manuscript of c.1250 in the Walters Art Museum; Mellinkoff, 'Titian's Pastoral Scene,' 847, fig. 2; the Bible Picture Book of Canon Velislav of c.1340, Caviness, *Visualizing Women*, fig. 24; a German Universal Chronicle of c.1375–80, Mellinkoff, 848, fig. 4; another German chronicle of c.1400, Kunz, *Lotgeschichte*, 188, no. 95, fig. 11.
 38. The first passage is from a twelfth-century account, 'Innominatus VI (Pseudo-Beda),' ed. Wilhelm Neumann, *Oesterreichischer Vierteljahresschrift für katholische Theologie* 7 (1868): 407, trans. Aubrey Stewart in *The Library of the Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society* (London, 1894; repr., New York: AMS Press, 1971), 6:39, which is also one of many reports saying that traces of the pillar of salt were still visible. The phrase 'fece sobbissare' is from a Florentine pilgrim in 1384: Guglielmo Manzi, *Viaggio di Lionardo di Niccolò Frescobaldi Fiorentino in Egitto e in Terra Santa* (Rome, 1818), 158 (also 165, *sobissò*). The word 'verdroncken' (swallowed up, drowned) is used by a German pilgrim in the 1490s (Manzi, 185) and 'versoncken', absorbed or swallowed up (191).
 39. Luke 17:26–33, 'pluit ignem et sulphur de caelo, et omnes perdidit' at verse 29. For fire and brimstone, see also Revelation 9:17–18.
 40. Avril Henry, *Biblia Pauperum. A facsimile and edition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), 121, 123. See also *Biblia Pauperum* (Lucerne: Faksimile Verlag Luzerne, 1993), fol. 31 for an illumination of c.1405 by the Master of the Hours of Margaret of Cleves.
 41. Henry, *Biblia Pauperum*, 123.
 42. Leon Battista Alberti, 'On Painting' and 'On Sculpture', ed. and trans. Cecil Grayson (London: Phaidon, 1972), 80–83.

43. Verkerk, *Ashburnham Pentateuch*, fig. 20; a detail of the two cities is in Ehrenstein, *Alte Testament im Bild*, 158; Guisto de' Menabuoi's view in Padua's Baptistry (1376–78).
44. See the two German chronicles cited in n. 37.
45. Mountains are a place of safety at the Last Times: Matthew 24:16; Mark 13:14; Luke 21:21.
46. *Luther's Works*, 3:278–79; John Maxfield, *Luther's Lectures on Genesis and the Formation of Evangelical Identity* (Kirksville: Truman State University Press, 2008), 204.
47. *The Illustrated Bartsch*, vol. 83, *German Book Illustration before 1500*, part 4, *Anonymous Artists 1481–1482*, ed. Walter Strauss and John Spike (New York: Abaris, 1982).
48. See, for instance, the 1556 print after Marten van Heemskerck's design of *The Death of the Duke of Bourbon during the Sack of Rome* (British Museum 1868,0208.59) or the title page of a surgical manual, Hans von Gersdorff, *Feldbuch der Wundarzney* (Strassburg, 1528).
49. *Luther's Works*, 10:295; G.S. Taylor, *The Book of the Knight of La Tour-Landry* (London: John Hamilton, 1930), 100. Dürer designed a woodcut of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah for the latter book, the *Ritter vom Turn* (Basel, 1493): Erwin Panofsky, *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), 28–9, fig. 38.
50. J.R. Hale and J.M.A. Lindon, trans., and J.R. Hale, ed., *The Travel Journal of Antonio de Beatiss. Germany, Switzerland, The Low Countries, France and Italy, 1517–1518* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1979), 162.
51. Pietro Andrea Mattioli, *Il Magno Palazzo del Cardinale del Trento* (Venice: Francesco Marcolini, 1539), T iii verso—iv recto, and E iii verso on Luther.

Framing Warfare and Destruction
in Sixteenth-Century Netherlandish Prints:
The *Clades Judaeae Gentis* Series
by Maarten van Heemskerck

Dagmar Eichberger

The well-known Catholic painter and draftsman Maarten van Heemskerck (1498–1574) was one of the most prolific print designers of the sixteenth century. Van Heemskerck's drawings and prints depict a wide range of subjects: biblical stories and edifying religious themes, moral lessons and cosmic allegories, mythological and historical subjects.¹ In all, he produced 53 print series from the middle of the sixteenth century onwards. Like his fellow artists Hendrick Goltzius and Marten de Vos, Heemskerck specialised in illustrating the Bible.² Of the 38 Old Testament series that he designed, the majority focus on the lives of individual figures such as Jonah, Susanna, Gideon and Samson.³ These print sets usually consist of four, six, eight or ten images. One of the latest print series that he created stands out as it follows a very different path. The so-called *Clades Judaeae Gentis* series contains a much larger number of scenes, depicting 'noteworthy disasters encountered by the Jewish people'.⁴ This set of 22 sheets

D. Eichberger

Institut für Europäische Kunstgeschichte, Universität Heidelberg/The University of Heidelberg, Germany

was produced in 1569 by Maarten van Heemskerck and his partner, the Dutch engraver-publisher Philips Galle.⁵ Heemskerck must have regarded this series as one of his most important print productions, as he opens the series with an elaborate title page (Fig. 11.1).⁶

The *Clades Judaeae Gentis* series is much more complex in form and content than his earlier sets of engravings. In the explanatory text at the bottom of the title page, Heemskerck employs the term *libellus*, thereby pointing to the fact that the large number of prints could be studied like a ‘booklet’ or possibly even arranged as such. Instead of covering just one Old Testament hero portrayed through significant episodes from his life, this set provides a cross-section of the Old Testament by assembling numerous stories of destruction, human failure, death and disaster. The tragic fate of individuals such as Noah, Nimrod, Lot, Joshua, Samson, Omri and Jehu is combined with the destruction of individual cities such as Sodom, Babylon, Jericho, Ai and Jerusalem. The series also comprises scenes of idolatry and finishes with the desecration of the Jewish temple and the looting of its ritual furnishings. This unusually dense series of Old Testament narratives is complemented by a pair of New Testament



Fig. 11.1 Philips Galle (engraver), Maarten van Heemskerck (designer), *Noah's sacrifice*, engraving, c.1569. Kupferstich-Kabinett, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (Photo: Dirk Gedlich)

scenes towards the end, depicting the *Adoration of the Shepherds* and the *Adoration of the Magi*. In concordance with the chronology of events, the very last scene shows the destruction of the second temple of Jerusalem by Emperor Titus in 70 AD. From a Christian perspective this last occurrence sealed the fate of the Jewish people and signalled the start of the new era introduced by the advent of Christ.⁷

This chapter investigates how the notion of ‘tragedy’ or ‘disaster’ was interpreted in Heemskerck’s ambitious print series. It argues that the settings in this series correspond to the antiquarian mind-set that was prevalent in the humanist circles in which Heemskerck moved.⁸ The historical situation in the Netherlands during the last quarter of the sixteenth century was extremely volatile with the onset of the iconoclast movement in 1566 and the political repercussions that followed. So the question arises whether Heemskerck employs drama and emotion with the aim of stirring up and inciting the viewer, or whether he intentionally provides a more detached visual report in order to demonstrate how ancient civilizations such as that of the Jewish people might have perished.

On the title page of the *Clades Judaeae Gentis* series, the artist takes centre stage and presents himself as an erudite and widely travelled man.⁹ A shoulder-length portrait bust of him in a niche has been placed at the base of an antique column. Heemskerck is portrayed a second time as a draughtsman in the company of a builder, sketching the ruins of a historic site, as he did during his visit to Rome, some 30 years earlier.¹⁰ Arthur DiFuria has convincingly argued that there exists a close link between the ruins of ancient temples, arches and broken obelisks in the frontispiece and the Old Testament scenes that follow.¹¹ The ruins of grand building structures are used throughout the series as backdrops for biblical scenes, thus reminding the viewer of the downfall of entire tribes or people as described in the Old Testament.¹²

In order to more clearly understand Heemskerck’s treatment of human emotions in his representation of the disasters that befell the Jewish people, it is essential to grasp the internal structure of the image series in the *libellus*.¹³ The title page is followed by 18 episodes from the Old Testament. Heemskerck structured the sequence by combining either two scenes from the life of a central figure or by selecting two scenes from an important historical account. Starting with the Covenant that God made with Noah after the deluge, the Old Testament account finishes with the destruction of the first temple of Jerusalem.¹⁴ The last pair of images, the *Birth of Christ* and the *Adoration of the Magi* in prints 19 and 20, indicates an epochal change,

heralding a new era. The final scene in the series shows the destruction of the second Temple of Jerusalem by Emperor Titus as described by Flavius Josephus.¹⁵ The print series is clearly shaped by moral conflict, bitter disagreement and fierce battles, as experienced by the people of Israel and its neighbours prior to the coming of Christ. While many of the individual scenes have been depicted in earlier paintings, printed books or tapestries, the sequential arrangement under the heading MEMORABILIORES IVDAEAE GENTIS CLADES is new. Heemskerck's aim is to have the viewer clearly focus on the lessons of the terrible conflicts and disasters within the history of the Jewish people.

BIBLICAL PROTAGONISTS: CAUSES OR AGENTS OF DIVINE JUDGMENT

In many of the prints from this series, the story concerns a central male figure whose actions exemplify either good or bad behaviour, success or failure, honour or disgrace, victory or defeat. The protagonist is always placed in the foreground and forms part of the biblical narrative that is taking place in a vast historic setting within a sea of ruins.

The first pair of images shows *Noah's sacrifice after the Deluge* and the *Mocking of Noah by Cham*. The accompanying text explains that Noah prepares burnt offerings on the altar and that the smoke rises to the sky (Fig. 11.1).¹⁶ This moment is depicted in the lower left-hand corner. Noah, his wife and their three sons pray to God, who welcomes this gesture of repentance in the aftermath of the catastrophe. The scene is embedded into a landscape of disaster. Corpses and carcasses cover the ground, and the debris of a past civilization—columns, arches, vaults—is scattered across a deep landscape. In the background, two pyramids and the remains of a city are depicted at the foot of Mount Ararat. Noah's Ark sits on top of the mountain and a rainbow appears in the sky as a visual sign of God's forgiveness and his Covenant with Noah and every creature never to destroy the earth again with such a flood (Gen 9:8–17). When the smoke rises to the sky, the four survivors in the foreground express their gratitude and awe by bowing to the ground or by raising their hands towards God.

In the next print (Fig. 11.2), Noah's Ark appears a second time in the far background. Several women and children now inhabit the ancient ruins, whereas the men harvest grapes in a distant vineyard.¹⁷ In the foreground, Cham mocks his drunken father Noah while his brothers Shem and Japheth turn away in embarrassment. The respectful sons try to cover



Fig. 11.2 Philips Galle (engraver), Maarten van Heemskerck (designer), *The mocking of Noah*, engraving, 1569. Kupferstich-Kabinett, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (Photo: Dirk Gedlich)

up Noah's nakedness with a piece of cloth. As a consequence of Cham's transgression, his offspring Canaan will be punished by Noah. The pairing of these two scenes suggests that while mankind was given another chance by God after the deluge, sinful behaviour and lack of decorum soon gained ground again among Noah's children.

The second pair of images comments on human hubris by showing how King Nimrod, a direct descendant of Cham, built a tower that reached the clouds.¹⁸ As if shown in slow motion, the tower of Babel starts to break up in the first print and collapses entirely in the second. The king is depicted as a passive onlooker who watches the devastation while his workmen leave the forlorn site.

The destruction of an oversized tower of Babel is followed by the destruction of an entire city and its wicked inhabitants in prints 5 and 6. In print 5 the ancient city of Sodom with its triumphal arches, obelisks and circular buildings goes up in flames, while Lot and his family are guided out of town by an angel. A case of individual disobedience is demonstrated by Lot's wife, who disregards the instructions given by the angel and turns into a pillar of salt.¹⁹ Print 6 also alludes to depravity, and depicts the

incestuous union of Lot and his daughters, within a desolate landscape of architectural ruins devoid of any human beings.²⁰

The destruction of a biblical city is also the focal point in print 7, albeit for very different reasons.²¹ In this case, the people of Israel bring about the downfall of Jericho under the leadership of their military leader Joshua. With the support of God, the Israelites conquer and settle the land on the western side of the river Jordan. The second print from this pair shows the imminent dangers faced by the people of Israel through the story of a corrupt man who ignores the law and steals valuables from the banned city of Jericho.²² The culprit by the name of Achan is depicted twice in this print, firstly hiding his booty in a tent, and secondly, being stoned to death after having confessed his crime. Joshua is the dominant figure in the foreground, as it is his action that extinguishes God's wrath. After Joshua brings justice, the city of Ai is taken by his troops. The city is associated with idolatry by depicting an oversized cult image among the burning ruins. Ai—the Hebrew expression for a ‘heap of rubble’—alludes to the destructive force of this takeover.²³ The story of Joshua and the city of Ai is continued in prints 9 (Fig. 11.3) and 10, which depict the King of



Fig. 11.3 Philips Galle (engraver), Maarten van Heemskerck (designer), *The King of Ai hanged by Joshua*, engraving, 1569. Kupferstich-Kabinett, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (Photo: Dirk Gedlich)

Ai's death by hanging and his dishonourable burial.²⁴ The accompanying text underlines that the king was pale with fear when the chains were put around his neck. Two soldiers seem to cast a questioning look at his dead body and Joshua comments on his fate by pointing.

Prints 11 and 12 are dedicated to the triumph of Samson over the Philistines, a suicide attack that the Israelite pays for with his own death.²⁵ In the first print, blinded and enslaved Samson is guided by a young boy to the temple of Dagon, where the Philistines had intended to ridicule him while feasting. Samson is also shown inside the multi-storied building, grasping the two load-bearing columns and shattering the temple, thereby killing all the enemies inside. To the left of the collapsing structure, a young boy flees in horror, his arms thrown up in the air. While the first print depicts death and destruction, the second deviates from the usual pattern by paying homage to the much-admired hero. In contrast to the King of Ai, who was buried dishonourably under a heap of rubble, Samson is buried in state. His large body is laid out on a donkey and a long funerary cortege demonstrates the respect paid to him by his people.

In the case of Samson, it becomes apparent that the *Clades Judaeae Gentis* series does not exclusively address the failures of the Jewish people. Like the military leader Joshua, Samson is a predominantly positive figure who fights successfully against the enemies of his people. God had punished the Jews for their sins by making them subject to the Philistines. As Ilona van Tuinen argues, Samson contributed to the redemption of the Israelites by killing a large number of Philistines.²⁶ The giant-like leader who paid with his life to achieve redemption for his people is depicted as an upright man in the foreground. In comparison with alternative print series by Heemskerck, such as the six-part *Life of Samson*, there are no close-ups or gory details in the 1569 print.²⁷ Heemskerck does not present Samson's death as a sensational event but treats it in a rather restrained and quiet fashion. The depiction of his funeral also refrains from strong emotions: the participants quietly parade Samson's body through town.

The following double spread shows two scenes from the first book of Kings that are less well known and rarely depicted.²⁸ In both scenes the effects of war are noticeable: burning palaces and shattered buildings dominate the landscape. The central figure of these two scenes is Omri, the founder of a dynasty of kings who is involved in warfare, destruction and political conflict. King Zimri of Tirzah is described as an immoral ruler who conspires and commits many cruel murders before he is overcome by Omri. The Israelites reject him and opt instead for Omri as their new king.

When King Omri attacks the city of Tirzah, Zimri sets fire to his palace and dies in the flames. According to the bible, Zimri was punished by the Lord for his sins and for worshipping the Golden Calves.

The next scene shows another feud amongst the Jewish people who are divided between different leaders fighting for supremacy, in this case Tibni and Omri. While King Omri wins the upper hand, he is nevertheless described in the Old Testament as a ruler who adheres to worshipping idols, in particular the cult of the Golden Calves (1 Kings, 16:25–6; 2 Kings, 10:29).²⁹ His son Ahab and his daughter-in-law Jezebel actively support the cult of Baal and thus provoke the wrath of God.³⁰ These two pagan cults are referred to repeatedly in this print series, and thus idolatry is singled out as one important cause for the downfall of the Jewish people.

In the second book of Kings, Jehu is described as the ruler who eradicates the cult of Baal and kills all worshippers and priests that belong to the Omride dynasty (2 Kings 10:18–27).³¹ The moment in which King Jehu gives orders to destroy the cult image of Baal is depicted in print 15. Heemskerck refrains from showing the brutal slaughtering of Baal's followers and concentrates instead on the destruction of the colossal idol lying on the ground.³² Jehu watches the smashing of the pagan statue and the burning of the Baal sanctuary in the background. Print 16 shows Jehu in a less favourable light, supporting the sacrilegious cult of the Golden Calves in Bet-El and Dan (2 Kings 10:29).³³ In contrast to the temples of Baal, these altars remain intact and are spared from destruction. Jehu approaches the cult image in the company of a priest and a soldier and pays homage to the idol. King Jehu is thus an ambiguous figure prone to idol worship.

Already three years earlier, another print series designed by Maarten van Heemskerck had concentrated on the cult of Baal and Old Testament idolatry. In this ten-part series entitled 'The story of Daniel, Bel and the Dragon' (1565), the Old Testament hero Daniel uncovers the hypocrisy and fraud committed by the priests of Baal and their families.³⁴ Convinced by Daniel's arguments, King Cyrus condemns the clergy for their malpractice, and in print 6 demands the destruction of the statue of Baal. King Jehu and King Cyrus are thus two rulers who both eradicate pagan rituals in their territories, yet the emphasis of each print is different. While the 1565 series focuses on the virtuous Daniel who exposes clerical abuse, the *Clades Judaeae Gentis* series concentrates on King Jehu in order to stress his ambivalent behaviour towards pagan idols. To Heemskerck and his contemporaries, image worship and iconoclasm were vital, highly emotive issues at

a time of repeated outbreaks of violence in France and the Netherlands. The emphasis on the hypocritical behaviour of the priests of Baal in the 1565 series could be understood as criticism of contemporary clerical practice, for which both humanists and reformers castigated the Church. By comparison, the *Clades Judaeae Gentis* print series is less polemical. It does not point to the clergy as the culprits, but to the inconstancy of Jehu, who fails to obey God's strict orders and turns the temple precinct into a 'foul sewer' through his idolatry.

The last pair of images from the Old Testament cycle illustrates the destruction of Solomon's temple by the Chaldean army.³⁵ In print 17, the soldiers from the Babylonian empire remove the famous bronze columns and other valuable goods from the temple of Jerusalem. In print 18, the soldiers carry away more temple treasures such as Solomon's Brazen Sea, the famous bronze basin standing on 12 oxen made of brass.³⁶ Similar to the tower of Babel, the temple itself is dismantled step by step; first it is set on fire, then the walls are broken down by the Chaldeans, so that the inner sanctuary is laid open. The military commander in the foreground is Nebuzaradan, who served in the army of Nebuchadnezzar, then King of Babylon, and ordered the pillaging and burning of the entire city of Jerusalem, the temple, the palace and the houses (Jeremiah 52:15–23). The subtitle on print 18 refers explicitly to Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, whose idolatry annoyed God to such an extent that He called in Nebuchadnezzar to destroy the temple of Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 36:11–19). This pair of engravings marks the end to the story of the Israelites as it is told in the Old Testament.

As a coda to print 18, the final destruction of the temple of Solomon by the troops of Emperor Titus is portrayed in print 21, the very last image in the entire series (Fig. 11.4).

In keeping with the chronology of events, this last scene—taking place about 70 years after the birth of Christ—follows on from the two New Testament scenes. The subtitle informs us that it depicts the final destruction of Jerusalem: 'Having captured Solomon's Temple rich with offerings, Titus by the will of the most high, burns it to the ground'.³⁷ The text stresses that it is the will of God that brings about the downfall of the Jewish people and thereby emphasises the general theme of the series. The Latin text on the title page tells us that the reader can learn from the events portrayed in the print series both now and in the future.³⁸ In the eyes of sixteenth-century theologians, the Israelites were at fault because they did not recognise Christ as the Messiah who brought salvation to



Fig. 11.4 Philips Galle (engraver), Maarten van Heemskerec (designer), *The destruction of Jerusalem by Emperor Titus*, engraving, 1569. Kupferstich-Kabinett, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (Photo: Dirk Gedlich)



Fig. 11.5 Philips Galle (engraver), Maarten van Heemskerck (designer), *The adoration of the Magi*, engraving, 1569. Kupferstich-Kabinett, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (Photo: Dirk Gedlich)

the world. Catholics, Lutherans and Calvinists all agreed on this point and regarded the Jewish population with much suspicion. But before we look more closely at what exactly these stories were supposed to tell ‘the reader’, the two New Testament scenes need to be taken into account.

The *Birth of Christ* depicted in prints 19 and 20 indicates the onset of a new era in the history of the world and mankind. The event is recounted in two steps, the *Adoration of the Shepherds* and the *Adoration of the Magi* (Fig. 11.5).³⁹ In both scenes, the divine light issued by the star of Bethlehem shines on the Christ child. While the first scene is located in the ruins of a monumental building with a stone vault, the *Adoration of the Magi* is located in a majestic space with a spiral ramp that is fringed by classical columns. The new era is symbolically reflected in the style of a new building that looks intact compared to the other architectural structures.

Heemskerck’s intentions in devising this set of images have been understood quite differently. Most scholars emphasise the role of the images as moral exempla, and this is undoubtedly an important feature of many contemporary print series.⁴⁰ Eleanor Saunders additionally stresses the political relevance and the topicality of individual images and goes so far as to link individual motives with specific contemporary events.⁴¹ Arthur

DiFuria is more cautious in his interpretation and prefers to see the prints as a general warning against the dangers of human hubris and vanity.⁴² He pays particular attention to the remnants of classical architecture in Heemskerck's prints and reads these ruins as symbols of past civilizations that ceased to exist. DiFuria claims that the print series admonishes the viewer to recognise that a similar fate could easily befall the inhabitants of the Netherlands. Merel Groentjes' analysis of the ruins in Heemskerck's print series is different again: she sees the various states of decay as symbolic reflections on the eroding relationship between God and the Israelites and argues for a steady move towards the final end of the Old Covenant.⁴³

Looking at the print series as a whole, the rich panorama of stories portrays a people whose leaders are either reprimanded by God or are shown in a positive light. Samson and Joshua, for instance, have their shortcomings, but are nevertheless positive figures who stand out as virtuous military leaders. In many scenes, however, the Israelites face death and disaster. Pillage and destruction are the result of their sin and failure to obey God's commands: Nimrod and the tower of Babel exemplify human pride (prints 3 and 4); Lot's wife stands for disobedience (print 6); the King of Ai faced death because of his greed and ruthlessness (print 9—Fig. 11.3); Jehu's fight against pagan idols was only half-hearted (prints 15 and 16).

The choice of individual scenes is remarkable in many respects, as well-known biblical stories are combined with rarely depicted scenes from the Old Testament. Several images require a sound knowledge of the bible in order to understand the plot. It may well be that Heemskerck had specific contemporary incidents in mind when selecting these stories for his admonitory 'booklet', but this is difficult to substantiate. As Peter Arnade and others have shown, the 1560s were a dangerous and unstable period in the history of the Netherlands, a time in which the political allegiances of the nobility and the urban elites constantly changed.⁴⁴ All the allusions that Heemskerck may have incorporated into his prints remain oblique; and consequently there is room for interpretation. While Heemskerck was himself a devout Catholic, there are no obvious confessional markers that suggest an explicit stand in regard to religious matters. Again, these are features that are typical of many print series from this period.⁴⁵

MUTED EMOTIONS IN THE FACE OF DISASTERS

As mentioned earlier, the emotional atmosphere in Heemskerck's print series is rather cool and composed. In this context, the texts under each of the narrative prints deserve to be looked at more closely. The short subtitles summarise the relevant biblical story and serve as an aid in reading the images. It is remarkable that most of the texts remain at a very factual level and do not cast a judgment on the protagonists. The text for print 3, for instance, reads: 'This high tower of Babel falls, having been constructed with much strength of the people; it strikes the earth, and scatters many lives.' The text on print 5 is similar: 'Lot and his wife are led out of notorious Sodom together, and his wife acquires—see—the stiffness of hardened salt.' The profound grief of the Israelites over the death of their hero Samson on the other hand is clearly expressed in the subtitle: 'With a groan, the miserable corpse was entrusted to the earth, with his sad brothers accompanying the mourning funeral procession.' The subtitles throughout the series present emotions that are relatively muted rather than dramatic, looking ahead to the sort of neo-stoic approach to managing the emotions that would be developed most fully by Justus Lipsius in his *Constancy in Times of Public Calamity* (1583/4).⁴⁶

Given that the title page refers explicitly to the instructive value of this print series, the subtitles seem to fall somewhat short of this objective. One could go even further and say that the Latin texts adopt the style of a news report: short, informative, non-judgmental. Unfortunately, the identity of the author who devised these texts is not known. It could have been someone like Hadrianus Junius (1511–75) or Dirck Volckertsz. Coornhert (1522–90); both were erudite men who knew Latin, and had worked closely with Heemskerck on various printing projects.⁴⁷

Heemskerck interprets his role in this series as a visual artist who documents the history of the Jewish people as closely as possible to the narrative accounts found in the Bible. He evidently understood these scenes as historic events that took place a long time ago. This impression is also supported by the lack of drama in the faces, gestures and postures of the people portrayed. Heemskerck generally shows large groups of people and rarely focuses on individual suffering or painful death. In contrast to many of his earlier series, he consciously refrains from depicting strong emotions, even in the most dramatic and violent scenes such as the conquest of Ai or the destruction of the temple of Solomon. It seems as if the political events that followed the 1566 iconoclastic uprising and ended

in a civil war of major dimensions, may have prompted Heemskerck to search for a different tone for the prints in this series. He started drawing the first design for this series in 1567 and 1568, at a time when it was not clear how the measures taken by Margaret of Parma and the Duke of Alba would affect the lives of those living in the Netherlands. Instead of inciting and stirring the population up even more, Heemskerck may have intended to make his contemporaries reflect upon the perils that could endanger an ultimate return to a peaceful society.

In the same year the *Clades Judaeae Gentis* series was printed, Maarten van Heemskerck and Philips Galle produced a single print of considerably larger dimensions, *The Fall of Babylon*.⁴⁸ This image is based on chapter 18 of the Book of Revelation. In the foreground, two mighty men and their exotic entourage gather to experience the destruction of Babylon, an Assyrian city with a reputation for extreme depravity. The city is about to go up in flames; some of the taller monuments have already started to topple. The two angels in heaven are preparing to hurl a heavy millstone at the people gathering below (Revelation 18:21). It is no coincidence that the print series depicting the *Disasters of the Jewish people* was produced in the same year as this harrowing depiction of the fall of Babylon at the end of time. The latter print is distinctly admonishing in character and proffers a warning to the rulers of the world to consider what they are doing and change their ways, as honour, wealth and power are temporary goods that will have no value at the Last Judgment.

The Emperor, his wife and the dignitaries on the right hand side of the print have turned towards the viewer, so that one can see their faces expressing grave concern, fear and even horror. The crown of the Emperor has a shape similar to the mitre crown used by the Habsburg sovereigns, thus making a subtle reference to the ruling dynasty responsible for some of the conflicts in the Netherlands. The dignitaries on the left-hand side—most likely members of the clerical estate—equally express their anxiety through their gaping mouths, their terrified looks and their wildly gesturing arms and hands. The Latin text below the image reinforces the visual message by further intensifying the outburst of emotions:

Babylon, capital of the Assyrian race, falls with huge force, and it brings about a horrible ruin everywhere. A great numbness instantly strikes the astonished leaders. Kings in purple, sailors and the common crowd shudder at the terrifying prodigies of immediate danger, and, their cheeks bedewed with tears, bewail their bitter fortune.⁴⁹

It can be assumed that this large engraving was intended to appeal to the general public and the ruling powers in particular. With this eschatological image, Heemskerck urged his fellow citizens to take notice of the prophecies of future events as described in the Book of Revelation. Given that many of Heemskerck's contemporaries believed in the imminence of the Apocalypse, this danger was considered to be real and was thus much more tangible than the tragedies once faced by the Israelites. Natural disasters such as earthquakes, conflagrations and floods were read as premonitions of the imminent end, as God's punishment for mankind.⁵⁰ This may have motivated Heemskerck to create such a highly dramatic scenario in which the despair and the anxieties of the leaders of church and state became the principal subject of the image.

The *Clades Judaeae Gentis* series on the other hand, tells the story of a chosen people that fell out of favour with God. As the title page states, the reader can learn from those occurrences and can draw conclusions from what once happened to the Jewish people. Heemskerck treats this series like a visual documentary with short texts. Strong emotions are not his first priority in this series, as these images aim to convey historical information about the terrible things that happened to the Jewish people. The stories offer explanations as to what may have caused their downfall, namely pride, disobedience, greed, fraternal strife and heresy. Out of concern that his contemporaries might fall into the same trap and yield to worldly temptations, Heemskerck invents a different mode of representation for telling an old story. While the large engraving with the *Fall of Babel* is an image full of drama and emotion, the *Clades* series resorts to a much more restrained style of representation in which the artist first and foremost describes the vicissitudes that the Jewish people faced and the dire consequences this had for the peace of their community.

NOTES

1. Van Heemskerck served as churchwarden of St Bavo cathedral in Haarlem for the last 22 years of his life (1552–1774). *Oxford Art Online*, s.v. 'Maarten van Heemskerck' by Ilja M. Veldmann, accessed 12 June 2012, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com>; Ilja M. Veldman, *Maarten van Heemskerck and Dutch Humanism in the Sixteenth Century* (Maarssen: Schwartz, 1977); see also Hans-Martin Kaulbach and Reinhart Schleider, *'Der Welt Lauf'. Allegorische Graphikserien des Manierismus*, exh. cat., Staatsgalerie Stuttgart (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje, 1997). I wish to thank the

- following colleagues for their helpful comments and support: Roger Scott, Jennifer Spinks, Ilja Veldman and Charles Zika.
2. Peter van der Coelen, ed., *Patriarchs, Angels & Prophets. The Old Testament in Netherlandish printmaking from Lucas van Leyden to Rembrandt*, exh. cat. (Amsterdam: Museum Het Rembrandthuis, 1996), 13–15.
 3. Ilja M. Veldman, *Maarten van Heemskerck. Old Testament, including series with Old & New Testament subjects*, vol. 1 (Roosendaal: Koninklijke Van Poll, 1993); After completing this essay, an exhibition catalogue was published that concentrates on the Clades series: Marco Folin and Monica Preti, eds, *Les villes détruites de Maarten van Heemskerck. Images de ruines et conflits religieux dans les Pays-Bas au XVIIe siècle* (Paris: INHA, 2015).
 4. Inscription on the title-page: ‘DAMVS TIBI, BENIGNE LECTOR, VNO LIBELLO TANQVAM INSPECVLO EXHIBITAS, MEMORABILIORES IVDAEAE GENTIS CLADES, VT DELICTORVM SEMPER COMITES, ITA CVM PRAESENTI, TVM POSTERAE AETATI PRO EXEMPLIS FVTVRAS’; for the English translation see Frances C. E. Allitt, ‘Construction and Collapse on Paper: *Clades Judaeae Gentis* of Maarten van Heemskerck, 1569’ (BA Hons. thesis, Emory University, 2010), 16: ‘We give to you, dear reader, displayed [published] in one little book as though in a mirror, the vicissitudes of the Jewish people which are worth remembering, as now in the present so also in the future ages.’ The translations were done with support of Louise Pratt and Walter Melion.
 5. Maarten van Heemskerck designed the individual images for this series between 1567 and 1568, as we know from his signed and dated drawings in Copenhagen and Berlin. Based on these drawings, Philips Galle engraved the copper plates and published the prints in 1569. Veldman, *Maarten van Heemskerck*, 1:199–214; Jan Garff, *Tegninger af Maerten van Heemskerck. Den Kongelige Kobbertstiksamling Kopenhagen* (Copenhagen: Statens Museum for Kunst, 1971); <http://www.smk.dk/en/explore-the-art/search-smk/#q=heemskerck>; on Philipps Galle, see Manfred Sellink, ‘Philipps Galle (1537–1612): engraver and print publisher in Haarlem and Antwerp’ (PhD diss., University of Ghent, 1997), <https://biblio.ugent.be/publication/3161607>.
 6. According to Ilja Veldman, the idea of a title page only became a standard feature in printmaking much later with Crispijn de Passe, See Ilja M. Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe and his progeny (1564–1670), a century of print production* (Rotterdam: Sound and Vision Publ., 2001).
 7. The most recent publication on the series is Merel Groentjes, ‘CLADES JUDAEAE GENTIS: Patterns of Destruction,’ in *Imago Exegetica: Visual Images as Exegetical Instruments, 1400–1700*, ed. Walter Melion et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 509–41.

8. On humanism in the Netherlands see Francis Ribemont, ed., *Heemskerck et l'Humanisme*, exh. cat. (Rennes: Musée des Beaux-Arts, 2012); Ilja M. Veldman, 'Maarten van Heemskerck and Hadrianus Junius: the relationship between a painter and a humanist,' *Simiolus* 7 (1974): 35–54; Ilja M. Veldman, 'Maarten van Heemskerck en Italie,' *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 44 (1993): 125–42; Ilja M. Veldman, 'The "Roman sketchbooks" in Berlin and Maarten van Heemskerck's travel sketchbook,' in *Rom zeichnen. Maarten van Heemskerck 1532–1536/37*, ed. Tatjana Bartsch und Peter Seiler (Berlin: Gebrüder Mann, 2012), 11–23; Ilja M. Veldman, 'The Eternal Eye: Memory, Vision and Topography in Maarten van Heemskerck's Roman Ruin "Vedute",' in Bartsch and Seiler, *Rom zeichnen*, 157–70.
9. On the title page, see also the entry in Ribemont, *Heemskerck et l'humanisme*, cat. no. 1 (Olivia S. Sjöholm), 67; Hein-Thomas Schulze Altcapenberg, ed., *Disegno. Der Zeichner im Bild der Frühen Neuzeit*, exh. cat. Kupferstichkabinett Berlin (Florence: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2007), 150; Veldman, *Maarten van Heemskerck and Dutch humanism*, 111 and fig. 98.
10. Arthur J. DiFuria, 'Self-Fashioning and Ruination in a Print Series by Maerten van Heemskerck,' in *Culture figurative a confronto tra Fiandre e Italia dal XV al XVII secolo*, ed. Anna De Floriani and Maria Galassi (Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana, 2008), 117–25.
11. DiFuria, 'Self-Fashioning,' 120 and 123–4.
12. Arthur J. DiFuria, 'Remembering the Eternal in 1553: Maerten van Heemskerck,' in *Self-Portrait Before the Colosseum*, *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 59 (2010): 90–109.
13. These are the subjects and the consecutive numbers that have been given to each print: title-page, [1 and 2] *Noah's sacrifice & Cham mocking his drunken father Noah*, [3 and 4] *King Nimrod builds the Tower of Babel & The destruction of the Tower of Babel*, [5 and 6] *Lot and his family flee from Sodom & the drunken Lot is seduced by his daughters*, [7 and 8] *Joshua destroys the city of Jericho & The Destruction of the city of Ai*, *Joshua condemns Achan to death by stoning*, [9 and 10] *Joshua sentences the King of Ai to be hanged & the body of the King of Ai is disposed of outside the city walls*, [11 and 12] *Samson destroys the temple of the Philistines & The burial of Samson*, [13 and 14] *The capture of the city of Tirsah & conflict between King Tibni and King Omri*, [15 and 16] *The destruction of the temple of Baal & Jehu's idol worship in front of the altar of the Golden Calves*, [17 and 18] *The first temple of Jerusalem in flames & the looting of the first temple by the Chaldeans*, [19 and 20] *the Adoration of the Shepards & the Adoration of the Magi*, [21] *Emperor Titus destroys the second Temple of the Israelites*.
14. My numbering follows the Arabic numbers placed on the individual prints, as listed in Veldman, *Maarten van Heemskerck*, 1:199–203.

15. Flavius Josephus, *Der jüdische Krieg. De bello Iudaico*, bk.1 (Munich: Goldman, 1974), 1.
16. In the following notes, the transcriptions of the *tituli* (subtitles) are taken from Veldman, *Maarten van Heemskerck*, 1:200–3; (Genesis 8:20–22), no. 1: *Prima Noe imponit pingues holocausta per ara. Descrescente unda, penetravit ad aethera nidor*; Allitt, ‘Construction,’ 22: ‘First, Noah places a sacrifice at the fertile altars, At the weakening of the flood the aroma penetrated to the heavens.’ The scene of Noah’s covenant with God was very popular and featured in a tapestry series designed by Michiel Coxcie and woven by Willem de Pannemaker in 1567. The first edition of this tapestry series was designed for Emperor Philipp II, and another edition was made for his half-sister, Duchess Margaret of Parma in 1567. While Michiel Coxcie’s design focuses on the principal figures, namely God’s dialogue with Noah, the print by Heemskerck pays much more attention to the devastated landscape covered with debris.
17. (Genesis 9:21–3), no. 2: *Dormit in aprico multo Noe victus laccho, Et nudata patris Ridet Genitalia Chamus*; see Allitt, ‘Construction,’ 28: ‘Noah sleeps in the open air, having been conquered by Dionysus [Iaccho], And Ham [Chamus] laughs at the nudity of his father’.
18. (Genesis 11:4), no. 3: *En molem aedificant animisque, opibusque parati, Vertice quae nubis, et vertice tangeret astra*; Allitt, ‘Construction,’ 30: ‘Behold they build a structure having raised their strength and spirit’; (Genesis 11:5–9), no. 4: *Alta cadit Babylon multa constructa virum vi, Concutit haec terras, mortalia pectora sternit*; Allitt, ‘Construction,’ 31: ‘This high [tower] of Babel falls having been constructed with much strength of the people, It strikes the earth, [and] scatters many lives’. Neither the bible nor the *titulus* name Nimrod as the builder of the tower. Both Flavius Josephus in his *Antiquities of the Jews* (I,4,2) and the *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* name the king; see *Bibelwissenschaft.de: das wissenschaftliche Bibelportal der deutschen Bibelgesellschaft*, s.v. ‘Abraham 4.1.8,’ by Thomas Hieke, last modified January 2005, <http://www.bibelwissenschaft.de/stichwort/12288/>.
19. (Genesis 19:15–26), no. 5: *Duxitur e Sodoma Loth uxor et utraq[ue] nota Concretiq[ue] salis coniunx trahit ecce rigorem*; Allitt, ‘Construction,’ 32: ‘Lot and his wife are led out of notorious Sodom together, And his wife acquires—see—the stiffness of hardened salt’.
20. (Genesis 19:33–5), no. 6: *En pater (infandum) natarum amplexibus haeret Inscius diffusus nectare multo*; Allitt, ‘Construction,’ 33: ‘Behold (unspeakable) the father clings to his daughters with embraces, Unknowing, having been drunk with much nectar, he damages them’. For an in-depth analysis of this theme, see Patricia Simons’s essay in this volume.
21. (Joshua 6:12–20), no. 7: *Corruit Hiericho totam cum circuit urbem Arca Die, voce et populi, et clangore tubarum*; Allitt, ‘Construction,’ 37: ‘All of

Jericho collapses when he encircles the whole city with the Ark of God [the covenant], With both the voice of the people and the blast of the trumpet’.

22. See *Bibelwissenschaft.de*, s.v. ‘Achan,’ by Walter Dietrich, last modified January 2009, <http://www.bibelwissenschaft.de/stichwort/12348/>; (Joshua 7:25 and 8:19–20), no. 8: *Finit Achas vitam per sapa volantia avarus Huius quicquid erat multo consumitur igni*; Allitt, ‘Construction,’ 37: ‘Greedy Achas finishes life, stones flying through the air, Whatever there was of [the city] is being consumed by a great fire’.
23. See *Bibelwissenschaft.de*, s.v. ‘Ai,’ by Klaus Koenen, last modified October 2009, <http://www.bibelwissenschaft.de/stichwort/12877/>.
24. (Joshua 8:29), no. 9: *Nobilis ardit Hay (divino numine) capta. Regis et aptantur pallenti vincula collo*; Allitt, ‘Construction,’ 38: ‘The noble city of Hay having been captured is burning, And chains are put on the paling neck of the king’; (Joshua 8:29), no. 10: *Stipite de celso corpus iam exanguie refigunt Abiectum magno lapidum tumulatur acervo*; Allitt, ‘Construction,’ 39: ‘They take down the corpse now bloodless from the high post, the body thrown outside is buried beneath a great heap of rocks’.
25. (Judges 16:25–30), no. 11: *Vtramque implicuit dextra laevaue columnam Sampson. Et ingenti cedit domus alta ruina*; Allitt, ‘Construction,’ 42: ‘On the right side and the left side, Samson grasps both columns, And the great house tumbles into deep ruins’; (Judges 16:31), no. 12: *Cum gemitu mandatur humo miserabile corpus Supermum maesti fratres comitantur honorem*; Allitt, ‘Construction,’ 43: ‘With a groan, the miserable corpse was entrusted to the earth, With his sad brothers accompanying the mourning funeral procession’. On the various aspects of the figure of Samson, see Erasmus Gaß, ‘Vom Sunnyboy zum Selbstmordattentäter—Zur profanen und theologischen Simsonfigur,’ *Zeitschrift für Literatur- und Theatersoziologie* (2013): 47–70.
26. Ilona van Tuinen, ‘Struggles for Salvation. A Reconstruction and Interpretation of Maarten van Heemskerck’s Strong Men,’ (MA thesis, Amsterdam University, 2009), 63, <http://dare.uva.nl/cgi/arno/show.cgi?fid=158813>.
27. Philips Galle after Maarten van Heemskerck, *The life of Samson*, engraving, c.1560, no. 6: *Samson destroys the temple*, Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, accessed 12 January 2015, <http://diglib.hab.de/?grafik=graph-a1-783g-1>.
28. (1 Kings 16:17–19), no.13: *Hela cadit, regnat Zambri, qui milite cinctus Seque suamque domus rapidos coniecit in ignes*; Allitt, ‘Construction,’ 48: ‘Hela falls, [while] Zambri rules, who surrounded by an army throws both himself and his own house into swift flames’; (1 Kings 16:21), no. 14: *Scinditur Israhel, rex parte creatur utraque Pugnam ineunt, Thebni*

- succumbit praeualet Amri*; Allitt, 'Construction,' 49: 'Israel is divided, the king is created on both sides; they began the fight, Tibni gives way, Omri prevails'; see *Bibelwissenschaft.de*, s.v. 'Omri,' by Detlef Jericke, last modified March 2011, <http://www.bibelwissenschaft.de/de/stichwort/29644/>.
29. See *Bibelwissenschaft.de*, s.v. 'Goldenes Kalb,' by Klaus Koenen, last modified September 2005, <http://www.bibelwissenschaft.de/stichwort/19820/>.
30. See *Bibelwissenschaft.de*, s.v. 'Ahab,' by Thomas Wagner, last modified January 2007, <http://www.bibelwissenschaft.de/stichwort/12745/>.
31. See *Bibelwissenschaft.de*, s.v. 'Baal,' by Sebastian Grätz, esp. 4.2, last modified May 2006, <http://www.bibelwissenschaft.de/stichwort/14309/>.
32. (2 Kings 10:26–7), no. 15: *Grande Bahal numen fortis disiecit Iehu, Cunctaq(ue) combussit disiecit dona colossi*; Allitt, 'Construction,' 50: 'Jehu destroyed the strong Baal with great power, And burned all the gifts to the discarded colossus'.
33. (2 Kings 10:29–31), no. 16: *Areaque est temple in tetram mutate cloacam, Ape tamen dium vitulis decernit honorem*; Allitt, 'Construction,' 51: 'And the precinct of the temple was changed into a foul sewer, But he decreed that honor be paid to the calves of the gods in [their] apse'.
34. This print series was designed by Maarten van Heemskerck, engraved by Philips Galle and published by Theodoor Galle, see Veldman, *Maarten van Heemskerck*, 1:232.II; all prints from this series are held by the British Museum, London, accessed 15 February 2015, http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/.
35. See *Bibelwissenschaft.de*, s.v. 'Zerstörung Jerusalems (587 v. Chr.),' by Klaus Koenen, last modified January 2013, <http://www.bibelwissenschaft.de/de/stichwort/43966/>.
36. (2 Kings 25:9, 13–17, and see also 1 Kings 7:23–6), no. 17: *Dona auro gravia, et bases, binasque columnas Insultans patrias transfert Chaldaeus ad oras*; see Allitt, 'Construction,' 53: 'The heavy gold, gifts, and pedestals, and the columns two-by-two The mocking Chaldeans carried to their ancestral shore'; (2 Kings 25:10, 13–17), no. 18: *Sol nouies magnum se circumvolv-erat annum Sub te Sedechia vastatur machina temple*; Allitt, 'Construction,' 54: 'The sun had traveled nine times around the great ring (Under you, Sedechi) a siege laid waste to the temple'; on 'Sedechi' or *Zedekiah*, see *Bibelwissenschaft.de*, s.v. 'Zedechia,' by Klaus Koenen, last modified February 2013, <http://www.bibelwissenschaft.de/stichwort/35202/>.
37. Allitt, 'Construction,' 60; no. 21: *Titus habens Solymas, flammis radicitus vrit Et templum donis opulentum & numine summi*.
38. See note 5 for this text.
39. (Luke 2:16), no. 19: *Aeditus hic Christus, subsidet poplite Mater Adsunt pastores, fulua canit ales ab aethra*. Allitt, 'Construction,' 58: 'Christ is born to these, the Mother sinks to a knee, Here are the shepherds, an angel

- sings what is to come to the ether'. (Matthew 2:11), no. 20: *Stella notat congestum cespite culmen, Dona Magi puero portant Oriente profecti*; Allitt, 'Construction,' 59: 'The star marks the roof of the cottage heaped high with earth, The Magi bring the boy gifts, having set out from the East'.
40. Ilja M. Veldman, 'The Old Testament as a moral code,' in *Images for eye and soul: function and meaning in Netherlandish prints (1450–1650)* (Leiden: Primavera Pers, 2006), 119–50.
 41. Eleanor A. Saunders, 'Old Testament Subjects in the prints of Maarten van Heemskerck, "als een claere spiegele der tegenwoordige tijden,"' (PhD diss., Yale University, 1978), ch. 4 and 277–94; Frances C.E. Allitt is more interested in exegesis and in reading the images in their biblical context, see 'Construction,' 62–3.
 42. DiFuria, 'Self-Fashioning,' 126.
 43. Groentjes, 'CLADES JUDAEAE GENTIS,' 540–1.
 44. Peter Arnade, "'Faithful to the King to the Point of Beggary": Treasonous Elites and the Dutch Revolt,' (working paper 11-001, Northwestern University, The Roberta Buffett Center for International and Comparative Studies, May 2011), accessed 15 February 2015, http://www.bcics.northwestern.edu/documents/workingpapers/Keyman_11-001_Arnade.pdf.
 45. Walter Melion and James Clifton, eds., *Scripture for the Eyes. Bible Illustration in Netherlandish Prints of the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Museum of Biblical Art, 2009), 11.
 46. Justus Lipsius, *De Constantia Libri Duo: Qui Alloquium Praecipuè Continent in Publicis Malis* (Leiden: Christophe Plantin, 1583).
 47. Ilja M. Veldman, 'Maarten van Heemskerck and Hadrianus Junius: the relationship between a painter and a humanist,' *Simiolus* 7, no.1 (1974): 35–54; Ilja M. Veldman, 'Coornhert en de prentkunst,' in *Dirck Volckertszoon Coornhert. Dwars maar recht*, ed. Henk Bongers et al. (Zutphen: De Walburg Pers, 1989), 115–43, 178–9.
 48. Engraving, 23.8 × 41.3 cm, Metropolitan Museum, New York, accessed 5 January 2015, <http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online/search/429805>.
 49. The subtitle is a free interpretation of Revelation 18:9–17: 'Assyriae Babylon gentis caput impete vasto. Concidit, et foedam late trahit illa ruinam. Percutit attonitos proceres stupor illicet ingens. Purpurei Reges, nautae, vulgus que profanum horrescunt subiti miracula tremenda pericli, atque genus madidis fortem miserantur, acerbam.' I am grateful to Roger Scott for translating this text into English.
 50. See Jennifer Spinks, 'Signs that speak: Reporting the 1556 Comet across French and German Borders,' in *Religion, the Supernatural and Visual Culture in early Modern Europe*, ed. Jennifer Spinks and Dagmar Eichberger (Brill: Leiden, 2015), 212–39.

The Destruction of Magdeburg in 1631: The Art of a Disastrous Victory

Jeffrey Chipps Smith

I pity my own self, for wrinkles and deep furrows
Disfigure what was fair. My beauty's lost in sorrows,
Is beautiful no more. A grace that charmed the world,
The nations' brightest crown, in wretchedness is hurled ...
My song dies on my lips, my harp lies in the dust, ...
Rich stores are empty now, the cattle's strayed and lost,
Unploughed the fruitful fields, the pastures burnt and black ...¹

The female personification of Europe stands alone barefoot on a rock (Fig. 12.1). With unbound, dishevelled hair and dirty, torn clothes, she voices a lament about the quarrelling and warring of Europe's leaders. 'Peace is what we want, war is no good' reads one of the lines in Elias Rudel's accompanying text. The etching, made in Leipzig, shows Europa wounded by arrows amid the battling at right. The inclusion of a Jesuit priest signals the Catholic Church's role in stoking the conflict; however, both Protestants and Catholics are blamed in the text. Europa gazes pleadingly at the seated group of leaders who peacefully work out their differences. The reference is to the Leipzig Convent, a gathering of Protestant princes and city representatives in April 1631 organised by

J.C. Smith

Department of Art and Art History, The University of Texas, Austin, TX, USA

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Emotions in the Shadow of the Apocalypse, 1400–1700*,
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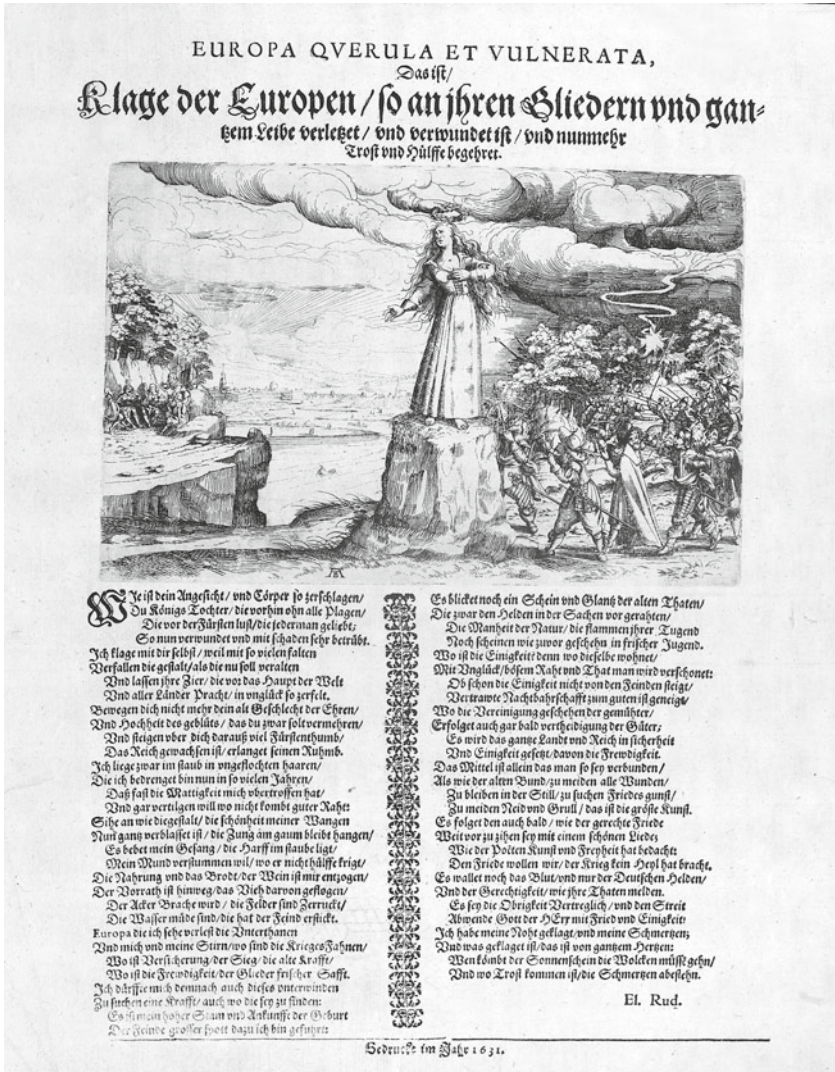


Fig. 12.1 Andreas Bretschneider, *Europe's complaint* (*Europa querula et vulnerata, Das ist Klage der Europen ...*) (Leipzig, 1631), etched broadsheet. Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel: IH 155

Johann Georg I, Elector of Saxony (r. 1611–56).² Using pictorial antithesis, the lightning bolt and dark storm clouds behind bode ill at right. But where peace prevails, the sun shines on a tranquil town. The hand of God places a laurel wreath on Europa's head, an image reminiscent of the rewards of a martyred saint. Unfortunately, despite her expectations, the Leipzig Convent failed and war raged on.

This broadsheet with its combination of image and text typifies how the popular media reported current events and disseminated often highly polemical propaganda or graphic satire. It also embodies something of the horror and hopelessness experienced by so many throughout the Thirty Years' War from 1618 to 1648.³ Single prints, broadsheets, pamphlets and newspapers, often illustrated, functioned much like a modern editorial with accompanying cartoon. These informed and provoked. Artists and authors, typically anonymous, stoked the emotions of their viewers and readers using visually engaging images and biting or, alternatively, laudatory texts often composed in amusing rhythms. This rhetoric of expression sensationalized contemporary events while also seeking to control emotionally how these occasions or individuals would be understood and remembered. News and images were often slanted or framed to reflect political and confessional biases. Yet for audiences, both in the seventeenth and twenty-first centuries, broadsheets provide invaluable documentation of momentous events. Often timed to coincide with particular stories, broadsheets had a short economic window. They had to sell quickly. Editions averaged between 300 and 500 impressions, but could be twice as large.⁴

This chapter focuses on one of the most infamous events of the Thirty Years' War—the destruction of Magdeburg on 20 May 1631 by imperial troops commanded by General Johann Tserclaes, Count of Tilly (1559–1632). I am fascinated by the role of the media in reporting on and rather quickly shaping reactions to this calamity. What should have been a crowning victory for Tilly and the Catholic League was rapidly reframed instead as a catastrophe and proof of Catholic and imperial barbarism. Most related pamphlets, prints and broadsheets were created by Protestant authors and artists in north German towns.⁵ Titles such as *Epitaphium und klägliche Grab-Schrift: Der inn aller Welt bekandten / jetzt verheert und verbrandten / Stadt Magdeburg (Epitaphium and pitiful epitaph: The known in all the world, now devastated and burned city Magdeburg)*, printed in Leipzig in 1631, were designed to attract attention.⁶ With a few exceptions, Catholics failed in this battle of the popular press to shape con-



Fig. 12.2 Matthäus Greuter, *Portrait of Count Jean Tserclaes de Tilly*, engraving, 1631. Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel: A 21990

temporary opinion. Matthäus Greuter’s engraving was published in Rome as an independent print, not a broadsheet, in 1631 (Fig. 12.2).⁷ A half-length portrait of Count Tilly, clad in armour, is framed by banners listing his military victories. Below, the general masters his rearing horse—a common trope in military and ruler scenes. The landscape behind signals his triumphs at Heidelberg, Mannheim and, most prominently, Magdeburg. The inscriptions, written in Italian and, secondarily, Latin, speak to a very different and more distant audience than the broadsheets written mainly

in German. In examining the textual and visual rhetoric of such broadsheets, I shall concentrate on four topics: the historical event and depictions of Magdeburg's ruin; the representations of Tilly as military leader; the wooing and rape of the Maiden of Magdeburg; and allegories of Tilly's defeat. All of these images, unless noted, date to 1631 and 1632, though some were reissued later.

Magdeburg is strategically situated at a bend in the Elbe River. Possessing then the only strong bridge in the middle and lower portions of the Elbe, the city benefited from its commercial trade and tax levies. With about 30,000 inhabitants, it was also the largest regional city and a Lutheran stronghold. In the mid-sixteenth century the Catholic archbishop of Magdeburg was replaced by a secular administrator, normally a Lutheran Brandenburg prince. As the armies of the Catholic League and Emperor Ferdinand II (r. 1619–37) battled the Protestants in northern Germany, control of Magdeburg with its bridge became critical, especially for resupplying troops. Tilly's predecessor, Albrecht von Wallenstein (1583–1634), occupied Magdeburg's episcopal territories in 1629. Initially, Wallenstein negotiated with the city council for controlling passage over the bridge.⁸ When this failed, imperial troops blockaded the city from the beginning of March until the end of September 1629, at which time Wallenstein decamped and marched his army toward the Baltic Sea. The city sought to remain officially neutral in the struggle between Protestant and Catholic forces. Yet in August 1630 its position changed. At the urging of Administrator Christian Wilhelm von Brandenburg (r. 1598–1631), who had secretly returned to the city, Magdeburg's council sided with the Protestants. A decisive factor was the arrival of Swedish King Gustavus Adolphus (r. 1617–32) and his forces in Mecklenburg two months earlier. This transformed the military contest in northern Germany. In November the energetic Swedish commander Dietrich von Falkenberg took over the defence of Magdeburg and the strengthening of its fortifications.

In late autumn 1630 the imperial troops, now under General Tilly's command, renewed the blockade of Magdeburg.⁹ The blockade became a siege, starting in March 1631.¹⁰ As seen in Daniel Mannasser of Augsburg's engraving, whose text proclaims its truthfulness, the imperial forces attacked, striking from all sides, early on the morning of 20 May (Fig. 12.3).¹¹

Approximately 18,000 troops under the commands of Tilly, Count Gottfried Heinrich of Pappenheim and Count Wolf of Mansfeld, stormed the city, which was protected by 2,500 regular soldiers and 5,000 citizens.¹²



Fig. 12.3 Daniel Manasser, *The destruction of Magdeburg*, engraving, 1631

The print shows the bombardment and the breaching of Magdeburg's walls. Bodies and debris fly into the sky while corpses float in the river. Fire rages in different neighbourhoods. From contemporary accounts, some fires were set intentionally, in the hope of diverting the city's defenders from fighting to saving their homes. Some commentators subsequently claimed Count Pappenheim ordered the fires. Unusually strong winds that morning whipped up the flames and by 10 a.m. the conflagration spread out of control. Tilly ordered his troops to stop plundering and try to put out the fire, since the goal was to capture Magdeburg intact. The city, however, was quickly reduced to smoke and ash. 1,700 of 1,900 buildings in the city burned. Fire coupled with the pitched battles within the walls claimed some 25,000 lives. 1,000 citizens survived by taking refuge in the cathedral and another 600 women and children found safety in the nearby Premonstratensian monastery, both of which were untouched by

fire. Mannasser records the basic features of the battle while stating that 30,000 souls died in just a few hours. The print frames the occasion as a victory for Count Tilly, who is portrayed at the upper left. Mannasser, like the producers of the later broadsheets, based his city view loosely upon the well-known print in Georg Braun and Franz Hogenberg's *Civitates orbis terrarum* of 1572.¹³

News of Magdeburg's destruction spread across Germany within days. The first illustrated broadsheets recorded the battle in a rather straightforward, non-political manner. One highly detailed broadsheet devoted three text columns to recounting the siege and battle (Fig. 12.4).¹⁴ A key explaining the print's letters and numbers identifies Neustadt, Altstadt and Sudenburg, the three main parts of town; major structures including the Rathaus, churches and city gates; and the stationing locations of the imperial troops. Count Pappenheim was quartered to the left or the north side by the Neustadt. The Count Mansfeld occupied the eastern bank of the river. Tilly's positions were to the west and south of Magdeburg. It shows fires beginning in Neustadt and in the sections along the Elbe. The death-toll is given in the broadsheet as 24,000.

This broadsheet was published with an addendum—a second print in the form of a flap or overlay, which records the physical damage.¹⁵ The crumbled walls at the far left indicate where imperial troops entered Neustadt. The print's impact is greatest in what it can no longer show. Many neighbourhoods were wholly obliterated. Only a few houses are summarily indicated. The quarter around the cathedral and the Premonstratensian monastery were spared. For a viewer now, and most probably then, the totality of the devastation must appear shocking. It brings to mind the images of European cities bombed during the Second World War.

At least 14 separate prints depicting the siege of Magdeburg are known, including one with an English text.¹⁶ Six replicate the basic image seen in Fig. 12.4 though with varying degrees of detail. While it is difficult to claim primacy or authorship for any one of these, the repetition demonstrates how a successful print was copied, often in a matter of days, and recopied or pirated, particularly when the story was of current newsworthiness. The sales potential was greatest in the days and weeks immediately after the event. In this case, the sheer scale of the human losses and physical devastation of the city was shocking. By recording the horrors of Magdeburg, the broadsheets may have intentionally, if indirectly, stoked fears that a similar calamity could befall any city caught in the grip of this war. The particular event offers an unsettling broader message about the uncertainties of life in a time of strife.



Fig. 12.4 Anonymous, *The capture and destruction of Magdeburg (Eigentlicher Abriss Auch Waarhaftiger Bericht ...)* (n.p., 1631), engraved broadsheet. Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel: 219.1 Quodl. (25a)



Fig. 12.5 Georg Köler (Cöler), *Equestrian Portrait of Johann Tserclaes, Count of Tilly, on Horseback before the City of Magdeburg*, engraving, 1631. British Library, London. © The British Library Board: 1750.b.29 (10)

A second category of prints and illustrated broadsheets focuses on Count Tilly. One group portrays the general on horseback (Fig. 12.5).¹⁷ Holding his staff and staring directly at the viewer, Tilly is in full command of beast and battle. Behind, his troops attack the burning city as viewed

from the east. The artist, Georg Köler of Nuremberg, used a generic formula for the victorious military leader. It corresponds closely with the earlier equestrian portrait of King Gustavus Adolphus capturing Stralsund in July 1630.¹⁸ The best version of Count Tilly's portrait is by a staunchly Catholic artist, Philipp Sadeler, active in Munich and closely associated with the Bavarian court and the Jesuits.¹⁹ The artists directed their prints to appropriate audiences. Two other variations of the Tilly portrait make slight adjustments. One adds the inscription, 'Wer kan wider Gott' (Who can [act] against God), a phrase or motto repeated in the text below.²⁰ This can be read as a justification for Tilly's appropriate retribution to the city for opposing God and the Catholic Church. An alternative version, in which the road behind the general is now littered with the dead while horsemen pursue the living, is hardly a scene of glory.²¹ It blames Count Tilly, not Magdeburg, for resisting God's will. The text above the general's head now reads, 'Ich hab ia mein bestes gethan. / Doch kont ich got nich widerstahn' (I have done my best. [Yet] I cannot resist God).

In another pro-Catholic print, Count Tilly is heralded as the victor in the shooting contest of 20 May (Fig. 12.6).²² The text states that his opponent, Gustavus Adolphus, was invited to participate but never showed up. The Swedish king gave excuses, such as not liking smoke because it hurt his eyes. This refers to Gustavus Adolphus's promise to defend Magdeburg against the imperial troops. In May 1631, however, he had not yet secured Elector Johann Georg I of Saxony as his ally. He also did not wish to battle Tilly without the support of the Saxon army. A pamphlet defending the king's inaction was published soon after the sack of the city.²³ In the middle ground of the print the administrator, identified in the text as the Swedish Field Marshall Ziller, points at a target decorated with the city's arms, while Dietrich von Falkenberg, here labelled as the *Pritschmeister* (or harlequin) who organised the festivities, lies dead. Falkenberg, who had been in charge of the city's defences, died during the siege. Tilly's aim is true, as Magdeburg burns in the background. His prize is the *Magdeburgisch Junckfreylein* or the Maiden of Magdeburg. Holding her wreath above her head, she is escorted to the general by mounted soldiers at right. The text's highly emotive language, more than the image, tells how Tilly is shocked by the sight of Magdeburg whose clothes have been soiled by Lutheran teachings.²⁴ He orders that she be given new 'snow-white garments in keeping with the old-standing of the Catholic religion to which she had previously adhered, and a clerk in orders [i.e. a priest] baptised her anew, Marienburg instead of Magdeburg, and so she shall



Fig. 12.6 Anonymous, *The shooting contest at Magdeburg* (Abbildung. Was gestalt Herr Graff von Tilly ... bey den Magdenburger gehalten Frey Shiessen den 20. May 1631. Das böste gewohnen) (n.p., 1631), etched broadsheet. Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel: IH 176a.

remain as long as it pleases God'.²⁵ The text is one of several mentioning the desire to rename Magdeburg as Marienburg after the Virgin Mary.²⁶ Enforcement of the Edicts of Restitution of 1629, which demanded that the episcopal dioceses of Magdeburg and Halberstadt be returned to the Catholic Church, was one of the primary justifications for Tilly's conquest of the city. The cathedral of St Moritz was formally re-consecrated for Catholic usage on 25 May, just four days after the battle.

As already observed, contemporary prints introduced two other significant protagonists in this contest of persuasion: the Maiden of Magdeburg and Gustavus Adolphus. The city's name, *Magd* or maid and *burg* or castle, inspired its adoption of a young virgin or maiden as its symbol. For centuries she had appeared on Magdeburg's coat of arms.²⁷ In 1631 she was presented as either prize or victim depending on the print's Catholic or Protestant bias. In one broadsheet the Maiden of Magdeburg, sitting on a cushioned bed, reaches out for help to the king of Sweden, the electors of Saxony and Brandenburg, the duke of Württemberg, and the imperial free cities.²⁸ She asks who will cure her sickness. The Protestants, whose responses appear in the text below, offer only empty vows of assistance. On the opposite side, Tilly and a group of soldiers stand in the foreground, while Emperor Ferdinand II, head in hand as if melancholic, looks on. Tilly claims that his commission on the Elbe was the good medicine that healed the maiden.

Far more popular, since it exists in eight different variations, is the lampoon about Tilly's wooing of the maiden and his matrimonial demands.²⁹ One version includes a satirical song sung by 22 different characters in which Magdeburg proclaims that she has love for only Gustavus Adolphus.³⁰ Count Pappenheim, as the best man, assures the Maiden that Tilly is her finest match. Tilly soothingly tells her that he has never taken love by force and that he will help her lose her pride and bring her to God and the emperor. Others hoping for their own gain, or to limit their losses, speak up in support of Tilly or another suitor, Gustavus Adolphus. The Swedish king stands next to her. The text mentions that he is known for taking what he wants, and he desires the Maiden. This interjects a sexualized rhetoric contrasting prideful Gustavus Adolphus's demands with the defenceless Maiden's physical subjugation. Some warn her about trusting a foreigner. The emperor states he will not allow her to marry anyone but Tilly. Here text and image do not always mesh, because the Maiden of Magdeburg dies suddenly and the wedding becomes a funeral, which elevates the presentation of this theme into a different emotional

register. The personification of the Imperial cities cries over the death of its sister while fretting about its own fate. The emperor reminds the cities of their sworn ties. Finally, God proclaims that the disobedient will be punished. This suggests the broadsheet has ultimately a Catholic slant in which Magdeburg's destruction was due to her disobedience and need to be disciplined.

Tilly's attack against Magdeburg was portrayed as rape, a horrible violation of the maiden's virginity. There was a long tradition of referring to lands as women and cities as maidens who often wear wreaths or floral crowns to signal their virginal state.³¹ In times of war, the maiden is wooed and, if unmoved by the words of her suitor, she is attacked and raped. The metaphorical rhetoric certainly played to the prevailing fears about actual sexual assaults then being carried out by soldiers on both sides of the conflict. Magdeburg's name prompted this allegory to be repeated over and over again in broadsheets and other published materials as well as in private letters, field reports, popular songs and personal diaries.³² When Elector Moritz of Saxony (r. 1547–53) ended his unsuccessful year-long siege of Magdeburg from September 1550 to November 1551, the city council secretary wrote of the Maiden: 'your head is rightly ringed with the victor's wreath. For your virginity could not be conquered by seductive arts, deception, threats or force of arms'.³³ During this siege, the newly erected statue of the Maiden with her wreath or crown placed over the main gate included the provocative motto 'Who will take it?'³⁴

At this time, Tilly was nicknamed Magdeburg's bridegroom. Protestant detractors mocked his advanced age of 72 by calling him an old goat and other less flattering names. Reportedly in the aftermath of his conquest of the city, Tilly personally chopped off the head of a statue of the Magdeburg maiden and exclaimed, 'you wench, you made things difficult enough for me before I took you, now I shall not spare you either'.³⁵ A text published on 1 June 1631 in Halberstadt recounted a different sort of subjugation.³⁶ Tilly ordered an image of the Magdeburg Maiden holding her wreath to be placed under the feet of a representation of the Virgin Mary holding the Christ Child. In a report to imperial officials in Vienna, Tilly described the city's fortifications as formerly virgin, meaning unbreached.³⁷ Referring to its former Protestant state, Count Pappenheim exclaimed, 'Praise God in all eternity, Magdeburg is quenched, and its virginity is no more'.³⁸ This comment, made a day after the city's conquest, was repeatedly quoted in the Catholic press, which recognized the emotional power of such metaphors. Like so many civic sieges, the imperial victory resulted in the actual

violation of women and children in Magdeburg.³⁹ One propaganda text reported how a soldier bragged that he hacked the Magdeburg Maiden on one of the city's gates and that he also violated a 13 or 14-year old girl.⁴⁰ Documented incidents and rumours of much worse, coupled with the city's historic association with a maiden, made the conquest of Magdeburg all the more infamous and emotionally charged, engendering disgust and fear in the eyes of contemporaries.

The lament of the Magdeburg Lady broadsheet exists in at least five different printings.⁴¹ The full title is *The mournful marriage of the Lady of Magdeburg, celebrated this 10 May 1631 with her blood-thirsty bridegroom, Tilly*.⁴² In the etching, General Tilly and the maiden appear on a hill overlooking the city, here labelled 'Magdeburg before the conquest'. Tilly offers her his left, not right, hand. She refuses and stands apart. The maiden removes her crown of virginity in favour of the heavenly crown being offered by the hand of God. The accompanying biblical texts provide her comfort. These tell Magdeburg that 'the Lord will make you free from the hands of your haters' (Micah 4:10) and—anticipating the Day of Judgment—'Be true till death and I will give you the crown of life' (Revelation 2:10). By contrast, the text below tells how Magdeburg refused to partake of the wedding meal, which instead of wine and sweetmeats offered human blood and rotting flesh. The Maiden, presented as unshakable in her Protestant faith, is told that the 'Virginity of the Soul' is above physical violence. The text ends with a chronogram that 'exhorts those to whom God's Word is known, to remain unswervingly true to it and not to pervert it in any way'.⁴³

After her destruction, Magdeburg dies. Or does she? The maiden is a martyr for her Protestant faith. Contemporary literature contains numerous references to Magdeburg as the Lutheran Lucretia.⁴⁴ One of the foundational myths of the ancient Roman republic tells how Lucretia, raped by Sextus Tarquinius, son of the tyrant, demanded revenge by her kin and civic officials before she committed suicide to salvage her honour. Reports circulated that some Magdeburg women threw themselves into the Elbe to escape subjugation by Tilly's troops.⁴⁵ Their suicides, like Lucretia's, hopefully would inspire Protestant forces to defeat Tilly and the Catholic League. One account even made the claim that while 11,000 virgin martyrs died with St Ursula at Cologne, 30,000 Protestant martyrs were murdered in Magdeburg.⁴⁶

In a broadsheet dated 1631 Magdeburg lies in her coffin on her funerary bier.⁴⁷ At first glance she appears dead. Indeed there were contempo-

rary texts lamenting her death. Diederich von dem Werder's *Sorrowful song over the lamentable destruction of the praiseworthy and ancient city of Magdeburg* bitterly damns Tilly, the 'raging old dog'.⁴⁸ He writes,

The golden crown of honour, the virgin wreath upon your yellow hair: now you lie stretched out, a murdered bride, completely covered with iron, ash and blood, horrible, pale, burnt, swollen, stinking, black, obscene and violated. Violated also by rape, so destroyed by rape that the sun is horrified, the earth is shocked, even heaven is appalled. Wanton lecher, the three whores of hell would be your rightful brides: even Pluto's wife was not abducted with so much fire and murder. You old bald-head, you deserve that Charon's ship take you straight into his abyss.⁴⁹

Yet the broadsheet's title proclaims provocatively that the Maiden is not dead, in spite of one's initial reaction to the print's visual imagery, just asleep.⁵⁰ Her head, resting on a pillow, is crowned with a wreath of flowers. The text reminds the reader, 'The Virgin makes the crown / A crown does not a Virgin make'.⁵¹ Magdeburg grasps the bare roots of a tree, which seems to grow from the wreath clutched in her right hand. Its branches are laden with weapons and armour, sharp new fruits that will someday be wielded against those who caused her harm. This signals a new beginning or new growth for the city, faintly viewed behind, which will rise again like the radiant sun at right. The broadsheet manipulates one's emotions from sorrow over the Maiden's apparent death to hopefulness about her future life.

Allegories of Tilly's threat and ultimate defeat assumed different forms. *A short but sharp A B C*, much like Aesop's *Fables* or the tales of Renard the Fox, uses animals to convey its moral.⁵² A mouse (Magdeburg), lured into an open trap, faces certain death by the cat (General Tilly) if it tries to flee. A fox (likely either France or the elector of Saxony) urges the mouse to flee, but can offer no help since it is chained. The conclusion appears in another closely related broadsheet.⁵³ Here, as Magdeburg burns in the background, the fox says, 'A cat that's so ill he's forgotten the mice / He's fighting death, because he's eaten a sharp mouse.'⁵⁴ Surprised, the cat bemoans his fate: 'O misery, great need, my powers are fading / I've killed many mice and destroyed their holes / But I've never been so weakened before / Oh what can this be, it serves me right / Because what I have just done to others / (some were innocent, others much grieved for) / Is now being done to me'⁵⁵ This version likely appeared after Tilly's defeat at

the battle of Breitenfeld outside Leipzig on 17 September 1631, where he was wounded.⁵⁶ At right the rodents or rebellious Protestant towns are working together. In one version of the print, the Swedish lion is included beside them as their protector.⁵⁷

With the Swedish armies now fully engaged, Tilly never enjoyed another major triumph after Magdeburg. In one broadsheet, Gustavus Adolphus is portrayed as an archer.⁵⁸ His arrow has found its mark—a hawk identified as Tilly of the League, who has attacked but not killed the defenceless dove labelled the Christian Church. Freed from its captor, the dove in synchronistic fashion flies upward toward God, who is rendered as the Tetragrammaton amid the radiant sun. Divine light shines on the small church in the background and toward the king. The text clearly presents Gustavus Adolphus as the protector of the true Church.

As the Swedish king and his allies marched through northern Germany to the Rhine in 1631 and early 1632, they conquered town after town formerly held by the Catholics. One broadsheet shows the seated pope with broken keys and sword, a reference to the Roman Church's claim to have the authority to bind and loose—that is, to control access to heaven.⁵⁹ The Jesuit father behind him counsels 'Peace, Peace'. Opposite, the Swedish king, using a long pole, forces the bloated pontiff to regurgitate 50 towns and territories. Accompanied by his lion, with its paw placed on a compass, Gustavus Adolphus demands, 'Spit out, priest, what you have eaten, so that your stomach will have no burden'.⁶⁰ The pontiff complains, 'The Swede's power and his good fortune holds my compass back'.⁶¹ That is, the Catholic forces have lost their direction. In one version of the print, Mannheim is the last conquest. Here, however, the latest Protestant triumph is Magdeburg. Both towns were sites of Tilly's past victories. On 8 January 1632 Magdeburg was given over to Gustavus Adolphus, who placed the city under the care of General Johan Baner.⁶²

One of the more unusual broadsheets is titled *Magdeburg lye* (Fig. 12.7).⁶³ Lye, a major ingredient in soap and cleaners, is made by allowing water to wash through wood ash. The ashes of Magdeburg inspired this allegory of cleansing. The letters are keyed to the text. As Magdeburg burns, young and old die (A). The city's coat of arms with the Maiden appears prominently on the gate. God sends angels to help the poor and to gather up women's tears (B). Sacks filled with hot ash are brought to the angels who empty these in a large pile (C). Ash and the water of tears are mixed to make lye (D). The lye is placed in a row of dishes (E).



Fig. 12.7 Anonymous, *Magdeburg lye (Magdenburger Laug)* (n.p., c.1632), etched broadsheet. British Library, London. © The British Library Board: Crach.1.Tab.4.c.1 (14)

God's chosen physician, Gustavus Adolphus, oversees the operation (F). His medicine, the lye, is applied to remove all Catholic impurities (G). The Jesuits and others trying to flee are caught (H). They recognise their errors and God's grace (I). Thereupon, the pious kneel and praise the eternal God (K). God, again in the form of the Tetragrammaton, appears within

the radiant sun. Under the support of the Swedish king, Magdeburg is purified of its false Catholic faith.

The visual rhetoric of these prints and broadsheets typically was quite straightforward and tied to popular culture through language and/or imagery. Stereotypes based on long histories of strong feelings and conflicts were widely used by Protestants and Catholics alike. Let us end with a gypsy fortune teller. *Tilly's luck* depicts the general standing outside the burning city of Magdeburg, whose cathedral appears at left (Fig. 12.8).⁶⁴ A turbaned soothsayer, flanked by an infant, holds Tilly's right hand in her left. In the text, which is structured as a dialogue between the two, the gypsy promises to tell the truth as she reads his palm. Near the end of the session, she remarks, 'Your hand is completely and not at all good. It shows you have bad trouble'.⁶⁵ She ends by telling Tilly that because of his bad or crossed luck he will lose the lands of Mark, Pomerania, Mecklenburg, Franconia, Saxony and Bohemia.⁶⁶ The broadsheet likely dates to the beginning of 1632 when Tilly's losses were mounting.

The destruction of Magdeburg on 20 May 1631 is an historical fact. The recording of the conquest and the portrayals of its protagonists, however, were shaped by the political and confessional biases of its reporters. The framing of the events through the print media sought to influence reactions. Was the conquest of Magdeburg a great military triumph for General Tilly? Had the tide of the Thirty Years' War not shifted with the arrival of the Swedish king and his army, perhaps the siege of Magdeburg might have been memorialised in paintings by Rubens or another great artist as the defining moment when the Protestant rebellion against the emperor and the Roman Catholic Church was broken. As foretold by the gypsy, this was not to be General Tilly's fate. The victory at Magdeburg was a disaster militarily since the city and its populace were decimated, however unintentionally. The conquest was quickly allegorised. Tilly, the old bridegroom, wooed the Maiden back to the true faith through his tough discipline. Or, alternatively, he raped the Maiden. Actual events on the ground in 1631 moved so quickly that memories of most sieges and skirmishes are lost. Yet even the critical Protestant victory at the battle of Breitenfeld just months later generated far fewer broadsheets than Magdeburg. The destruction of the city was horrifying even by the brutal standards of the day. Then and still today, the histories of Magdeburg and its conqueror are joined. Perhaps then it is not surprising that one broadsheet, published in Magdeburg, announcing General Tilly's death on 30 April 1632 ran the headline or title *Heimführung Deß Magdeburgischen Hochzeitlers* or *The repatriation of the Magdeburg bridegroom*.⁶⁷

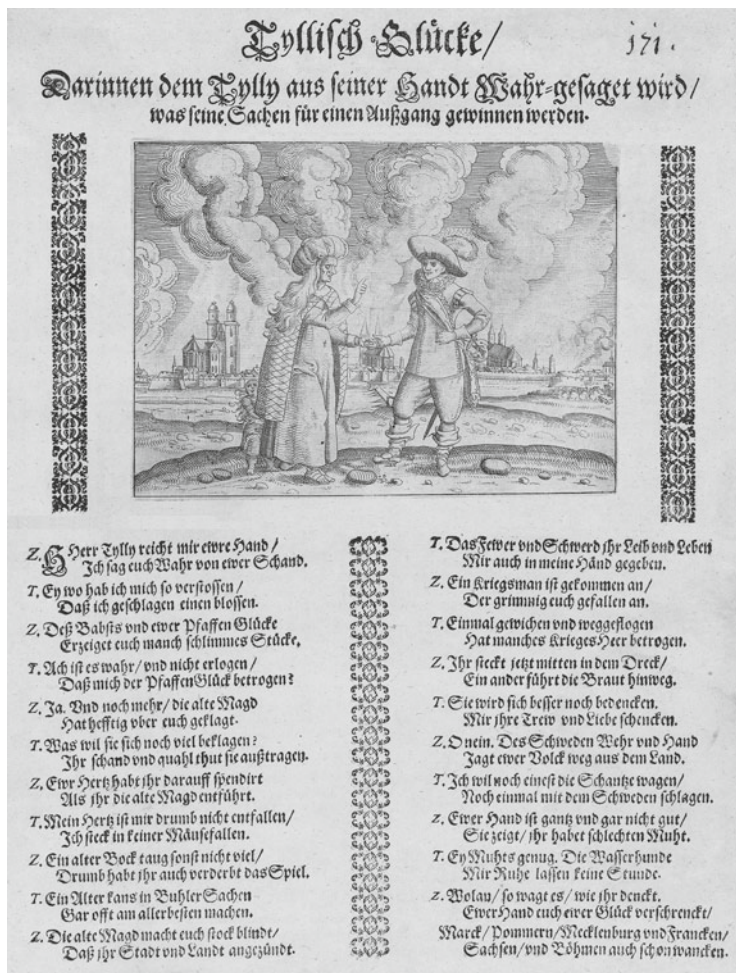


Fig. 12.8 Anonymous, *Tilly's luck* (*Tyllisch Glücke*. Darinnen dem Tyllly aus seiner Handt Wahr-gesaget wird / was seine Sachen für einen Außgang gewinnen werden) (n.p., c.1631–32), etched broadsheet. Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Hamburg: Scrin. C/22, 171

NOTES

1. 'Ich klage mit dir selbst weil mit so vielen falten/Verfallen die gestalt als die nu soll veralten/Und lassen ihre Zier die vor das Haupt der Welt/Und aller Länder Pracht/in unglück so zerfelt. [...] Es bebet mein Gesang/die Harff im staube ligt [...] Der Vorrath ist hinweg/das Vieh darvon geflogen/Der Acker Brache wird/die Felder sind Zerruckt [...].' W. A. Coupe, *German Political Satires from the Reformation to the Second World War*, Part 1 1500–1848, 2 vols (White Plains: Kraus, 1993), 177–8 (with partial translation as cited here), no. 1.156; John Roger Paas, 'The Changing Image of Gustavus Adolphus on German Broadsheets, 1630–3,' *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 59 (1996): 205–44, here 220, fig. 68; John Roger Paas, *The German Political Broadsheet 1600–1700* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1996), 5: P-1306. All translations are my own unless otherwise specified.
2. The elector hoped to thwart a Protestant alliance with King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden. Peter H. Wilson, *The Thirty Years War—Europe's Tragedy* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), 465–7.
3. See also Sigrun Haude's essay in the present volume.
4. Wolfgang Harms et al., eds., *Illustrierte Flugblätter des Barock. Eine Auswahl* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1983), xii; Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 1:25.
5. Wilhelm Kühlmann, 'War and Peace in the Literature of the Seventeenth Century,' in *1648—War and Peace in Europe, Essays II. Art and Culture*, ed. Klaus Bussmann and Heinz Schilling (Münster: s.n., 1998), 329–38, esp. 330.
6. Sächsische Landes- und Universitätsbibliothek, Dresden, Hist. Germ.C.548, 81.
7. Matthias Puhle, ed., *Die Welt im leeren Raum. Otto von Guericke 1602–1686*, exh. cat., Kulturhistorisches Museum Magdeburg (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2002), 256–7, no. 93.
8. Bernhard Mai, 'Die befestigte Stadt Magdeburg im 17. Jahrhundert. Von der frühneuzeitlichen Stadtbefestigung zur Brandenburg-preußischen Festung,' in Puhle, *Die Welt im leeren Raum*, 56–65, esp. 60–61.
9. Wilson, *Europe's Tragedy*, 467–70.
10. Puhle, *Die Welt im leeren Raum*, 258–9, no. 95.
11. The battle's date is sometimes given as 10 May, based on the old-style Julian calendar, rather than 20 May in the new Gregorian calendar. Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1346; Matthias Puhle, ed., *Magdeburg in Bildern von 1492 bis in 20. Jahrhundert*, exh. cat., Kulturhistorisches Museum Magdeburg (Magdeburg: Magdeburger Museen, 1997), 243,

- no. 243; Hans Medick, 'Historisches Ereignis und zeitgenössische Erfahrung: Die Eroberung und Zerstörung Magdeburgs,' in *Zwischen Alltag und Katastrophe. Der Dreißigjährige Krieg aus der Nähe*, ed. Hans Medick and Benigna von Krusenstjern (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999), 377–407, here 387, fig. 1.
12. The estimates of the numbers of troops and defenders vary widely.
 13. Matthias Puhle, *Magdeburg 1200* (Stuttgart: Theiss, 2005), 166, fig. 5.46.
 14. Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1338; Puhle, '...gantz verheert!': *Magdeburg und der Dreißigjährige Krieg*, exh. cat. Kulturhistorischen Museums Magdeburg in Kunstmuseum Kloster Unser Lieben Frauen (Halle/Salle: Mitteldeutscher Verlag, 1998), 242–3, no. 238.
 15. See note 14 and Puhle, *Magdeburg und der Dreißigjährige Krieg*, 243, no. 239.
 16. Paas, 'Changing Image,' 222 says the low number of extant broadsheets suggests the printings were not so numerous. Wolfgang Harms and Michael Schilling, *Deutsche illustrierte Flugblätter des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts. Die Sammlung der Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel* (Munich: Kraus, 1980 and Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1985–9), 2:403–6, nos. 229–32; Paas *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1335–7, 1339–42; Puhle, *Magdeburg und der Dreißigjährige Krieg*, 245, no. 242.
 17. Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1351.
 18. Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1273–5, 1312.
 19. Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1348.
 20. Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1350; Puhle, *Magdeburg und der Dreißigjährige Krieg*, 236, no. 229.
 21. Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1349.
 22. Coupe, *German Political Satires*, 185–6, no. I.162; Harms and Schilling, *Deutsche illustrierte Flugblätter*, 2:410, no. 235; Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1353; Puhle, *Magdeburg und der Dreißigjährige Krieg*, 253–4, no. 257.
 23. Klaus Bussmann and Heinz Schilling, eds., *1648—War and Peace in Europe—Catalogue*, exh. cat., Westfälisches Landesmuseum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte, Münster and Kulturgeschichtliches Museum and the Kunsthalle Dominikanerkirche, Osnabrück (Münster: s.n., 1998), 364, no. 1038. On the Swedish justifications, see Wolfgang Harms, 'Einige Funktionalisierungen von biblischen Texten auf historisch-politischen illustrierten Flugblättern der frühen Neuzeit,' *German Life and Letters* 48 (1995): 264–76; Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1363–7, 1455–7.
 24. 'Braut, deren dan laider/durch Lutters Lehr besudelt die Klaider.'
 25. '... zklaiden schneweis nach alten standt Catolisch Religion der sie vor disem wahr vnderthon, vnd ein Ordens Person gleichweist getaufft, viin

- Magde: iozt Marienburg haist, darbey vortan erhalten soll werden so lang Gott gnadet hio auf Erden.' Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1353; Coupe, *German Political Satires*, 186 (with translation).
26. On the name Marienburg, see Martin Knauer, "... Das Mägdlein ist nicht todt, sondern es schläfft...": Die Eroberung Magdeburgs als heilsgeschichtliches Ereignis,' in Puhle, *Magdeburg und der Dreißigjährige Krieg*, 71–9, esp. 76; Birgit Emich, 'Bilder einer Hochzeit. Die Zerstörung Magdeburgs 1631 zwischen Konstruktion, (Inter-)Medialität und Performanz,' in *Kriegs/Bilder in Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit*, ed. Birgit Emich and Gabriela Signori (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2009), 197–235, here 206–8.
 27. Puhle, *Magdeburg 1200*, 102, 130, 165, figs 4.1, 4.53, 5.42; Emich, 'Bilder einer Hochzeit,' 211.
 28. Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1354.
 29. Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1358, also 1355–7, 1359–62.
 30. Coupe, *German Political Satires*, 187–8, no. I.164; Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1355; Knauer, '... Das Mägdlein,' 74–6. I wish to thank Una McIlvenna who has identified the print's reference to a Danish battle, as likely Tilly's victory over Christian IV, king of Denmark, on 27 August 1626 at the Battle of Lutter. The broadsheet's parts were to be sung to the tune of the *Wilhelmuslied*, also called *Dannemarkische Schlact*, a popular song about William of Orange. See Chapter 13 by her in the present volume.
 31. Ulinka Rublack, 'Wench and Maiden: Women, War and the Pictorial Function of the Feminine in German Cities in the Early Modern Period,' *History Workshop Journal* 44 (1997): 1–21, esp. 1–4; Mara R. Wade, 'Reading Rape: Gendered Discourses of Sexual Violence. Grimmelshausen and the Sack of Magdeburg,' in *Ethik—Geschlecht—Medizin*, ed. Waltraud Ernst (Münster: LIT, 2010), 17–39.
 32. Harms and Schilling, *Deutsche illustrierte Flugblätter*, 3: 294–5, no. 151; Puhle, *Magdeburg und der Dreißigjährige Krieg*, 145–6, no. 57; Knauer, '... Das Mägdlein,' illustration on 73; Eberhard Nehlsen, 'Song Publishing during the Thirty Years' War,' in Bussmann and Schilling, *1648—Essay II*, 431–7, esp. 433. New lyrics were often added to existing tunes. The sacking of Magdeburg ('O Magdeburg du schöne Stadt/verbrunnen und zerstöret') refers to the sad song *An Wasserflüssen Babylon* (1631), whose tune should be used when sung.
 33. Rublack, 'Wench and Maiden,' 2.
 34. W. A. Coupe, *The German Illustrated Broadsheet in the Seventeenth Century* (Baden-Baden: Heitz, 1966), 1: 117–18.
 35. Rublack, 'Wench and Maiden,' 3.
 36. Emich, 'Bilder einer Hochzeit,' 229.

37. Medick, 'Historisches Ereignis,' 382–3.
38. 'Die hoffart Magdeburg(s) ist ... gedempft vnd ihre jungfrawschafft him wech.' Emich, 'Bilder einer Hochzeit,' 214; also Rublack, 'Wench and Maiden,' 3.
39. Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1347. In this broadsheet soldiers drag different groups of unwilling young 'women and virgins,' as the text key states, from the city to their camp.
40. Emich, 'Bilder einer Hochzeit,' 229.
41. Coupe, *German Political Satires*, 184–5, no. I.161; Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1363–7; Puhle, *Magdeburg und der Dreißigjährige Krieg*, 255, no. 259; Emich, 'Bilder einer Hochzeit,' 208–9.
42. *Klägliches Beylager er Magdeburgischen Dame/so sie den 10. May dieses 1631. Jahres/mit ihrem Blutdürstigen Gemahl/dem Tilly gehalten.*
43. Coupe, *German Political Satires*, 184.
44. Peter H. Wilson, *The Thirty Years War. A Source Book* (New York: Palgrave, 2010), 151–2. The text's anonymous author, thought to be a survivor of the siege, blames the city's Catholics, among others, for its defeat. Emich, 'Bilder einer Hochzeit,' 233 discusses the Lucretia allegory concocted by Protestants.
45. Emich, 'Bilder einer Hochzeit,' 230–33, esp. 232. The stories inspired Eduard Steinbrück's *The Magdeburg Maidens* (1852–66; Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Alte Nationalgalerie), in which women leap off the ramparts to avoid the rapacious soldiers. Puhle, *Magdeburg und der Dreißigjährige Krieg*, 263–4, no. 277.
46. Wilson, *Source Book*, 151–2.
47. Coupe, *German Political Satires*, 187, no. I.163; Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1369; Knauer, '... Das Mägdlein,' 78.
48. Published as an addendum in his *Die Busz Psalmen, in Poesie gesetzt: Sampt angehengten TrawerLied/Uber die klägliche Zerstörung der Löblichen und Ubralten Stadt Magdeburg* (Leipzig, 1632). Kühlmann, 'War and Peace,' 330.
49. 'Die gulden' EhrenCron/und Jungfräwlicher Krantz/Auff deinem gelben Haar: Jetzt ligstu da gestreckt/Als ein' ermordte Braut/bist überall bedeckt/Mit Eisen/Asch/und Blut/erschrecklich/blaß/verbrenndt/Geschwollen/stinckicht/schwartz/unflätig/und zerschendt/Zerschendt durch Nothzucht aub/durch Nothzucht so zerrüttet/Daß sich die Sonn' entsetzt/die Erde drob erschüttet/Der Himmel selbst erschrickt. Gottloser BulenKnecht/Es werden ja für dich die drey Höll-Huren recht/Ihr Bräutigam zu seyn: Mit solchem Brand und Morden/Ist auch des Plutons Weib selbst nicht geraubet worden/Du alter Kahlkopf/du verdientest/daß das Schiff/Charontis mit dir stracks in seinen Abgrund lieff.' Kühlmann, 'War and Peace,' 336 (with translation).

50. MAGDEBURGICA PVELLA DORMIENS/Nicht Todes sondern schlaffendes Magdeburgisch Mägdelein.
51. 'Die Jungfraw macht den Krantz/ein Krantz die Jungfrau nicht.'
52. *Ein Kurtz jedoch scharffes A B C.* Coupe, *German Political Satires*, 188–9, no. I.165; Harms and Schilling, *Deutsche illustrierte Flugblätter*, 2: 408–9, no. 234; Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1309–11; Wilson, *Source Book*, 167–8 (with translation).
53. Wolfgang Harms and Cornelia Kemp, eds., *Deutsche illustrierte Flugblätter des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts*, vol. 4 *Die Sammlung des Hessischen Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek Darmstadt* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1987), 222–3, no. 175; Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1471–7; Puhle, *Magdeburg und der Dreißigjährige Krieg*, 253, no. 256; Wilson, *Source Book*, 168–9 (with translation).
54. 'Ein Katz sehr kranck so anderer Müß vergessen,/Mit dem Todt ringt weil sie ein Spitz-mauß hat gefressen.'
55. 'O wehe der grossen noth, mein Kräfften sindt verzehret,/hab manche Maiuß getödt, vnd ihr örter zerstöret,/Dergleichen aber nicht, von keiner also gschwegt./O was müß dieses sein, es gschicht mir eben recht,/weil eben das was ich, an andreit hab geübet,/(Manch vnschuldlich erwischt, die andren sehr betrübet.)/Mihr jetzünd widerfährt, vnd mir mein balck zerzüset.'
56. Köhlmann, 'War and Peace,' 330. Tilly's defeat at Breitenfeld (1631) was seen as compensatory relief. In *General Tyllis drey Tugenden in Laster verkehret*, Georg Gloger (d. 1631), a Leipzig poet, repeats a popular slur: 'For he who gorges himself with blood has no real fortune; and he who rapes virgins has neither star nor luck. Therefore he is now justly called—as he deserves—a whoremaster/drunkard/and runaway soldier'.
57. Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1477.
58. Coupe, *German Political Satires*, 202, no. I.179, who thinks the print post-dates Breitenfeld; Harms and Schilling, *Deutsche illustrierte Flugblätter*, 2: 388, no. 221; Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1427.
59. Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 6: P-1559–61. Coupe, *German Political Satires*, 223–4, no. I. 200 illustrates a later version that includes six more post-Magdeburg victories ending with Kreutznach. Coupe stresses that vomiting is an expression of the enforced surrender of lands wrongfully swallowed up.
60. 'Spey auß Pfaff was gefresse hast./Auff daß dein magen bringt kein last.'
61. 'Das Schweden macht vnd sein gelück/Haldt mir den Compas weit zurück.'
62. Tobias von Elsner, 'II. Preußische Festung und barocke Stadtanlage—Von der Trümmerstätte des Dreißigjährigen Krieges bis zum Beginn der Industrialisierung,' in Puhle, *Magdeburg in Bildern*, 59–110, here 61,

- 64–5. An alliance of imperial and Saxon troops who besieged Magdeburg forced the capitulation of the Swedish troops in July 1636. Only with the Treaty of Westphalia of 24 October 1648 could Magdeburg reclaim its ‘alte Freiheit und das Privilegium Otto’s I.,’ the restoration of its rights and historic privileges.
63. Coupe, *German Political Satires*, 195–6, no. I. 172; Harms and Kemp, *Deutsche illustrierte Flugblätter*, 4: 200–201, no. 174; Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1455–7; Puhle, *Magdeburg und der Dreißigjährige Krieg*, 252–3, no. 255; Michael Niemetz, *Antijesuitische Bildpublizistik in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 2008), 131–2.
64. Paas, *German Political Broadsheet*, 5: P-1518; Harms et al., *Illustrierte Flugblätter des Barock*, 118–19, no. 57. The motif of the gypsy and Tilly appeared earlier in *Gründliche Weissagung. Vom Heidelberger Vermelt... (Rebus)*. *BMPRFH* 1630 (sic). Coupe, *German Illustrated Broadsheet*, 190 (with a discussion of the rebus form) and 220, no. 216, plate 116.
65. ‘Ewer Hand ist gantz und gar nicht gut/Sie zeigt/ihr habet schlechten Muht.’
66. ‘Wolan/so wagt es/wie ihr denckt./Ewer Hand euch ewer Glück verschrenckt/Marck/Pommern /Mecklenburg vnd Francken/Sachsen/vnd Bömen auch schon wancken.’
67. Emich, ‘Bilder einer Hochzeit,’ 216, fig. 5.

PART IV

News Reporting: Reading and
Mobilising Emotions

Ballads of Death and Disaster: The Role of Song in Early Modern News Transmission

Una McIlvenna

In the late seventeenth century, the diarist Samuel Pepys collected a ballad about the Great Fire of London, called ‘London mourning in Ashes; OR, Lamentable Narrative lively expressing the Ruine of that Royal City by fire...’.¹ It was to be sung to the well-known tune, ‘In sad and ashy weeds’:

OF Fire, Fire, Fire I sing,
that have more cause to cry,
In the Great Chamber of the King,
(a City mounted High;)
Old London that,
Hath stood in State,
above six hundred years,
In six days space,
Woe and alas!
is burn’d and drown’d in tears

It swallow’d Fishstreet hil, & straight
it lick’d up Lombard-street,
Down Canon-street in blazing State
it flew with flaming feet;
Down to the Thames
Whose shrinking streams
began to ebb away,
As thinking that,
The power of Fate
had brought the latter day

U. McIlvenna
School of English, University of Kent, Canterbury, UK

Up to the head of aged Pauls
 the flame doth fluttering flye,
 Above a hunred thousand souls
 upon the ground do lye;
 Sick souls and lame,
 All flie the flame.
 women with Child we know,
 Are forc'd to run,
 The fire to shun,
 have not a day to goe.

If this do not reform our lives,
 A worse thing will succeed,
 Our kindred, children, and our wives,
 will dye for want of Bread;
 When Famine comes,
 'Tis not our Drums,
 Our Ships our Horse or Foot,
 That can defend,
 But if we mend,
 we never shall come to't.

There are three important things to note about this ballad: it provides a great deal of factual information about the Great Fire of London; it warns its hearers to repent in order to avoid an even worse fate; and it is an enjoyable song to sing. This last point will depend largely on personal interpretation and performance style, but the word 'lively' in the title is an indicator of the tempo, and its melodic range across the octave calls for a forceful performance. All three of these elements—its fact-based content, its moral lesson, and its entertaining attributes—seem incongruous when placed together, at least for a modern observer. Today, we expect to receive these three elements from three separate sources: a newscaster, a preacher and a pop singer. We no longer use song to transmit factual information; as Andrew Pettegree notes, 'this is the one part of the early news world that has no clear equivalent today.'² But not only were ballads a primary source of information about newsworthy events in the early modern period, they also allowed those who could not read—a majority of the population in seventeenth-century Europe—to hear the news.³ The conjunction of music and lyric aided in memorisation, allowing listeners to pass on the information they had heard. Given their aural reception, ballads were thus the most accessible medium in the early modern period, cutting across all divisions of class, education, gender, age and location. They were also potentially the most emotively powerful medium: as well as the writer's choice of sensational language and affecting music, the ballad's emotional potency could be heightened by the performance of whoever chose to sing it. Songs did important cultural work in this period, reinforcing and reiterating ideas with each re-performance, and it is only through close study of balladry's unique qualities that we can understand their enormous influential capacity.

This chapter explores how ballads presented and mediated the news of death and disaster, and in doing so how they functioned within the early modern system of information transmission. Why did early modern Europeans sing songs about distressing events in which people suffered loss and pain, or died brutally or in large numbers? To a modern Western sensibility this seems unnatural and morbid; to sing a 'lively' song about the destruction of a city would likely be perceived as not showing appropriate respect for the dead.⁴ Two changes have occurred in our modern age that make this so: on the one hand, our relationship with song and the oral nature of news; and on the other, our understanding of, and relationship with, death. By looking at songs about two of the most popular news topics of the day, public executions and disasters, we can get a sense of the manner in which balladry differed in its presentation of the news from the prose pamphlets that circulated at the same time. I show that ballads acted as a vehicle of learning, a pedagogic tool that encouraged their listener-singers to interpret negative events as a warning of divine retribution and as an opportunity to repent for one's sins. While prose broadsheets presented such news in a similar way, songs' ability to be easily memorised and repeated meant that they were the most effective medium for the dissemination of such a message in an early modern Europe racked by violence, death and disaster. They can therefore provide an explanation for the ubiquity of apocalyptic belief and discourse in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe. Executions and disasters played a similar role in the early modern mindset, acting as signals for the community to come together in repentance, and songs were a primary medium for dissemination of the news of such events. In this paper, therefore, I also provide a more nuanced understanding of how songs operated in the communal and participatory nature of death and repentance in the early modern period.

Related to these issues is the writers' use of familiar tunes as a musical basis for the new ballad lyrics, a tradition known as *contrafactum*. While certain studies of early modern popular song have argued for the importance of *contrafactum*, they are restricted to a single language tradition, and often focus on a limited time period.⁵ However, it was a long-standing pan-European tradition, with enormous implications for the transfer of meaning, and this essay uses a multilingual approach to examine this practice. As I have argued elsewhere, *contrafactum* was more than merely a technique to aid in memorisation; it was used by ballad-writers in a conscious attempt to manipulate the memories of their listener-singers.⁶ Certain melodies were chosen because of the cultural and emotional asso-

ciations they carried with them. The human memory makes strong links between a song's melody and its text, or at least between a song's melody and the experience of hearing that song, and this phenomenon was exploited to its full by the creators of early modern news-songs. Take, for example, the tune with which I opened, 'In Sad and Ashy Weeds': the choice of this tune for a song about a great fire is no mere coincidence. Ballad writers chose their tunes with care, fully aware of the emotional connotations they could carry into the newer versions. This methodological innovation, using melody as a means to uncover layers of cultural and social associations and significance, provides insight into the complex emotional reactions that could be produced by songs of death and disaster.

Unlike many other disasters, not many people died in the Great Fire of London; nonetheless, *London mourning in Ashes...* is still fairly representative of how ballads portrayed the news of disasters. A great amount of factual detail is given, with the mention of numerous specific streets and buildings. The language is highly emotive—the sick, the lame, and pregnant women 'are forc'd to run', but, given that there are not many dead (or in order to show the scale of the disaster), the writer personifies the city's distress: the Thames 'thinks' that Judgment Day is nigh and ebbs away, while the burning churches are portrayed as shedding leaden 'tears' 'to see their Fabricks burn'. The last verses interpret the events as signs of God's vengeance, with a warning to repent in order to prevent other, worse punishments (in this case, famine), further evidence of the perception of connectivity between disasters that Gerrit Schenk talks about in Chap. 3 of this volume. The predominant message of early modern news-ballads as divine anger at the sins of mortals, together with the ubiquity and potency of ballads as vehicles of information transmission, helps us understand the peculiar strength of belief in apocalyptic destiny across a variety of religious communities and traditions in early modern Europe.

Like disaster ballads, execution ballads also relied on sensationalist language to heighten their affective impact, with the story presented as a warning to listeners to learn from the mistakes of the condemned in order to avoid a similar ghastly end. The 1642 ballad, 'A Warning to all Priests and Jesuites...', about the execution of two priests, Alban Roe (also known as Bartholomew Roe or Saint Alban Roe)⁷ and Thomas Greene (Reynolds), and set to the tune 'The Rich Merchant Man', a melody repeatedly used for ballads associated with punishment and repentance, offers a good example of the graphic way in which public executions were detailed in ballads:⁸

Fast bound and guarded strong,
 unto their dying place,
 These Papist Priests were drawne along
 to suffer in disgrace.

Then hang'd till almost dead,
 and so immediately,
 Were both cut downe and quartered,
 as Traitors use to dye.

Their members and their hearts,
 were all in fire burn'd,
 Their guts, and all their inward parts,
 were straight to ashes turn'd.⁹

These lyrics may seem unnecessarily detailed and gory; but in order to understand the message that execution ballads send about death and punishment, it is imperative to be clear about the role of the body of the condemned within the ritual of execution. This requires an appreciation of the early modern perception of death itself, summarised by Paul Koudounaris in his study of ossuaries and charnel houses. As Koudounaris explains, before Enlightenment ideals of individualism began to envision the body as a closed system with the skin defining our natural boundary from the bodies of others, ‘death and decomposition were among the “acts of the bodily drama” that were once played out on a more public stage.’¹⁰ Although Koudounaris is speaking metaphorically about a ‘public stage’, in the early modern period execution was performed on the most public of stages in the most public of places and indeed its public, visual, didactic role was central to its purpose. Rather than the private, rapid and mostly painless conception of execution as it is performed today, for example, in the US, early modern public execution existed to benefit its viewers morally and spiritually through the destruction of the body of the criminal, both during life *and* after the moment of death.

The body of the condemned—both the living body and the corpse—spoke to its witnesses with a potency that no other entity could possess, of the perils of immoral living and the imperative to prepare for divine judgment. Koudounaris explains this seemingly paradoxical ability of the speaking corpse: ‘In the modern Western world, we have come to consider death as a boundary. In many other cultures it is not—it is con-

ceived simply as a transition, and a dialogue between the living and the dead forms a meaningful part of social discourse.¹¹ This dialogue with the dead was never more immediate than in the spectacle of execution where the body of the condemned would undergo at times severe torture and mutilation in order that spectators could learn from the perpetrator's agony and shame, and meditate on how to conduct their own lives so as to avoid such an end.¹² That dialogue was continued in the ballads that told of the crimes perpetrated and the punishment enacted upon the criminal, especially so because execution ballads were often written in the first person and purported to be the last words or confession of the condemned. While it might be thought that the plaintive voice of a victim of the condemned's criminal actions would evoke more sympathy on the part of listeners than the criminal's, such an approach ignores the role that the condemned played in the community. The first-person voice would allow the singer to vicariously experience the emotions of the condemned, even if only briefly, as s/he sang the story of the condemned's crimes and remorse for the sins that resulted in such a gruesome end. Thus the French noblewoman Marie-Madeleine-Marguerite d'Aubray, Marquise de Brinvilliers, convicted of poisoning several members of her family in the 1660s, 'personally' sang of her water torture and execution as an experience from which others should learn:

Ce n'est pas tout que de perdre la vie,	It is not just that I lose my life,
Mes entrailles s'en vont estre rotties,	My innards will be roasted,
Et dans ce lieu on va brûler mon	And in this place my body will be burned,
corps,	Even though it is already in the ranks of the dead.
Encor qu'il soit déjà au rang des	Contemplate my fate, illustrious nobility:
morts,	My sentence has reduced me to weakness.
Contemplez moy, très-illustre	
noblesse:	
Ma sentence me réduit en faiblesse. ¹³	

Although for the spectators at La Brinvillier's execution, the sight of her burning corpse would have an immediate suitably deterrent effect (it was believed), songs allowed the lesson to be repeated *ad infinitum*. Like the corpses and dismembered body parts that were regularly displayed at the gallows or on the city gates, balladry continued the dialogue between corpse and witness, and let the condemned sing to listeners of their journey towards both the moment of death and beyond.

In fact, the ‘moment of death’ was, in early modern public executions, a problematic concept. Complex death sentences involving intricate and often highly symbolic acts of torture were followed to the letter, even when—as in many cases—the convict was dead before the punishment was complete. In fact, merciful ‘pre-killings’ were often enacted by the executioner before the most excruciating ordeals were inflicted. In other words, torture was regularly carried out on corpses. To understand what seems to a modern mind a paradox, it is helpful to think of death not so much as a momentary shift from ‘living’ to ‘dead’, but rather as a process that the condemned began from the moment of judgment. In French law the distinction was made clear. In his examination of *testaments de morts* in eighteenth-century Paris, Pascal Bastien rightly notes that once the sentence of death had been read aloud, the criminal became dead in a civil sense, expelled from the world of humans but not yet crossed over to the other side. This had legal consequences: while any denunciations made by the condemned thereafter could result in arrests, the denunciation was viewed as only a semi-proof, given that the accuser no longer had a social existence.¹⁴ Dwelling in this spiritual no-man’s land, the condemned thus occupied a liminal yet potent position, imbued by their viewers—whether rightly or wrongly—with knowledge of the great un-knowable, and this led to a strong belief in the magical powers of anything associated with their bodies, including their blood and even the rope of the noose.

This liminal position made executed criminals powerful vehicles for the dissemination of a message of repentance. Who better to warn the living of the need to live a life free from sin and crime than the condemned criminal? And who better to warn of the tortures of hell than someone who was already there? Jews convicted of crimes were offered conversion before their deaths in order to save their souls. Those who refused presented the spectators with the view of a soul on its way to eternal damnation. Although ballads about Jews are uncommon, the Bolognese poet-composer Giulio Cesare Croce clearly saw an opportunity in the execution of Manasso the Jew, in Ferrara on 30 April 1590, to employ as narrator the voice of one certain to feel the torments of hell.¹⁵ The description of Manasso’s torture, his flesh torn away with red-hot irons, his hand cut off and then slow strangulation through hanging, is likely to have evoked in the ballad’s listener/singer visions of the eternal punishments Manasso was already experiencing:

Son sul carro già salito,
 Et i ferri son nel foco,
 Ne mi par troppo bel gioco
 A sentir se gran calore.
 O Manasso traditore.

Now that I am on the cart
 and the irons are in the fire,
 it no longer seems so jolly
 to feel such searing heat.
 Oh Manas, traitor

Hor sù pur son espedit,
 E stratiet, e tormentet,
 Brustolet, e sagatet,
 Con vergogna, e dishonore.
 O Manasso traditore.

Come on! Now I am hurried
 and jerked along, tormented,
 burned, and beaten—
 what shame and dishonour!
 Oh Manas, traitor.

The fact that this ballad was so popular as to go through at least five editions, with the latest in 1644, 54 years after the events described, meant that no one who bought the ballad was in any doubt that the dead Jew sang to them from hell of his excruciating torture and subsequent remorse for his crimes. Even the sounds of hell can be imagined as Manasso recounts having his hand cut off to the appreciative roars of the audience:

Mitagliorno nel Fagiolo
 Una man, ahi caso duro,
 Attacarla su un muro
 Con fracasso, e gran rumore.
 O Manasso traditore.

They cut off my hand at the Fagiolo
 (oh, a painful thing!)
 and displayed it on a wall
 amidst the din and uproar.
 Oh Manas, traitor.

While execution ballads such as this encouraged their listeners to meditate on the suffering of the individual so as to persuade them to avoid such a life of sin, they sat within a wider literature that envisioned suffering as a universal experience from which all could learn. Reports of mass deaths due to natural disasters or the depredations of war were couched in a similar theme, presented in some cases as signs of the Last Days, which likewise made the audience reflect on the coming Day of Judgment. Like the punishment of the criminal, disasters were an opportunity to learn, and were often presented in a similar way, even employing the same tunes. A tune used regularly in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England for ballads of executions and disasters was 'Fortune My Foe'. That 'Fortune' was the most popular tune for new ballads in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England¹⁶ and the Netherlands (where it was known as 'Engelse fortun')¹⁷ demonstrates not only its popularity as a melody, but the popularity of songs about morbid events in the early modern period. It was also known as 'Aim Not Too High', after one of its most popular contrafacta, a

version which encouraged humility before the power of God and preached a message of daily repentance and devotion because, as the ballad tells us,

Expect each day and hour when Christ shall come,
With power to judge the world both all and some.

A state of constant readiness for the imminent terrors of Judgment Day was a central tenet of Reformation-era apocalyptic belief that saw omens of God's providence and divine rage both in the human-caused suffering of events such as the Wars of Religion and in natural events such as floods or fires. Disasters were interpreted as both punishment for the evil lifestyles of God's followers and as a warning of the terrors of the apocalypse for those who would not repent in time. Songs about such events were explicitly editorial in their analysis of them, leaving no doubt as to how their listener-singers should interpret the signs. The following title is typical of the ways in which the audience for a ballad about flooding was encouraged to interpret the events it relates (see Fig. 13.1):

A True Relation, Of The great Floods that happened in many parts of England in December and January last, to the undoing of Many the

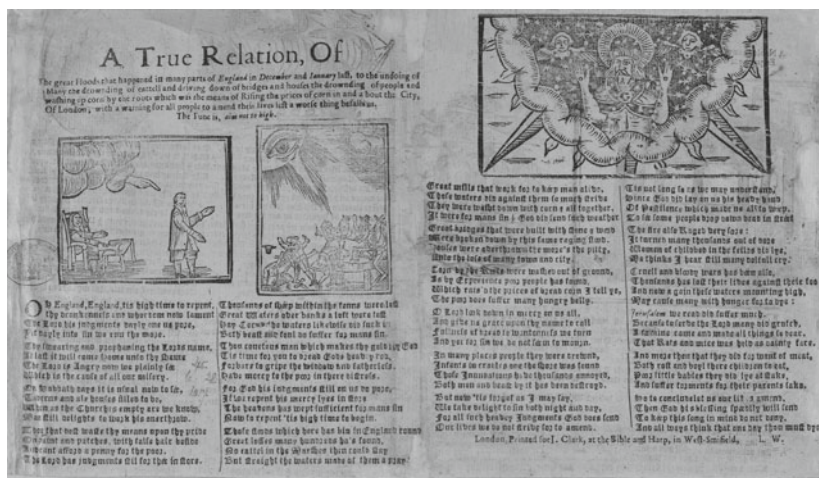


Fig. 13.1 *A True Relation, Of the great floods...* (London: J. Clark, at the Bible and Harp, in West-Smifield, 1651–1686?). British Library, London. © The British Library Board: C.20.f.9.236

drowning of cattell and driving down of bridges and houses the drowning of people and washing up corn by the roots which was the means of Rising the prices of corn in and about the City, Of London: with a warning for all people to amend their lives lest a worse thing befalls us.

The song moves from flooding, which caused loss of human life and livestock, to the inflated prices of corn, which it implies will cause famine. Crucially, this song is about floods ‘in many parts of England in December and January last’; it conflates separate incidents in different regions and makes no claim, as most other news songs do, to report ‘new’ or very recent events (indeed, an inflated price for crops is only likely to have happened after a poor harvest, rather than immediately upon bad weather). Instead, set to ‘Aim Not Too High’, the ballad recalls the repentant message of that earlier song and encourages its listener-singers to retrospectively interpret the various instances of flooding as a manifestation of divine judgment, just like the catastrophic deaths caused by war:

OH England, England, tis high time to repent,
thy drunkenness and whordom now lament
The Lord is Angry now we plainly see
Which is the cause of all our misery.

Cruell and bloody wars has been also,
Thousands has lost their lives against their foe
And now again these waters mounting high,
May cause many with hunger for to dye: ¹⁸

Here, the cause of the floods and famine is no different to that which caused the ‘cruell and bloody wars’. The distinction we make today about the natural versus human causes of disasters was not so clear in a period which saw omens of divine justice in both the failure of crops and the evil committed by humans upon one another. Catastrophic loss of civilian life because of wars, especially the Wars of Religion and the Thirty Years’ War, was interpreted as a sign of God’s judgment, specifically, that heretics and those leading sinful lives were being warned about the imminent Judgment Day.

The message of divine retribution in ballads could work in reverse, however, if one identified oneself as a member of God’s chosen flock. In Chap. 12 of this volume, Jeffrey Chipps Smith describes the flood of

printed broadsheets that followed upon the Sack of Magdeburg on 20 May 1631 by the forces of the Catholic League, under the leadership of Jean Tserclaes, Count of Tilly, and Field Marshal Pappenheim, in which approximately 20,000 civilians died. On both sides of the conflict, the accounts of the massacre, both in prose and in song, employed the trope of a maiden city deflowered by the powerful, masculine forces of the victors, here aided by the fact that Magdeburg translates as ‘City of the Maiden’.¹⁹ One such pamphlet contained a 22-verse song, the ‘Magdeburg wedding song’ (*Magdeburgisch Hochzeit Lied*), in which each of the verses was to be sung by a different protagonist in the conflict.²⁰ The song describes Tilly, Pappenheim and their forces trying to woo the maiden Magdeburg while she stubbornly holds out for the King of Sweden. Many historians who have studied this song rightly highlight the trope of rape that characterised not only this song, but so much of the literature surrounding the Magdeburg massacre.²¹ However, no one has yet noted the choice of tune to which the song is to be sung, important enough for the printer to print it in full size in the title: ‘to the tune, the way one sings [the song of] the Danish Battle’ (‘An der melodey, wie man der Dannemarkische Schlact singt’). This ‘Danish Battle’ refers to the Battle of Lutter, which took place also during the Thirty Years War, about five years earlier, in August 1626. Here the forces of the Protestant Christian IV of Denmark were decimated by those of the Catholic League, led by the same general, Count Tilly.

A song was written about the Battle of Lutter, to be sung ‘to the tune Wilhelm of Nassau’ (‘Im Thon: Wilhelmus von Nassoue’). This tune, the *Wilhelmuslied*, originally was the melody of a song about the Dutch statesman William of Nassau, better known as William of Orange, the celebrated Dutch leader who fought for the rights of Protestants against the might of the Spanish Habsburg empire. The tune was incredibly popular: the Dutch Song Database records 588 songs set to this tune. Its popularity would, in fact, lead to its becoming the Dutch national anthem, although the stately tempo in which it is now sung is a far cry from the style of the folk song whence it originated.²² Below on the left is the opening verse of the original *Wilhelmuslied*, sung in the voice of William of Nassau himself, and beside it on the right, the opening verse of the ‘Danish Battle song’, sung in the voice of Count Tilly:

Wilhelmus von Nassawe
bin ich von teutschem blut,
dem vaterland getrawe,
bleib ich bis in den todt,
Ein printze von Uranien
bin ich frey unerfehrt,
den könig von Hispanien
hab ich allzeit geehrt.

William of Nassau
am I, of Dutch blood.
Loyal to the fatherland
I will remain until I die.
A prince of Orange
am I, free and fearless.
The king of Spain
I have always honoured.

Graff Tillj ein künere Helt,
heist man mich alle zeit,
ich halte mich in dem felde,
ieder zeit gahr woll bereit,
den Käyser vnd Bayerfürsten,
habe Ich allzeit geehrt,
vom König von Norwegen,
bleib ich noch Vnuerfehrt.²³

Count Tilly a bold hero,
I am always called,
In the field I keep myself
Well-prepared at all times.
The Emperor and Prince of Bavaria
I have always honored.
By the King of Norway
I am still unscathed.

The Danish defeat at Lutter was a costly one, forcing the Protestant German princes to sue for peace, and so a song about that battle set to the *Wilhelmuslied* was a satirical blow that mocked the pride of the Protestants by turning their own song against them. To set the later ‘Magdeburg wedding song’ to the tune of the ‘Danish Battle song’ would not only have evoked memories of that earlier military success but would also have mocked the Protestant pride in the same fashion. The tune choice here encouraged the listener-singers of the song about Magdeburg to feel similarly joyous at the defeat and bloody massacre of the enemy. The melody therefore guides the listener-singers in the appropriate emotional response to the news of the massacre, one of jubilant domination:

Wol auff ihr daffire Soldaten
Und last uns frölich seyn
Die Schank ist uns gerathen
Wir haben ein Mägdlein fein
Durch Gottes krafft erworben
Und unseren Helden gut
Nun wollens wir versorgen
Mit einem Breutigamb gut.

Boldly valiant soldiers!
And let us merry be
Our venture was successful
A fine maiden have we
Gained with God’s strength
And our hero’s bravery
Now we shall provide her
With a good fiancé.

A melody that was very closely linked to the proud resistance of Protestants to foreign Catholic powers is here used satirically both to flaunt the Catholic League’s victory against the proud city of Magdeburg

and to position it as one in a series of such victories.²⁴ But the victory is not simply territorial or political. God gets the final word in the ballad, criticising Magdeburg's ill-placed pride in her Protestant resistance, and promising even more punishment to others with the same idea:

Alle Gwalt durch mich verschen	All authority is provided through me
Ohn mich kein Macht besteht	Without me, no power exists
Sol also nichts geschehen	So nothing shall be done
Was mein Will wiederstrebt	That goes against my Will
Hochmuth kan ich nicht leiden	Pride I cannot stand
Unghersam find nur Pein	Disobedience finds only pain
Darumb wer Straff wil meyden	Therefore whoever wishes to avoid punishment
Las ihm angelegen seyn.	Let that be of concern to him.

The apocalyptic scale of the Magdeburg massacre is thus depicted as a just punishment, divinely ordained, which is to stand as a warning to other heretical cities to repent so as to avoid the same fate. Death, even on an unimaginable scale, could therefore be presented as righteous, God's wrath operating upon a sinful world in order to warn survivors and observers to follow the correct path to salvation.

In contrast to the first-person voice of an execution ballad, the structure of the 'Magdeburg wedding song', in 22 verses, each one in a different voice, promotes the singing of the song by a group of people, each singer choosing a different verse and protagonist. One can imagine such a song being sung in an alehouse, a popular venue for ballad-singing²⁵, or by soldiers, a group so widely known for composing and singing songs that 'military ballads' form a sub-genre of early modern balladry.²⁶ That the first verse is sung in the voices of the victorious soldiers is another indicator that it was intended to be sung by this group. Songs were regularly composed specifically for soldiers to sing, such as the 1546 German song *A song written for the mercenary soldier: useful to sing in these times of war* (*Ein Lied für die Landsknecht gemacht: In diesen Kriegsleufften nützlich zu singen*), which provided both lyrics and two sets of notated melodies.²⁷ More famously, the French national anthem *La Marseillaise* was originally composed in July 1792 by Joseph Rouget de Lisle as a song for Royalist soldiers to sing, but its ambiguous mentions of the 'enemy' allowed it to be adopted by the radical troops of *fédérés* in Marseilles, who gave it both its name and its firmly republican associations.²⁸ Although one can never speak with certainty about the individual performances of a song without

eye-witness accounts, it is clear that certain song styles promoted a sense of communality, encouraging their listener-singers to view the events depicted from a similar perspective.

Although we think of public executions and disasters as separate types of news events, at times the presentation of crime and punishment could be presented as a type of divinely-ordained disaster. The mass witch-burnings described in the 1626 ballad ‘Of the great misery that has occurred in the Margravate of Baden, how there over fifty witches, men, women, boys and girls were burned...’ (*Von dem grossen Jammer Welcher sich begeben in der Marggraffschafft Baden wie allda schon vber die fünfftzig Hexen Mann Weib Knaben und Mägdlein sein verbrant worden...*), gives the impression of a wave of sorcery that was taking over the countryside, causing crops to fail and people to starve:

Erstlich in deß Marggraffen Land
genent von Baden wolbekant
schon viel verbrand sein worden
zu Kupene vnd zu Rastatt
bey 50 man verbrennet hat
an diesen dreyen Orthen.²⁹

Firstly in the territory of the Margrave
Renowned by the name ‘von [of] Baden’
Already many have been burned
In Kuppenheim and Rastatt
About 50 were burned
In these three places.

Each of the ballad’s verses describes a confession by a different member of the community of various types of behaviour linked with witchcraft: a boy of thirteen married a she-devil, a girl caused injuries to her father through magic, a midwife murdered children at birth, and a publican fed cat flesh as mutton to her unsuspecting customers and cast spells on them.³⁰ One of the verses also discusses the disastrous results for local agriculture:

Wol in dem Württenberger Land
wie Männiglichen wolbekant
daß der Wein ist erfroren
Gott es jhn nicht verhängen wolt
sonst in dem Land man habe
warhaftig wenig Korn.

Indeed in the Württemberg territory
As is known to many
The wine is frozen
God did not want to impose this on them
Besides in this land there was
Truly little corn.

Thus natural disasters such as erratic weather and bad harvests are constructed as the effects of sorcery. The mention of ‘frozen’ vines in the ballad reminds us that the area was suffering the effects of the Little Ice

Age that David Lederer explores in Chap. 14 of this volume, which here was attributed to the power of ‘the devil’s cunning’. Erik Midelfort has detailed the witch panics in south-western Germany that resulted in thousands of executions, with 193 people being executed in the Margravate of Baden between 1628 and 1631 alone. Although his study does not discuss this specific incident, he does note that, following the Catholic victory at Wimpfen in 1622, the territory of Baden-Baden was rapidly converted back to Catholicism, a rapid religious change which provided the ‘crucial background for the Baden witch hunt panic’.³¹ The implication is that, within the religious turmoil, heretical belief was blamed for sicknesses and bad harvests, belief that had brought down the judgment of God.

This is supported by the ballad’s melody: it is to be sung to the tune of the chorale *Kommt her zu mir spricht Gottes Sohn* (‘Come unto me says the son of God’), a melody repeatedly used for songs about executions and disastrous topics. VD17, the German project digitising seventeenth-century broadsheets and pamphlets, lists 26 songs set to this tune, all but one of which have as their topic the manifestation of divine punishment or portents: the supernatural punishment of greed, abnormal weather conditions, wonders such as prophecies and multiple births, famine and the disasters of war, murders and the punishment of the perpetrators, laments over the capture and/or destruction of cities, and conversely, songs of gratitude to God for having a Protestant leader or for the victory of Christians over the Turks.³² Each one of these topics would have been interpreted in the seventeenth century as a powerful manifestation of the will of the Lord, punishing sinners, warning all to repent, and destroying the heretics. Thus the chorale’s melody was closely associated with the cautionary themes of fear of the Lord and of the need for repentance so as to avoid divine judgment. The ballad about the witch-burnings presents mass execution as disaster, conflating two separate kinds of news events to create a sense of apocalyptic retribution for heretical beliefs, and its melody conjures up associations with other acts of divine punishment.

CONCLUSION

To understand how song as a medium differed from the other news media of the early modern period such as prose pamphlets or newspapers, we need to engage with news-songs as oral and aural performative acts rather than as merely ‘read’ texts. Ballads differed from prose pamphlets in their ability to be performed, and re-performed, thus continuing their dissemi-

nation among a wider audience who needed no literacy to understand their message. While we cannot reconstruct every performance of a news-ballad, we can deduce some information about how they were intended to be performed by looking at their structure. Execution ballads written in the first-person voice encouraged an identification with the condemned criminal, a stance that at first seems paradoxical until one understands that the condemned stood as a figure of example in early modern Europe, an individual whose suffering and dying body and corpse served to educate its witnesses about the perils of abandoning a pure, sinless way of life. To sing in the voice of the repentant prisoner was to embody the experience of one entirely subjugated before the will of the Lord. Multiple voices in ballads served a different, if related, purpose: encouraging different members of the group to join in, forging a sense of community and shared beliefs. The sub-genre of military ballads that were often explicitly composed for soldiers to sing were a powerful tool in a period that was so dominated by the movements and actions of military forces. If we think of songs as communally experienced performances, we can begin to get a sense of the potential they had to unite their listener-singers under a common set of religious beliefs or proto-nationalist identities.

There seems to have been little difference, however, in the techniques employed by different religious groups: while in seventeenth-century Protestant England ballads presented a world-view in which both natural disasters and the executions of priests were divinely ordained, the examples from France and Italy reveal that Catholics used lyric and melody in the same sophisticated ways to interpret negative events as part of God's will. Similarly, in the German lands we find both Catholics and Protestants employing the same chorale tunes for execution ballads. Intriguingly, a pan-European investigation of news-songs reveals that, in an era of bloody religious wars, there were surprising commonalities around key issues to do with death and God, and in the methods used to express these beliefs.

The technique of *contrafactum* was another commonality that was also central to the songs' emotional potency. To set a song about disastrous floods to a melody well-known for its association with songs about divine retribution was to encourage its listener-singers to meditate on the news event as another manifestation of God's anger and to thereby repent before worse outcomes. Conversely, the intention of the *Wilhelmuslied* to display Protestant pride and independence was subverted by Catholic ballad-writers' use of its melody in accounts of their victories. Song therefore had a power that prose pamphlets and broadsides did not: it could exploit the cultural associations of melody and the affective power of performance to heighten

the emotional reaction of its listener-singers. Recovering these often highly localised associations and studying the clues about potential performance practice can be a painstaking process, but it allows us to interpret these textual sources as they were originally intended. In turn, the musicality of the song, married to the rhetorical energies produced by the urgent and dramatic apocalyptic language, also goes some way to explain the popularity and ubiquity of these songs. Early modern Europe was an intensely musical place, and to explore the sophisticated ways in which news-songs exploited their audiences' memories through melody and performance is to reveal a great deal about how apocalyptic and emotionally-loaded ideas around death and disaster circulated in a period of famine and bloody wars.

NOTES

1. *London mourning in Ashes; OR, Lamentable Narrative lively expressing the Ruine of that Royal City by fire which began in Pudding-lane on September the second, 1666, at one of the clock in the morning being Sunday, and continuing until Thursday night following, being the sixth day... The Tune, In sad and ashy weeds.* (London: E. Crowch for F. Coles, T. Vere, and J. Wright, 1666–1675?). This work was supported by a Newberry Library Short-Term Fellowship, 2014.
2. Andrew Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know About Itself* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), 121.
3. Éva Guillourel, *La complainte et la plainte: Chanson, justice, cultures en Bretagne (XVI^e–XVIII^e siècles)* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2010); Patricia Fumerton and Anita Guerrini, eds., *Ballads and Broad-sides in Britain, 1500–1800* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010); Tom Cheesman, *The Shocking Ballad Picture Show: German Popular Literature and Cultural History* (Oxford: Berg, 1994).
4. As well as having associations with briskness, 'lively' in the seventeenth century could also mean 'full of life'. Both meanings seem incongruous with a song about a life-threatening disaster. See 'Lexicons of Early Modern English,' accessed 27 January 2015, <http://leme.library.utoronto.ca/search/results.cfm>.
5. Christopher Marsh, *Music and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 288–327; Robert Darnton, *Poetry and the Police: Communication Networks in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 79–102; Rebecca Wagner Oettinger, *Music as Propaganda in the German Reformation* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001); Kate van Orden, 'Cheap Print and Street Song following the Saint Bartholomew's Massacres of 1572,' in *Music and the Cultures of Print*, ed. Kate van Orden (New York: Garland, 2000), 271–323.

6. Una McIlvenna, 'The Power of Music: Contrafactum in Execution Ballads,' *Past & Present* 229, no. 1 (2015): 47–89.
7. 'Bartholomew Roe', *Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1913).
8. Una McIlvenna, 'The Rich Merchant Man, or, What the Punishment of Greed Sounded Like in Early Modern English Ballads,' *Huntington Library Quarterly*, special issue: Living English Broadside Ballads, ed. Patricia Fumerton, 79, no. 2 (2016): 279–99.
9. *A Warning to all Priests and jesuites, by the example of two Masse-priests, which for seducing and stealing away the hearts of the Kings Loyall Subjects, were hangd, drawne, and quartered : whose execution was on Friday, being the 21. day of January, 1642. To the Tune of, A Rich Marchant Man.* (London: F. Grove, 1642).
10. Paul Koudounaris, *The Empire of Death: A Cultural History of Ossuaries and Charnel Houses* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2011), 14.
11. Koudounaris, *The Empire of Death*, 11.
12. Pascal Bastien, *Une Histoire de la peine de mort: bourreaux et supplices, Paris, Londres, 1500–1800* (Paris: Seuil, 2011); Richard van Dülmen, *Theatre of Horror: Crime and Punishment in Early Modern Germany*, trans. Elisabeth Neu (Cambridge: Polity, 1990); Nicholas Terpstra, ed., *The Art of Executing Well: Rituals of Execution in Renaissance Italy* (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2008); Paul Friedland, *Seeing Justice Done: The Age of Spectacular Capital Punishment in France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); V. A. C. Gattrell, *The Hanging Tree: Execution and the English People 1770–1868* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).
13. *L'innocence vengée par l'exécution exemplaire d'une damoiselle parricide et fratricide qui a esté condamnée de faire amande honorable devant Nostre Dame, et delà conduite à la Grève pour y estre decollée et ensuite jetée au feu...* Cited in Edouard Tricotel, ed., *Deux plaintes sur la mort de la marquise de Brinvilliers* (Paris: Charavay, 1869).
14. Pascal Bastien, 'Héros de la Grève: Les derniers instants des condamnés à mort dans le Paris du XVIIIe siècle,' *Histoire et Archives* 18 (juillet-décembre 2005): 103–18.
15. Giulio Cesare Croce, *Lamento et morte de Manas hebreo. Qual fù Tenagliato sopra un carro, & gli tagliorno una mano, e fù poi appicato per homicidio, & altri delitti enormi, & obbrobriosi...* (Bologna: Gli Heredi del Cochi, al pozzo rosso da San Damian, 1623). Translation of verses by Meryl Bailey in Terpstra, *The Art of Executing Well.*, 336–39.
16. Claude Simpson, *The British Broadside Ballad and its Music* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1966), 225–31. Of the 123 ballad entries on the English Broadside Ballad database for the tune 'Fortune

- My Foe', all are concerned with negative events (deaths, executions, disasters, poverty, monstrous births, a lover's infidelity), all of which are interpreted as opportunities to contemplate one's mortality and repent in order to achieve salvation. EBBA, accessed 27 January 2015, http://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/search_combined/?tst=42&numkw=52&numpc=13&p=1.
17. The Dutch Song Database lists 259 songs set to the tune, nearly all of which come from the seventeenth century. Dutch Song Database, accessed 27 January 2015, <http://www.liederenbank.nl/resultaatlijst.php?zoek=2663&actie=melodienorm&sorteer=jaar&lan=en>.
 18. L. W., *A True Relation, Of The great Floods that happened in many parts of England in December and Ianuary last, to the undoing of Many the drowning of cattell and driving down of bridges and houses the drowning of people and washing up corn by the roots ...* (London: J. Clark, at the Bible and Harp, in West-Smifield, 1651–1686?).
 19. Ulinka Rublack, 'Wench and Maiden: Women, War and the Pictorial Function of the Feminine in German Cities in the Early Modern Period,' *History Workshop Journal* 44 (Autumn 1997): 1–21.
 20. *Magdeburgisch Hochzeit Lied/In der Melodey/Wie man di Dennemärkische Schlacht singt. Erstlich gedruckt zu Augspurg, und daselbsten von einem Papisten aussgesprengt worden* (Augsburg: n.p., 1631).
 21. David Lederer, 'The Myth of the All-Destructive War: Afterthoughts on German Suffering, 1618–1648,' *German History* 29, no. 3 (2011): 380–403; Hans Medick, 'Historical Event and Contemporary Experience: the Capture and Destruction of Magdeburg in 1631,' trans. Pamela Selwyn, *History Workshop Journal* 52 (Autumn 2001): 23–48.
 22. Although it was not made the official national anthem until 1932, the song has been popular since the sixteenth century.
 23. Cited in Eberhard Nehlsen, 'Liedpublizistik des Dreißigjährigen Krieges,' accessed 23 April 2014, http://www.lwl.org/LWL/Kultur/Westfaelischer_Friede/dokumentation/ausstellungen/neberhard_II_IV/index2_html.
 24. For a study of Magdeburg's earlier history of resistance via a pamphlet campaign against the Empire's attempts at its re-Catholicisation, see Nathan Rein, *The Chancery of God: Protestant Print, Polemic and Propaganda against the Empire, Magdeburg 1546–1551* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).
 25. Mark Hailwood, *Alehouses and Good Fellowship in Early Modern England* (Boydell and Brewer: Woodbridge, 2014), Chap. 3; Beat Kümin, *Drinking Matters: Public Houses and Social Exchange in Early Modern Central Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).
 26. Angela McShane, 'Recruiting Citizens for Soldiers in Seventeenth-Century English Ballads,' *Journal of Early Modern History* 15 (2011): 105–37. See

- also Antoine Le Roux de Lincy, *Recueil de chants historiques français*, 2e série: XVIIe siècle (Paris: Charles Gosselin, 1842).
27. *Ein Lied für die Landsknecht gemacht. In diesen Kriegsleufften nützlich zu singen. Im Dennmarcker oder im Schweitzer thon.* (n.p.: Mense Agosto, 1546).
 28. Laura Mason, *Singing the French Revolution: Popular Culture and Politics, 1787–1799* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 93–99.
 29. *Zwo Warhafftige und doch Männiglich zuvor bekante Neue Zeitungen... Von dem grossen Jammer Welcher sich begeben in der Marggrauffschaft Baden wie allda schon vber die fünfßzig Hexen Mann Weib Knaben und Mägdlein sein verbrant worden was dieselben für schröckliche Sachen bekant haben vnd etlich hundert Menschen durch ihr Teuffels Kunst vmb das Leben gebracht...* (Moltzen: n.p., 1626).
 30. For more examples of how witchcraft was depicted in early modern news-prints see Charles Zika, *Appearance of Witchcraft: Print and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (London: Routledge, 2007), esp. ch. 7, ‘Reporting the News and Reading the Signs’.
 31. Erik Midelfort, *Witch Hunting in South-Western Germany 1562–1684* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1972), 132–34.
 32. *Bibliography of Books Printed in the German Speaking Countries from 1601 to 1700* (VD17), accessed 28 May 2014, <http://gso.gbv.de/DB=1.28/SET=2/TTL=1/LNG=EN/>.

Dragged to Hell: Family Annihilation and Brotherly Love in the Age of the Apocalypse

David Lederer

HELL IS OTHER PEOPLE

Who is most likely to kill you? Foremost, murder is a social event. Certainly, method is a materially evident fact in most homicide investigations, but only defines the murderer in relationship to an object, such as an axe-murderer or a knife-wielding assailant. Motives, such as anger, greed or jealousy are more complex. Established through confession or circumstantial evidence, the attribution of motive offers clues to the murderer's individual character. However, the relationship between murderer and victim determines homicide as a social phenomenon. Social relationships may appear as self-evidently objective as method; one is a stranger, a friend, possibly an affine. Nonetheless, relationships are not materially evident projections of cultural expectations onto homicidal behaviour. Relationships can be personal and help criminologists to plot emotional matrices connecting murderers to victims. Others are impersonal social

D. Lederer

Department of History, Maynooth University, Maynooth, Ireland

forces associated with politics, poverty, race or religion, though these too are relational: there can be no poverty without wealth, no racial or religious ‘other’ without an abstract sense of group consciousness. Therefore, more than any other analytical category, human relationships generate homicides as social facts. We might say that social relationships create murder through collective condemnation and that without society there could be no murder, only killing.

The subsequent analysis focuses on family annihilation, i.e. the killing of one’s entire family followed by taking one’s own life. It is part of a larger project on brotherly love¹ and sources German-language broadsheets and pamphlets to highlight the general crisis of the seventeenth century, a subject of renewed interest since public debate on climate change began, coupled with the global economic downturn in 2008.² These broadsheets and pamphlets belong to a larger genre of popular ballads depicting hard-heartedness toward neighbours and kin during subsistence crises. They depict family annihilations and are significant as the very first reports of otherwise unremarkable suicides in media history; no earlier published accounts were dedicated solely to reporting individual suicides. Though the story behind each horrific slaughter is unique, the underlying motif of a neighbour’s hardheartedness mitigates the perpetrator’s guilt through reference to extenuating material circumstances (i.e. starvation) and a breach of communal values by social betters. The motif extols evangelical values of brotherly love, which shaped the composition and consumption of such tragic ballads. The failure of brotherly love poetically transferred guilt from a pitiable murderer/suicide onto grain hoarders and profiteers, ultimately reviled as devilish culprits. As objects of collective outrage for their defiance of communal values, they were divinely punished—dragged to hell to restore communal harmony and placate God’s anger. In other words, the shocking ballads of family annihilation gave meaning to an otherwise inexplicable tragedy, partially excusing murder/suicide by condemning a breach of brotherly love, thereby resolving events within God’s celestial plan by simultaneously reassuring and warning audiences during an apocalyptic age.

First, however, let us consider how criminologists express our more recent experience of homicide and family annihilation. Since the nineteenth century, statistics have assumed a dominant role as identifiers of deviant behaviours, understood as social facts which evidence collective consciousness.³ In the United States, the Department of Justice reports on ‘relationship of perpetrator to victim’ as one of fifteen categories of

homicide data in their Unified Crime Reporting. Gender is one relational indicator of risk. According to homicide data for 2012, of 12,765 total reported homicides, 9,917 victims were male (77.7 per cent), 2,834 were female and 14 unknown.⁴ Men were three times more likely to be victims of homicide than women. Similarly, of 14,581 murderers by gender, 9,425 were men (89.6 per cent) and 1,098 were women (the gender of 4,058 offenders unknown). Men were also more likely to commit murder in a ratio of almost four to one.⁵ Simply put, American men murder and are murdered more often than American women, but women are more likely to be victims than perpetrators.

The exact relationship of victim to perpetrator is indeterminate in almost half of all cases (5,757).⁶ Where relationship is known, 12.5 per cent of victims were murdered by family members, 30.2 per cent by acquaintances and 12.2 per cent by strangers; victims are killed more often by someone they know than by strangers, men are killed more often by strangers than women, woman are killed more often by family members or romantic partners. As perpetrators, 60 per cent of female murderers killed their spouse, an intimate acquaintance or a child.⁷

Overall, 498 wives were murdered as compared to 96 husbands, 494 girlfriends as opposed to 168 boyfriends. As victims of homicide, men fear most from complete strangers and casual acquaintances. Women were killed by partners more often than anyone else (666 victims, 35 per cent where the relationship was ascertainable). Other victims in families arose from matricide (130), patricide (126), filicide (215 sons, 168 daughters), fratricide and sororicide (78 brothers and 28 sisters), as well as 260 who were victims of non-specific family members.

Familicide is defined as the murder by a spouse or parent or child of another spouse or parent or child.⁸ When suicide by the perpetrator follows, the event is categorized as murder/suicide or family annihilation. It differs from other forms of murder/suicide, e.g. suicide-by-cop or indirect/judicial suicide, which are tangential to our examination.⁹ When murderers kill their family and themselves, criminologists speak of family annihilation. Ironically, although exceedingly rare, it attracts sensational media coverage in inverse proportion to its actual occurrence, since it is perceived as a breach of solemn trust or the betrayal of a traditional responsibility of care. Nonetheless, more young children are killed by their parents than by all other relatives, acquaintances and strangers combined.¹⁰ Overall, family annihilations are committed by men more often than women, with one exception. In cases of child-victims under five, women predominate

as perpetrators.¹¹ Given that children under the age of one (23 per cent) represent the largest percentage of victims by age group, the higher proportion of female perpetrators is significant.¹²

Since the early twentieth century, influential criminologists also presumed that perpetrators of family annihilation were mentally ill, though they often claim to act out of a desire to protect the family from some perceived danger.¹³ Schizophrenia, post-partum depression, paranoia or religious imaginings are among the mental illnesses frequently cited as explanations for family annihilation. Like statistical explanations, insanity associated with crime is often viewed as objective pathology. In media reports from early modern Germany, it was perceived differently. We need to consider media perceptions in historical context, as contingent upon religious ideals and material hardships during an apocalyptic era.

BALLADS OF HARDHEARTEDNESS

Printers reporting gruesome crimes undoubtedly trade on sensationalism. In her analysis of early modern crime reporting, Joy Wiltenburg defines sensationalism as ‘the purveyance of emotionally charged content, mainly focused on violent crime, to a broad public’.¹⁴ She identifies contemporary discourses informing emotions, manipulating cultural impact and transcending actual events. However, it would be wrong to assume reports were entirely fictitious, simply intended to dupe prurient consumers for profit. Broadsheet reports of other crimes are sometimes corroborated in archival records.¹⁵ Most contained good local knowledge. Without some kernel of truth, the stories would hardly be believable to the general public.

However, repetitive patterns in emotive language conformed to tropes and cultural expectations, simultaneously vouchsafing public values and reinforcing ideological agendas. While the chicken–egg problem of ‘the medium is the message’ need not detain us inordinately,¹⁶ broadsheets reinforced their emotive message by utilizing the mnemonic devices of rhyme and music. Ballads in particular depicted violent crimes through tone-poems peddled by itinerant ballad mongers. These *Bänkelsänger* hawked their penny broadsides as cheap entertainment alongside beggars and quacks selling patent medicines. As Tom Cheesman points out, wandering hurdy-gurdy men worked to instrumental accompaniment when not engaged in seasonal labour.¹⁷ Their broadsheets commonly recommended specific tunes. In her investigations of gallows songs, Una McIlvenna documents how their melodies can be recovered and even recreated to chilling effect.¹⁸

Regularly ignored by historians, the musical aspect is very significant. The emotive power of the music was central to the message in several ways. By detailing gruesome events in rhyming couplets set to the tune of religious hymns, ballad mongers jogged their customers' memory. Sensational crimes set to catchy tunes, portrayed in graphic images and narrated in rhyme captured the popular imagination. The image of patrons gathered together in an alehouse, sharing a pint and singing a lively ode about a grisly murder/suicide is evocative. Furthermore, the use of religious hymns reminds us that ballads were part of a religious ideology. The setting of stories about heinous crimes to popular religious hymns directed moral sensibilities towards brotherly love and particularly communal values. Both the medium (printed vernacular broadsheets sung to religious hymns and graphically illustrated for the sake of simple folk) and the message (communal values of brotherly love) clearly identify these ballads as Lutheran.

Evangelical reformers effectively exploited vernacular broadsheets and pamphlets as propaganda tools for the first time. Luther's exhortation to seek salvation through the written word (*sola scriptura*) encouraged literacy and stimulated a market for broadsheets. We can trace the confessional allegiance of many early modern printers to the evangelical movement. Although confessional sympathy did not always outweigh the profit motive, the two could go hand-in-hand. In conjunction with the printed word, the Lutheran tradition of song and community identity (e.g., 'A Mighty Fortress') provided another impetus to ballad sales. The ballads in question here are all evangelical. They showcase biblical allusions and moral lessons in keeping with evangelical doctrine.

Cheesman's analysis employs orthodox ethnographic categories from the German Folksong Archive (*Deutsches Volksliedarchiv*) and examples of murderous parents from Erk and Böhme's (eds.) *Deutsche Literaturhort*. From the latter, he identifies a 'central motif being refusal of a request for food' which he dubs 'ballads of hardheartedness'. According to Cheesman, these ballads articulated anti-aristocratic and anti-feudal sentiments. In keeping with Peter Blicke's theories on evangelical communalism, or what Winfried Schulze contrasts with *Eigennutz*, hardhearted members of the social elite turned their backs on their neighbours.¹⁹ While Cheesman stresses a Marxist conflict between the feudal aristocracy and urban burghers, the evangelical emotive of brotherly love (an exhortation from the second commandment to love one's neighbour) is actually communal. Hardhearted nobles figure in some broadsheets, but in others the villain

is a burgher or a sibling with no noble title. Even if economic inequality defines the social relationship between hoarder and beggar, the moral lesson is one of the need for common values rather than class struggle.

Apart from their Lutheran ideology, the backdrop of a general subsistence crisis informs the content of the family annihilation broadsheets and pamphlets. Prior to the appearance of the hardheartedness ballad in the 1570s, the first known pamphlet to depict family annihilation was Burkard Waldis's 1551 *True and most horrifying account of how a woman tyrannically murdered her four children and also killed herself, at Weidenhausen near Eschwege in Hesse*.²⁰ Since it appeared before the era of general crisis, the hardhearted villain is absent, and this required an alternate causation. The printer, an evangelical minister, attributes the murder/suicide to demonic temptations and sudden mania, i.e. insanity. The perpetrator repents before she dies, rendering it a redemption tale.²¹ Pamphlets and broadsheets of family annihilation are the earliest representations of the suicides of ordinary persons. In other words, individual suicides did not figure as the subject of broadsheets in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries unless they involved family annihilation.²²

Similarly and shortly thereafter, another illustrated murder/suicide pamphlet (Fig. 14.1), also produced as a broadsheet (Fig. 14.2, notably not a ballad) was associated with mania and violent rage rather than with hardheartedness. Published in Strasbourg by Swiss graphic artist and famous wandering ballad monger Heinrich Wirri,²³ it tells of events from Riquewehr. Given the town's proximity to Strasbourg, Wirri surely had direct knowledge of the case. The broadsheet and more expensive pamphlet depict the murder by Jacob Müller of his wife, then eight months pregnant, as related from eye-witness testimony from their household servant. Given the level of detail he offers, either the circumstances were the subject of widespread gossip or Wirri might have been privy to testimony from the proceedings before the town council.²⁴ The servant related to the court how late one night he heard terrible screams from his master's bedroom, after which Müller came out soaked in blood and holding a knife. Confronted, Müller protested that he had 'only' given his wife a beating. Shortly thereafter, the agitated Müller killed himself with the same knife. The woodcut illustrates the bloody murder, Müller's confrontation with his servant and the suicide as a non-sequential graphic collage.²⁵

By 1570, theological explications of a prevailing climate of suicidal despair reflected a marked shift in attitudes toward suicide among evangelical theologians. They began to mitigate suicidal despair within the context of famine, disease and runaway inflation. For example, let us compare

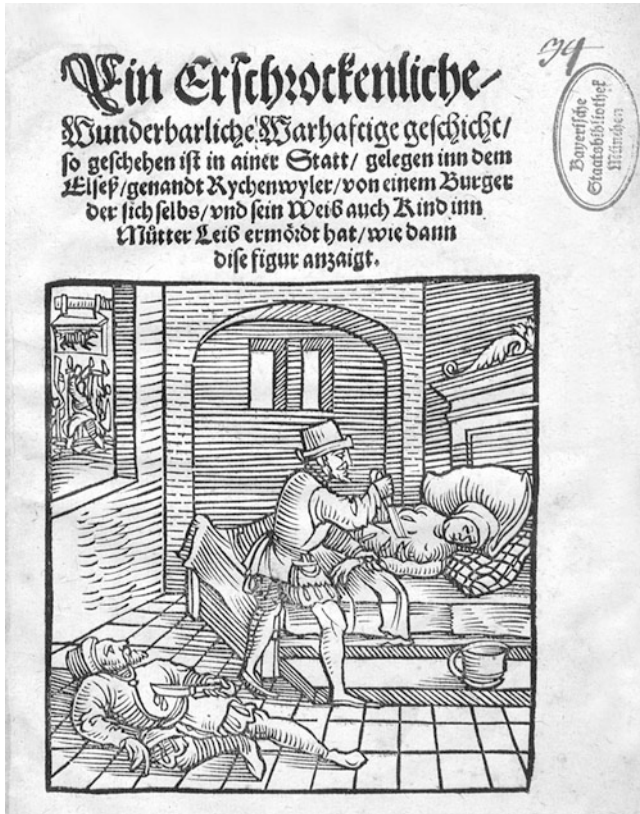


Fig. 14.1 Pamphlet depicting Jacob Müller murdering his wife and who, discovered by his servant (through the window in the background), then kills himself. *Ein Erschrockenliche, Wunderbarliche, Warhaftige Geschicht...* (Strasbourg: Heinrich Wirri, 1553), Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich

an exhortation by Martin Luther with that of the late sixteenth-century evangelical theologian, Sigismund Suevus of Freistadt. In his Sermon on the fifth Psalm of David, 1525, Luther states:

Therefore also despair, spiritual sadness, shame and disgrace do not actually come from the number or gravity of sins, but rather more from an affect and mood of disgust for sins and from which unwisely arises the search for appropriate good works of justification and salvation.²⁶

Ein wunderbarliche erschrockenliche warhafftige geschicht / so geschehen ist in einer Statt gelegen in dem Eltsaz / genant Rychenwyler / von einem Buerger / der sich selbs / vnd sein wib / auch d3 kind in Mütter Leib er moedit hat / wie dan diese figur anzeigt. 1553.



Es lebte ein Seaz in dem Eltsaz / ist genant Reichenwyler / da vor beste Wein in dem Eltsaz wachse / gab die Graff Jogen von Wirtenberg der zu dieser zeit da hof hant / in der selbige Seaz Rychenwyler / die ein herboge die nach in dem hauss gewese / da ein vedor / sonder zu dem tade gerichte / der vñ in den wibe funde lig. in der Kamer / vñ sein eigen demesser / ab seinem wib / wie einer silbernen zwingel in seinem h. rgen fessle bis an das hiff / ist menschlicher von wib vnd man uel erschöcke / vnd sich in geluff in der Seaz erhaben / ist die thei süßgeschlagen / vñ vermeint si stende ernde worden / dan niemand gedachte ds es der Wibe selbs gezean het / Tun hat der selbig wibe ein knechte vñ Hage / auch seliche werck leit die in in den Keben arbeiteten denn es oben in dem arkend wv dia drei vñ vñsigste Jars / die waren nun all an ir abset vñ wuffen vñ den handel mit / nun kunn man alle weis in byer freubnd die nach in dem hauss gewese / wie auch so wuende die Korwecker gestre / wuffend auch von niemand freubnd zu sagen der do binane ganzen wer / darauß lites man die erst gemelten dienft vñ werck leue vaben / vñ in gefenhus legen vnd die edoden leichnß vergeben. Tun waren selich nachbauren die wol etwas vmb den handel wuffend schwig / aber allweil si nie gestre wuenden / dan der wibe noch sein vater in der star hat / der nun ein ehlicher man ist / deo halb mentslich schwig der sinß wol marcke wie cas gangt was / dan in dem hauss niche verendere was weder an gele nach gele wete / auch ds sein egen beyweiser in sin gefunden ward. Tun schickte man nach dem nachrecher gen Bollmar leie ein in si ds Rychenwyler / da man die diuff vñ werck strecken wol ds si etwas ferchen woles / nun so ist der selbig Tachrichter gar ein gschichtler man / in selichen kunst / wie er nun kommen ist vñ in die leue angestige wurdene / hat er si nie wullen strecken in keinen weg

dan sy seind nie schuldig vnd wiff es gegen goet nie zu verantwerten / den der wibe hat es selber geant vnd si sollen die nachbauren fragen so werd man der sachen wol besichend finden / wewol der knechte hat angestige das er den Meister wol habe gehet / ein wib wuffen in seiner kamer treffen / auch die frantzosen schreien / auch so sey der Meister in die kuchen gangen vñ ein leiche angestige / hat er zu dem meister gree / meister was lebens ist sin hant / hab im d maister geantwurt / hat du sein kein adre / ich hab meyn Wib ein wenig geschlagen / hat er sich wideru schlauffen geleit vñ gedachte es sy als / dan er an dem abene nie wolle nie jr zu / riden sey gewesen / man hat aber in me glaube / vñ da man die nachsten nachbauren bei jr erid gestre / bae man erkunden das die diuff vñ werck leue vñ schuldig waren / vñ der wibe sich selber vñ sein ehgemahl mit sampe von dem / in müer leber mirre hat / vnd hat ein O bercke erkend das man in wider auß dem erreich sol aus grabt vñ auff ein wasser geschlagen / das ist geschicht / wie wol er mer dan achtet in in dem erlich gelegen ist. Auf diesem vnterschieden a schloßliche moide sol ein jeder mensich berache wie das der Tuffel vñ seind sein rñne hat weder tag noch nacht allwegen löge wie er vns betriegen mög / vñ so er mer sinum bösen rath volget in einem stuck / wibe er varjuchen in weider zu berebe / alle er dijen wibe geant hat / dann so bade er im gefolger hat sin Wegemahl vmb zu bringe / die do in monarfriffen sol ein junge fründe bringe / da hat der teuffel geodoch mocher sin es so w g bringe das er sich selb auch vmbfächte / so werd er schon sein vñ font die nie mer an gan / Seaz in ing wile wie er sein eige Wegemahl vmb Biache hab / auch sein eigen fleisch vñ bibe / er wurd nit nigene sicker sein vñ wie ein meider elleglich gerichte werde / er soll sich selber vmbkingen / sinß mußt er gar einen herten too leide. Sich lieber freubnd wie der teuffel nie listt mit vns vñ gar / darumb solten wir wache / dan er schlaffe nit / siche alle list vñ ruck wie er vns betriegen mög. Es sollen auch die Welchue diest geschichte wol betrachden das eins dem ander ereid leit vñ gort betrichl anruffen vnd bitten das er sie wolle behüten vor böser ansichung / vnd verfluchung des teuffels / damit nie eins gegon dem andern in vnmillen oder fñdschafft fallen / darvntch d3 diß solliche vnd andere er bringe. Gort lobete ons vor diß vñ andern lasten vñ fure vns in sin Reich durch sein sun vnsern herin Jesum Chysum AMPT.

In truck gegeben durch Heinrich Weiburger von Soloturn.

Fig. 14.2 Illustrated broadsheet depicting the same. *Ein wunderbarliche, erschrockenliche, warhafftige Geschicht...* (Strasbourg: Heinrich Wirri, 1553), Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich

Here, Luther places the blame for despair on affect and mood, rather than on sin. Note the changed emphasis in Sigismund Suevus of Freistadt's (1524–1596) *True warning... in these dangerous times* of 1572:

Now during this present extreme inflation and famine, which consumes almost all of Germany and many other lands... many unbelievers calculate with great presumptuousness [grain speculators—DL]... also many faint hearted persons are moved by devilish reckoning to excessive sadness, impatience and other sins... also one finds other people who, suffering from terrible illnesses... great poverty and hunger... and lay hands on themselves...²⁷

His allusion to subsistence crises and epidemics is echoed in tracts on suicidal despair by two contemporary evangelical theologians, Johann Schutz and Nicolaus Hemmingius. Schutz's apocalyptic *Shield of faith against... despair, also against temptations of premonitions and whether visions and revelations of these recent times are to be trusted*²⁸—a reference to the era of crisis which would have been self-evident to contemporaries—noted how Satan overwhelmed people with signs from inscriptions on tombstones, epitaphs, testaments and last wills, leading them to kill themselves by jumping into bodies of water, by hanging or by stabbing. As spiritual physic, he prescribed sociability, avoidance of sad thoughts and the consolation of scripture to prevent diabolical temptations of suicidal despair. Similarly, in his *Antidotum Adversus Pestem Desperationis* (Berlin, 1590), Hemmingius blamed an epidemic of suicidal despair on the concurrent epidemic of plague. Plague manifested the wrath of God which moved many to suicide to escape suffering and misery. The comments of Suevus, Schutz and Hemmingius reflect the general crisis of the late-sixteenth/early-seventeenth century from about 1570 to 1650.

Civic chronicles from Augsburg also demonstrate a conscious connection between crisis, plague and suicide. They attributed seven cases of suicide to plague-related illnesses from 1570 to 1596. Court records confirm a spike in suicides in Augsburg and neighbouring Bavaria during the years 1570 to 1640.²⁹ This period also witnessed the genesis and peak of hardheartedness ballads. The first family annihilation ballad appeared in 1580. Out of 25 published between 1580 and 1910 (Fig. 14.3), nine appeared between 1580 and 1621 (over one-third of the total during only 12 per cent of the 330 years). As Cheesman points out, the hardheartedness ballad drops off as a motif after the Thirty Years' War, perhaps as much due to improving environmental conditions as to factors specific to the ballad

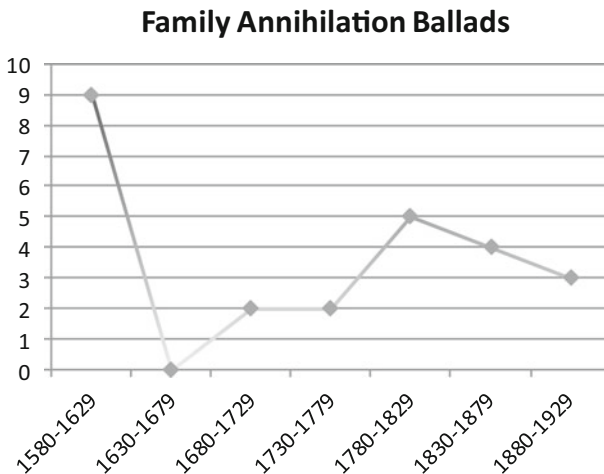


Fig. 14.3 Chronology of Published Family Annihilation Broadsheets and Pamphlets (Redacted from Tom Cheesman, *The Shocking Ballad Picture Show*, 50–51, 82ff., table 2.1, with the addition of one broadsheet not examined by Cheesman)

trade.³⁰ Therefore, a demonstrable link between the novel interpretation of a social event (hardheartedness and family annihilation) and changing environmental circumstances is manifest in the cultural production of pamphlets and illustrated broadsheet ballads sung to religious hymns. If, then, the medium was the message, what exactly was that message?

SOCIAL MORALITY AND THE REVOLT OF KORAH

The first media report to reflect these changes, *A shocking story which occurred in Brabant*, is an eight-page pamphlet published by Valentin Kröner in 1580.³¹ In narrative, it relates the story of an impoverished widow with four starving children during a severe winter followed by grain price inflation. She begged neighbours for help and they directed her to a local nobleman and known grain supplier. The nobleman insultingly refused the poor woman's request for credit. Thereupon, she returned to her children, hanged them all in a barn and then hanged herself. The nobleman arrived upon the scene and the devil appeared; the earth opened up and both he and his horse were dragged into the bowels of hell.

A slightly altered version of this story appeared as an anonymous four-page pamphlet in Hanseatic Lübeck in 1581. The *Shocking, true news*

was specifically a warning to the pious ‘in these troubled times’. It closed with a ‘Prayer to the Sun’ (*Sonnengebet*) set to song.³² It described a family annihilation on 24 April 1580 in the Prussian village of Bietow near Danzig. The peasant Gurgen Schultze begged neighbours for grain to feed his wife and four starving children. They referred him to the local Junker, who refused, swearing a black oath; he had nothing to give or the devil should take him. Schultze returned home, took his family into the barn, hanged them all and then himself. Upon hearing the horrible news, the Junker recognised his failure of neighbourly duty and rode out to the scene. There he encountered a black dog which barked gruesomely, whereupon he and his horse sank deep into the earth. The story ended with a warning to others (particularly the authorities) to uphold their obligations to the Christian community, especially the poor.

The first broadsheet (as opposed to pamphlet) to detail familial annihilation followed by suicide appeared in Augsburg in 1589 (Fig. 14.4). It was a narrative, not a ballad, alluding to a bread shortage explained against the backdrop of a decade of famine and plague.³³ Its precise legal detail, prose format and local knowledge indicate news of an actual event from an inside source. The printer, Hans Schultes, graphically depicted the horrific events of 17 July, when Hans Altweckher slaughtered his family and then killed himself after a journey to Augsburg to buy bread. According to the report, the morning following his return with no bread, he tended his livestock and came home to rest. His pregnant wife, Christina, unsuspectingly put their four children to bed. As they slept, Altweckher rose unnoticed, took a hoe and ‘at the behest of the devil, put his evil thoughts into action’, annihilating his entire family, ‘including the unborn child in his mother’s womb’. Desperate, he fled and happened upon a horse wrangler, to whom he related the tragic incident. Then Altweckher made a strange request. The wrangler should hurry to Altweckher’s brother, tell him to go to his house, locate hidden monies and remove them straight away. Meanwhile (the perpetrator announced), he was off to hang himself in the wood. Altweckher feared the authorities or the executioner would confiscate the monies. Shocked, the pious wrangler reported to the local judge who sent word to the town council in Augsburg. They ordered that Altweckher’s body be cut down and burned. A judge, sheriff and the executioner from Augsburg (Michael Deibler³⁴) examined the crime scene, located Altweckher’s body and discharged the council’s orders. Like the Wirri woodcut, this illustrated broadsheet graphically represented events as a non-sequential collage.

As a mitigating factor in a family annihilation ballad (as opposed to a non-rhyming report), hardheartedness made its first appearance in a



Fig. 14.4 Ware Abcontrafectung ainer erbärmlichen, und erschrocklichen Newen Zeytung. (Augsburg: Hans Schultes, 1589). Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg

Cologne broadsheet of 1591. Composed in rhyming couplets and sung to the tune of ‘Kommt her zu mir, spricht Gottes Sohn’³⁵, the *Truly new newspaper about a starving woman who hanged herself along with three children, which happened in a city called Löwen in Brabant on 4 March 1591* was a hybrid.³⁶ It echoed motifs from the *Shocking story* of 1580 and the *Shocking true news* of 1581, also sporting a one-scene woodcut of the woman kicking away a stool to hang herself from the rafters of a barn, her children already hanging beside her. In this version, she is married with one less child than the previous widow of Brabant. The villain is a Junker, also ultimately dragged to hell. The printer, Niclaus Schreiber, probably copied the Junker motif from the 1581 story of Gurgin Schultze,³⁷ though his broadsheet differs from the earlier pamphlet in several ways. While the woman does obtain bread from the Junker’s maid, she subsequently encounters him returning from the hunt and he callously cuts the loaf in two, feeding both halves to his dogs. Devastated, the woman returns empty-handed to her husband, who paternalistically orders her to pray to God, who would ensure, ‘The stones should sooner turn to bread before a proper Christian should suffer death’ from starvation. This is the first reference to the biblical breadstone in any of the familicide broadsheets. Inconsolable, she refused to listen. After her murder/suicide, her husband alerted the magistrates. The Junker is dragged to hell, but the devil is not physically present. Instead, the earth’s crust cracks open ‘like dust’, whereupon the Junker sinks into hell.

The last two ballad broadsheets depict family annihilations from 1612 and 1613 respectively. Their appearance coincided with a subsistence crisis. They share evolutions in the hardheartedness motif. For the first time, a chronological sequence of illustrated captions advances sequentially from right to left and left to right respectively. Previous broadsheets represented the events as one holistic collage, requiring reference to the text. Further, the husband is the perpetrator. The hardhearted villain is no longer a nobleman, but a burgher. Both reports begin as *A true and shocking new newspaper on what has occurred...*³⁸ One concerns an incident in Luzern, the other in the Alsatian town of Altendan near Strasbourg. Therefore, although the cases are from two different regions, the structural similarities are noteworthy.

The 1612 broadsheet (Fig. 14.5) sings the tale of a day labourer and a wealthy burgher to the tune of a *Tagweis*³⁹ addressed to poor and rich alike in ‘these hard times’.⁴⁰ The narrative is a gender inversion of the 1591 broadsheet. The burgher was greedy, wicked and proud, his wife submis-

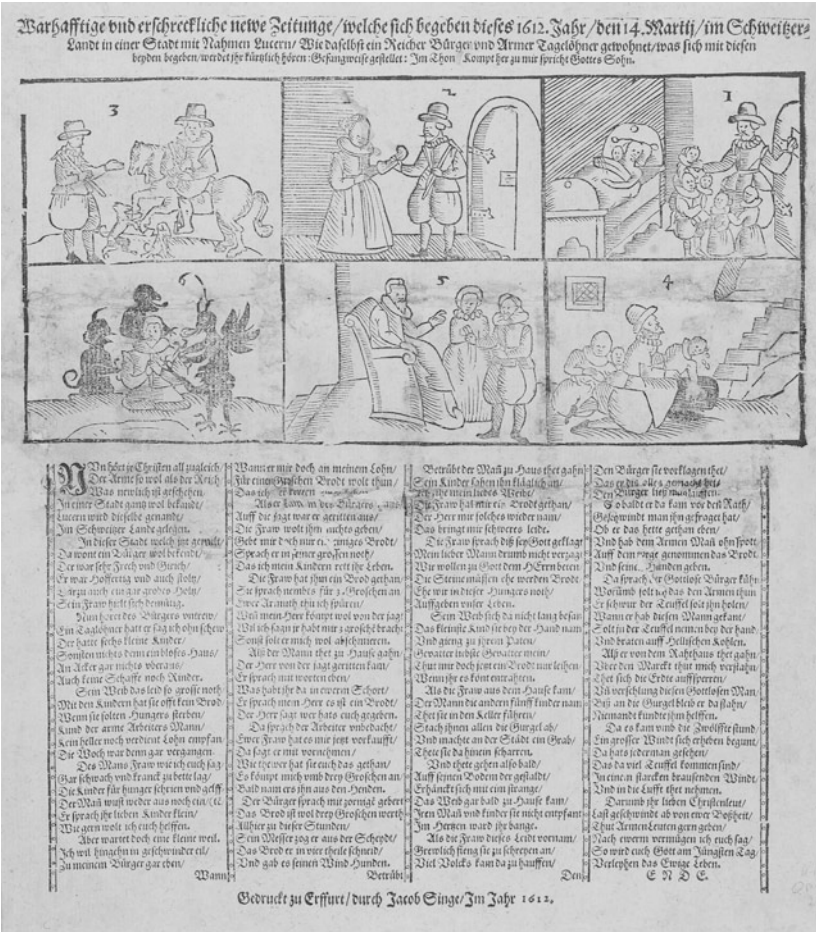


Fig. 14.5 *Warhafftige und erschreckliche newe Zeitungen* (Strasbourg: Jacob Singe, 1612), Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel

sive. The labourer and his wife had six starving children, a humble home, a small plot of land with neither sheep nor cattle (caption 1). He begged the burgher’s wife for bread. She offered only three pennies worth, fearing her husband would beat her after returning from the hunt (caption 2). On his way home, the labourer encountered the burgher, who took the bread, cut it up and threw it to his greyhounds (caption 3). Upon recognizing his

afflicted state of mind and tribulations (*betrübt*), the labourer's wife pleaded with him to seek solace in God, for surely 'Sooner will stones turn to bread than we shall surrender our lives to starvation'. Thereupon, she took one of the children to ask his godfather for bread. While away, however, her desperate husband took the remaining five children into the basement, stabbed them all (caption 4), buried their bodies on the edge of town and hanged himself. Bitterly, she called the wealthy man to task before the town council, which summoned him to answer the charge of taking bread from the poor man's hands (caption 5). The godless and cunning burgher expressed indignation, swearing the devil should carry him off to roast in the fires of hell if this were true. After leaving the town hall the ground opened in the market place and he was taken into the earth up to his neck; hours later, a troop of devils descended and carried him off in the wind (caption 6). The ballad closes with a remonstrance to help those in need according to one's wealth.

Similarly, the 1613 broadsheet (Fig. 14.6) relates the story of Jacob Siller and his starving family, also sung to the *Tagweis*. Troubled in his reason, Jacob took his family and knelt before his wealthy brother Johannes Schiller (*sic*⁴¹) begging for bread or a half-bushel of grain. Johannes claimed he had nothing to give and swore the devil should rend him asunder if he did. Poor Jacob took his family home, hanged his children and then himself from a tree (caption 2). Upon discovering the crime, his wife stabbed herself with a knife. Public commotion ensued. When the news reached his rich brother, Johannes callously remarked, 'What do I care?' and wished his brother and family swallowed by the sea. He then sat down to dine with his wife, a maid and a man servant, sarcastically joking that, after dinner, he would hang himself. Shocked, his wife exclaimed, 'Oh my beloved husband, what a great sin you have committed against your brother'. As they began to eat, a 'black man' (the devil) entered the room and stepped up to the table (caption 3). He reproached Johannes with the eternal flames of hell for his sins and proceeded to fulfil the latter's previous oath, tearing him to pieces to the horror of his dinner companions.

The moral of the story is abundantly clear. Both broadsheets are replete with New Testament allusions, such as the exhortation to feed the hungry from the parable of sheep and goats, Matthew 25:35, 'I was hungry and you fed me'. Taken together with the bread/stone metaphor (from the 'ask, seek, knock' parable of Matthew 7:9: 'Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?') Church-going audiences readily recognized the biblical exhortation to brotherly love, even to the point of mitigating terrible crimes. While the perpetrator of family

Eine Warhafftige vnd Erschröckliche Neue Zeitung.

Welche sich begeben vil zugetragen hat im Elsas in einer Statt Altendan genant wie alda zween Brüder gewohnet der eine ein reicher/der ander ein armer/wie der arme Bruder den reichen vnd ein halben Schaffel Aken gebeten hat/oder vmb ein Brodt/das er mit seinem Weibe vnd Kindern/zu essen habe Er wolle ihn in geleaner zeit bezahlen/oder mit seiner Sauen Arbeit abrichten. Und wie ihn der Reiche mit spöttlichen Worten abgewien hat. Und was sich nachmals weiter zugetragen ist/verordt der Oberrathschreiber Im Zhen. Wie man die Zeitung singt/geschreyt/den 4. May in d. 1513 zu Jher.



Sozt zu ein großes Wunder/ ihr Christen in gemein/ was ich an-
sich zueinander betradit groß und klein/ was so newlich geschichet
/ ihu ich mit warheit sagen vnd dasß ich getwis.
Als man schreibe Taufens schchshundert/ vnd darzu farwar/ den 4.
May besondere/ was ich sing dasß ist war/eine Statt die ist gang wol-
betande/ in dem Elsas gelegen/ Altendan ist sie genant.
Darinne thete wohin/ ein armer Bürgerman mit Namen Jacob
Siller/ wie ich euch zeige an/ mit seinem Ehlichen Weib schon/ sampt
deren Kindern kleine/ ihu ich euch melden an.
Der selbe hett einen Bruder/ welcher war reich am Gut mit Namt
Johanns Schiller/ sag ich an allen spot/ iwar reich am gelt sag ich
fren/ da zu hat er anch zween Häuser das glaubt an allen schew.
Gar Herrlich thete leben/ der reiche Bruder schon/ seinem armen
theer nichts geben/ wie für hören an/ darzu veracht er jeder-
man/ wie für ihn hin thet gehn/ muß ihm ein Feder lahn.
Der arme Bruder thet gehn/ wol zu dem reichen hin/ ihu ich mit
warheit sagen/ gar mit betrübten Sinn/ bey jeder Hand ein Kinde
ihet han/ vnd dar den Teuffel schreye/ in Jesu Christi Nam.
Eder Bruder ihu mit auffhelffen/ mit Korn oder Vordte schon/
dasß ich habe zu essen/ mit Weib vnd Kinde fortan/ ich wil dirs aber-
leiten ihu es wil dir das bezahlen/ wo mich Gott beyml thet ihu lahn.
Der reiche Bruder thet sagen/ wol zu dem armen Mann/ ihu dich
geschwind wegdrücken ins Teuffels namen schon/ hastu dir vil machen
ihu/ junge Scherine vnd Vordraffen/ so errechte sie auch allein.
Der arme Bruder thet wider sagen/ in seiner grossen Noth/ ihu
meinen Kindern gehen/ nur einen Vissen Brodt/ dasß sie doch zu essen
han/ von Gott dein aller he-ßten/ wurstu dem Lozn empfahn.
Da thet der rich Bruder sagen/ aus grestem obernuth/ der Teuffel
theu mich helen/ wann ich jetz habe Brodt/ alda in meinem hause
schon/ so ihu mich der Teuffel zureiff/ alsß bald von hunden an.
Der arme Bruder thet gehn/ mit seinen Kindern zu Haus/ er iwar
gar sehr betrubet/ wußt weder ein noch auß/ in seinen Garten er thet
gahn/ hiensich vnd seine Kinder/ alda an einem Baum.
Seine Frau in Garten thet gehen/ wels ihu nach ihrem Mann/
gar bald sie ihu sah hangen/ alda an einem Baum/ mit ihren dreyn
Kindern klein/ thet sie in Dinnacht fallen/ wie ihr werd hören seyn.
Alsß henn dar thet liegen/ bis sie zu ihr selber kam/ thet sie bald auff-
lichten/ ihr Meiser auß der steyden nam/ schach sich damit in ihren

Leib/ dasß sie da thet umfallen/ da war groß Herkuleydt.
Das geschrey thet bald kommen/ für den reichen Bruder dar/ wie es
da wer zungen/ dasß solt er hören iwar/ mit seinem armen Bruder
schon/ da thet er spöttlich sagen/ was thut mich Hals/ ich wolt er we-
verfunkt/ oder leg gleichsals/ im Weer da es am tiefsten ist/ mit
Weib vnd auch mit Kindern/ ihu weiter du sommer Grien.
So dörfst ich kein spödt hören/ vor seiner voren mich eres wol
aufgerichte/ so maaz er bitten für sich/ im Himmel oder im Helischen
Feuer/ was er da hat verdienet dasß werd ihm wol werden zu theil.
Wie sich nun thete enden/ derselbe löde Tag da sich der reiche Br-
der/ an dem armen der sondige hat/ zu seinem Weibe sag er spöttlich/
das abend Brodt wollen wir essen daruach wil ich hucken mich.
Die Frau erschraef gar schrey/ sprach ach mein lieber Mann/ wie
hast ihu so große Sünde an einem Bruder gethan/ jr habt die große
schuldt daran/ ach thet best gefug was hast ihu doch gethan.
Wie sie nun theten es ihn die auch sagen an/ zur Stube wein thet
kommen/ ein Grotzer Schaber Mann/ Trar für den Tisch sag ich gar
schon/ schreckliche Wort thet reden/ wie ihr werd hören an.
Hettstu deinem Bruder/ ihu Korn oder Brodt geben/ wie er
dich so sehr hate/ vnd auch daruach sprach an/ so were dich nicht ge-
schichn/ wie es ist heut ergangen/ vnd hast vor augen gesichn.
Der schwarze Mann thet sagen/ wels der lödige Teuffel war/
die nache habe ich bekommen/ dich zu fraffen iwar/ auch dor in alle
Ewigkeit/ in dem Helischen Feuer/ dasß ist dir auch bereit.
Der Teuffel thet ihn nehmen/ von seinen Tische weg/ daruber hat
geschien die Moad vnd der Knecht/ so wol auch sein eignes Weib/ die
habens angesehn/ wie der Teuffel zureiff den Leib.
In seinem eignes Haus ihu ich an setzen hat/ hat ihu der Teuffel jureiffen/ im
wie steckal dar/ die Frau ihu ergete merck/ seine bis sie noch nicht wer-
den/ wie hiesussehen an. Dasß geschrey ist bald kommen/ wol in die gasse Gtatt/
vil Volck thet darzu kommen/ so sehen die schreckliche Zalt/ die der Teuffel durch
Wettes mach/ hat schrecklichen bedangen/ drumd Wines nimbe wol in ader.
Der geschwilt alsß/ auch dieses weil in acht/ wie der reiche Bruder/ den
armen hat veracht/ alsß mit seiner Hand/ ihu huffe hat wollen beweißen mit einem
Stück Weede. Alsß bald ihr vernommt/ die schreckliche geschicht/ ran an/ gar
bis im Ende/ den gantz liden bedacht/ wie es damals ergangen ist/ hat ihu
ihu versehen/ das betraet die Drommer Kirt. Daruach ist vns die bitte
Ihr Christen Mann vnd alle/ laß vns die wille behüten/ vore Teuffel man-
vnd Weilt/ soß vns bitten vil zufrucht/ vnd thet wolig geben/ geben/
sein wiges Himmetreich.

Fig. 14.6 Eine Warhafftige und erschreckenliche neue Zeitung (Erfurt: n.p., 1613), Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg

annihilation and suicide faced the same dishonourable burial as King Ai (Joshua 8:29), the broadsheets said little about their damnation. In the Waldis pamphlet of 1551, the widow even lives long enough to repent her suicide attempt and is considered redeemed despite having murdered four children. The 1613 broadsheet illustrates the wife with a dagger through her heart floating above the earth toward her family, all hanged from a tree. Is this an allusion to the rood, the instrument of crucifixion which brings salvation? Clearly, their movement towards heaven indicates forgiveness through divine mercy. Therefore, while the murder/suicide is certainly never condoned, it is rendered the subject of pity through references to diminished physical (hunger) and mental (i.e. troubled, tribulations, despair) capacity in an era of subsistence crisis, an environmental condition only too familiar to contemporaries during those troubled times.

Not so with the wealthy. The vengeful God of the Old Testament, who punished the revolt of the Korahites against the community of believers and their leaders could also punish unbelievers in ‘these troubled times’. The weight of judgment for family annihilation clearly falls on hardhearted withholders of Christian charity who fail in their duty of brotherly love, the basis of the evangelical community. Each pamphlet and broadsheet ends with a not-so-subtle warning to pious Christians not to turn their back on their fellows in troubled times; ultimately, Society is to blame, not the murderer/self-killer. God exacts his vengeance through the devil, who acts with the permission of God. The 1613 broadsheet explicitly states as much; in the end, the whole community gathers to witness ‘the shocking deed which the devil, *through the power of God* [my emphasis], has shockingly committed’, i.e. rending the rich brother asunder. Another common characteristic is the reference to the fantastic depiction of the earth opening up to swallow the evil-doer. Again, pious audiences would have recognized this Old Testament event, described as the revolt of Korah against Moses and the legitimate community of believers (e.g. from the Tribe of Reuben 10; Numbers 16:32; Deuteronomy 11:6). During the Exodus, the people of Israel complained about the lack of water and food. Moses, striking his staff into a stone, produced water at Meribah, but the house of Korah and their followers disavowed the leadership of Moses and Aaron—and thereby the power of the one true God. Condemned by Moses, God punished them by causing them to be swallowed up by the earth. As a moral exhortation to social justice, the themes of the breadstone and the revolt of Korah have had considerable traction in Western culture. Molière alluded to them in the final scene of *Dom Juan or the Feast of Stone*, when the philanderer

(whose name has become synonymous with womanising) is confronted by the statue of the Commandant previously killed in a duel after defending the honour of his daughter. The statue interrupts the rascal's dinner, threatens him with damnation and, when his exhortation to atonement is spurned, he drags the unrepentant sinner into the bowels of the earth. The scene will be familiar to opera goers from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. Movie buffs may also recall liberties taken from biblical references in Cecil B. DeMille's re-enactment of the worshipping of the golden calf in the sixties epic, *The Ten Commandments*. More recently, in the 2009 horror film *Drag Me to Hell*, a callous Los Angeles debt-collector faces an analogous fate after being cursed by a gypsy for refusing an extension on her loan. In today's world, the motif has lost none of its former popularity; the film was awarded a 92 per cent score by *Rotten Tomatoes*. These subsequent examples from literature, opera and film serve to demonstrate the transmission and longevity of ideas from popular culture across different genres as media change over time.

CONCLUSIONS

As regards social interpretations of murder, suicide and family annihilation, neither the medium nor the message of the hardheartedness ballad-broadsheets of early modern Germany make any sense outside of their specific historical context. For evangelicals in an apocalyptic age, their power to interpret portentous events (in this case, starvation and family annihilation) derived from a communalist ideology of the type described by Peter Blickle. Protestant theologians and propagandists were the first to effectively harness print technology through illustrated broadsheets to spread their message for the sake of simple folk. The use of rhyming couplets to tell a story replete with scriptural metaphors familiar to an audience inculcated in scripture through preaching and the written word—*sola scripture*—was mnemonically reinforced by reference to popular evangelical hymns, an essential part of Sunday worship and everyday life. The medium and the message mutually reinforced evangelical identity and heightened a sense of collective consciousness and emotional community.

Located within this larger cosmological scheme, apparently meaningless crimes highlighted against the backdrop of material circumstances took on transcendental meaning. They placed the community under a microscope, identified weaknesses and encouraged group cohesion and conformity. By depicting unimaginably horrific crimes as potential portents, printers played

upon chiliastic fears. Specific waves of weather-related catastrophes, crop failures, hunger and endemic plague loomed large in the popular imagination. They mitigated culpability for heinous crimes, partly transferring responsibility onto a selfish culprit who, like a black mark upon the community, tempted the intercession of Satan. At one-and-the same time, printers and purveyors of ballad-broadsheets sold what the consumer wanted and stoked the fires of millenarian panic. They appealed to their readers' social conscience and, indeed, offered a concrete solution to thwart devilish greed, murder and suicide. Family annihilation had a meaning in God's plan and until Christians united to face adversity, further breakdowns of community could be expected, with potentially threatening consequences.

Finally, let us return to the initial question of the role of social relationships in familicide. Obviously, the same event can be interpreted in many different ways according to circumstances and morality. The broadsheets evidence the importance placed upon brotherly love as a social bond by the evangelical Reformation. In our increasingly privatised world, family annihilations are represented in our own tabloids as atomized events, freak happenstance, the products of temporary insanity. The commonality between their broadsheets and our tabloids is the development of print culture. Public awareness of larger social relationships as determinants of social facts witnessed the genesis of mass culture, broad collective consciousness and society as we have come to understand it. Even if ballad-broadsheets and tabloids cater to sensationalism, they are not without deeper implications and historical significance. As they rant about family annihilation, they whisper to us that without other people, there could be no murder at all; that murder is relational and does not occur in a vacuum. The nature of those relationships, however, remains a question of historical context. If broadsheets like these made modern social awareness possible, then they evidence a new type of thinking. For evangelical contemporaries, the social now became an underlying given. There was, indeed, no exit, not even for the victims of family annihilation, who remained in the web of society even after death, immortalized in broadsheet ballads of hardheartedness.

NOTES

1. Funded by a two-year Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant from the European Commission under the joint auspices of the Australian Research Council Centre for Excellence for the History of Emotions and the Wellcome

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2. See the forum in the *American Historical Review* 113, no.4 (2008) on the General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century Revisited, esp. Jonathan Dewald, 'Crisis, Chronology, and the Shape of European Social History,' 1031–52. Originally a Eurocentric concept, its global dimensions are explored by Geoffrey Parker, 'Crisis and Catastrophe: The Global Crisis of the Seventeenth Century Reconsidered,' 1053–79. On the impact of climate change on culture during the Little Ice Age, see Wolfgang Behringer, Hartmut Lehman and Christian Pfister, eds., *Kulturelle Konsequenzen der 'Kleinen Eiszeit'* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005).
3. Initially, suicide statistics were the first universal social indicators of deviant behaviour in the emergent field of social physics, later sociology. See Maria Teresa Brancaccio, Eric J. Engstrom and David Lederer, 'The Politics of Suicide: Historical Perspectives on Suicidology before Durkheim. An Introduction,' *The Journal of Social History* 46, no.3 (2013): 607–19.
4. Extended Homicide Tables of the FBI for 2012 (summary), accessed 6 October 2014, <http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2012/crime-in-the-u.s.-2012/offenses-known-to-law-enforcement/expanded-homicide/expandhomicidemain>; Table 1, accessed 6 October 2014, http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2012/crime-in-the-u.s.-2012/offenses-known-to-law-enforcement/expanded-homicide/expanded_homicide_data_table_1_murder_victims_by_race_and_sex_2012.xls; Table 2, accessed 6 October 2014, http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2012/crime-in-the-u.s.-2012/offenses-known-to-law-enforcement/expanded-homicide/expanded_homicide_data_table_2_murder_victims_by_age_sex_and_race_2012.xls.
5. Extended Homicide Tables of the FBI for 2012, Table 3, accessed 6 October 2014, http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2012/crime-in-the-u.s.-2012/offenses-known-to-law-enforcement/expanded-homicide/expanded_homicide_data_table_3_murder_offenders_by_age_sex_and_race_2012.xls.
6. Extended Homicide Tables of the FBI for 2012, Table 10, accessed 6 October 2014, http://www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/crime-in-the-u.s/2012/crime-in-the-u.s.-2012/tables/10tabledataadecpdf/table_10_offenses_known_to_law_enforcement_by_state_by_metropolitan_and_non-metropolitan_counties_2012.xls..
7. Arthur L. Kellerman and J. A. Mercy, 'Men, Women, and Murder: Gender-Specific Differences in Rates of Fatal Violence and Victimization,' *Journal of Trauma* 33 (1992): 1–5.

8. See Charles Ewing, *Fatal Families. The Dynamics of Intrafamilial Homicide* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1997).
9. Indirect or judicial suicide in early modern Europe predominated among female perpetrators with victims generally young children. See, for example, Arne Janson, *From Swords to Sorrow: Homicide and Suicide in early modern Stockholm* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1998); Kathy Stuart, 'Suicide by Proxy: The Unintended Consequences of Public Executions in Eighteenth-Century Germany,' *Central European History* 41 (2008): 413–45; Stuart, 'Melancholy Murders: Suicide by Proxy and the Insanity Defense,' in *Ideas and Cultural Margins in Early Modern Germany: Essays in Honor of H.C. Erik Middelort*, ed. Marjorie Elizabeth Plummer and Robin B. Barnes (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 63–80; Tyge Krogh, *A Lutheran Plague: Murdering to Die in the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).
10. Susan Hatters Friedman, Sarah McCue Horwitz and Phillip J. Resnick, 'Child Murder by Mothers: A Critical Analysis of the Current State of Knowledge and a Research Agenda,' *American Journal of Psychiatry* 162 (2005): 1578–1587.
11. For case-histories of family annihilation and female homicides, see: Rosemary Gartner and Bill McCarthy, 'Twentieth-Century Trends in Homicide Followed by Suicide in Four North American Cities,' in *Histories of Suicide: International Perspectives on Self-Destruction in the Modern World*, ed. John Weaver and David Wright (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 281–303; Geoffrey R. McKee, *Why Mothers Kill: A Forensic Psychologist's Casebook* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Lawrence A. Greenfeld and Tracy L. Snell, 'Women Offenders,' Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report, Dec. 2009, accessed 6 October 2014, <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/wo.pdf>.
12. See the UK Office for National Statistics report on Crime Statistics, Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, 2013/14, accessed 13 February 2015, <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/crime-stats/crime-statistics/focus-on-violent-crime-and-sexual-offences-2013-14/index.html>, which states, 'As in previous years, children under one year old had the highest rate of homicide (23.9 offences per million population) compared with other age groups. With the exception of those aged under one year, adults generally had higher incidence rates of being a victim of homicide than children.' Many thanks to Katie Barclay for bringing this to my attention.
13. One of the early pioneers in the field, he was responsible for introducing the neologism 'narcissism' into psychiatric jargon. On familicide, see his *Über Familienmord durch Geistesranke* (Halle: Marhold, 1908). Also, Ulrike Meier, 'Der erweiterte Selbstmord mit seiner forensisch-psychiatrischen Problematik' (PhD dissertation, University of Cologne, 1983).

14. Joy Wiltenburg, 'True Crime: The Origins of Modern Sensationalism,' *American Historical Review* 109 (2004): 1377. See also her chapter on family murders in *Crime and Culture in Early Modern Germany* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012); see also Gerd Schwerhoff, *Historische Kriminalitätsforschung* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2011), 52, 182–185.
15. See, for example, Wolfgang Behringer, *Witchcraft Persecutions in Bavaria: Popular Magic, Religious Zealotry and Reason of State in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 230ff; Abaigéal Warfield, 'The Media Representation of the Crime of Witchcraft in Early Modern Germany: An Examination of Non-Periodical News-Sheets and Pamphlets, 1533–1669,' PhD dissertation, National University of Ireland Maynooth, 2013, 261–95.
16. The rhetorical question posed by Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1964); see also Wolfgang Behringer, Miloš Havelka and Katharina Reinholdt, eds., *Mediale Konstruktionen in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Affalterbach: Didymos Verlag, 2013).
17. Tom Cheesman, *The Shocking Ballad Picture Show: German Popular Literature and Cultural History* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1994).
18. Una McIlvenna, 'The Power of Music: The Significance of Contrafactum in Execution Ballads,' *Past & Present* 229, no. 1 (2015): 47–89.
19. Cheesman, *The Shocking Ballad Picture Show*, 49–50; Peter Blicke, *Communal Reformation: The Peoples' Quest for Salvation in the Sixteenth Century* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1992); Winfried Schulze, 'Vom Gemeinnutz zum Eigennutz,' *Historische Zeitschrift* 243 (1986): 591–626.
20. *Eyne warhafftige und gantz erschreckliche historien...* (Marburg, 1551).
21. For a full explication of this sensational pamphlet, see Wiltenburg, 1386ff.
22. The first mention of an individual suicide appears in a funeral sermon of 1596; see Johann Pertsch, *Nachrufsschrift für den Selbstmörder Christoph Rhelin aus dem Jahr 1596* (Ralf Schuster Verlag, Passau 2013). Many thanks to Alexander Kästner for this reference and for corroborating my suspicions about the absence of early popular broadsheets on ordinary self-killers.
23. Eduard Hoffmann-Krayer, 'Wirri , Heinrich,' in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 55 (1910): 385–7, accessed 23 March 2016, <http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/ppn124537154.html?anchor=adb>.
24. Citations from town-council protocols regularly figured in chronicles, some written by civic scribes. See David Lederer, "'Wieder ein Faß aus Augsburg" ... Suizid in der frühneuzeitlichen Lechmetropole,' *Mitteilungen. Institut für Europäische Kulturgeschichte der Universität Augsburg* 15 (2005): 47–72.

25. Reprinted in 1555 by Georg Wickram, who blamed the husband's rage over a property deal gone wrong. See Marga Stede, "'Ein grawsame unnd erschrockenliche History": Bemerkungen zum Ursprung und zur Erzählweise von Georg Wickrams Rollwagenbüchlein-Geschichte über einen Mord im Elsaß,' *Daphnis* 15 (1986):125–34.
26. 'Also auch verzweyfflung geystliche trawrigkeyt/schmach und schande eyns bekümmerten gewissens, komen nicht eygentlich und zu förderst auss der menge und grösse der sunden/ sondern viel mehr aus eym Affect und gemüete/ das sich für den sunden entsetzet/ und das da unweysslich süche die fulle gutter wercke der gerechtickeyt und der seligkeyt.' Martin Luther, *Der Fünffte Psalm David. Widder die heuchler und falsche Propheten. Von Hoffnung und Verzweyflung* (Wittenberg, 1525), Hiiii.
27. 'Denn in dieser gewertigen schweren Thewrung und grossen hungers noth / die fast gantz Deuschlandt / und viel andere Länder eingenomen / viel ungleubige / verzweiffelte heilose tropffen / nach irem kopffe / rechnung Machen / wie hoch die Thewrung steigen / und wie lange solches wehren sole / mit grosser vermessenheit / das es nicht anders werden könne noch müsse. Durch welche Teuffelische rechnung auch viel kleinmütige Leuthe / zur ubermeßigen trawrigkeit / ungedult / und andern Sünden sich reitzen und bewegen lassen. Also auch in grosser krankheit un[d] andern nöten / wenn man allerley gebürliche mittel suchet und brauchet / und aber die noth nicht allein nichts linder/ sondern je grösser und hefftiger wird / da finden sich auch Leuthe / die als balde schliessen / es sey nun gar auß und umb sonst / ferner rath oder hülfte zu suchen / oder zu gewarten. Das heist an Gottes macht verzweiffeln.' Suevus Frestadiensus, *Trewe Warnung für die leidigen Verzweiffung, sampt nützlichen Bericht, wie und wadurch des Teuffels Leithstrick and Zweiffelknotten auffgelöst und zertrennet warden. Aleen angefochtenen und betrübten Leuthen, Sonderlich in diesen letzten geschwinden und geferblichen Zeiten zu gute gestellt* (Görlitz, 1572), B iv–v. See also David Lederer, 'Verzweiffung im alten Reich. Selbstmord während der "Kleinen Eiszeit",' in *Kulturelle Konsequenzen*, ed. Behringer, Lehman and Pfister, 268–76.
28. *Schild des Glaubens, wider die Sicherheit und verzweiffelung, auch wider die Anfechtung von der Versehung. Und ob Gesichten und Offenbarung in diesen letzten zeiten zu trawen sey* (Wittenberg: Gronenberg, 1583).
29. Lederer, 'Verzweiffung,' 258–64; Lederer, *Madness, Religion and the State in Early Modern Europe: A Bavarian Beacon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 242–58; Lederer, "'Wieder ein Fass,'" 68f.; Lederer, 'Aufruhr auf dem Friedhof. Pfarrer, Gemeinde und Selbstmord im frühneuzeitlichen Bayern,' in Gabriela Signori, ed., *Trauer, Verzweiffung und Anfechtung. Selbstmord und Selbstmordversuche in mittelalterlichen*

- und frühneuzeitlichen Gesellschaften (Tübingen: Diskord, 1994), 189–209.
30. Cheesman, *The Shocking Ballad Picture Show*, 65.
 31. *Ein erschreckliche Geschichte/ So geschehen ist in Brabant*. Walter Strauss, *The German Single-Leaf Woodcut, 1550–1600* (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1975), 566.
 32. Anonymous, *Erschreckliche, Warhaffige Zeitung, von einem Bawren, welcher seinen Juncker umb Korn zu leihen gebeten, das er jhm thet versagen, Und der Bawr darüber in verzweifflung gefallen, wegen hungers nott sich selbst sampt seinem Weib und Kinder erbengt, auch wie hernache der Edeman versuncken: Allen frommen Christen zur warnung in gesangs weise gestellet...* (Lübeck, 1581).
 33. *Ware Abcontrafectung ainer erbärmlichen, und erschrecklichen Newen Zeytung, so sich zu Erlingen, 4. Meil Wegs von Augsburg, oberhalb Schwab München gelegen, verlauffen, alda ein Inwonder und Brott Kauffer, mit Namen Hans Altweckher, sein Schwangers Weyb benannet Christina, und 4. Seiner Kinder... ermordet nnd umb gebracht hat* (Augsburg, 1589). This is, to my knowledge, the only broadsheet Cheesman passes over, perhaps because it does not strictly adhere to the hardheartedness genre.
 34. Although not mentioned by name in the broadsheet, details on his tenure are found in Kathy Stuart, *Defiled Trades and Social Outcasts. Honor and Ritual Pollution in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 75–6. He is not to be confused with the seventeenth-century Munich executioner of the same name, though the two were presumably related, given the nature of executioners' dynastic and social networks; see Jutta Nowosadtko, *Scharfrichter und Abdecker. Der Alltag zweier "unehrlicher Berufe" in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1994), 216ff.
 35. Later set down as a composition for organ by baroque composer Johann Michael Bach of Thuringia (father-in-law of Johann Sebastian Bach), accessed 24 November 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JtvVCjOdIAw>. See also Jean M. Perreault, *The Thematic Catalogue of the Musical Works of Johann Pachelbel* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2004), 114ff.
 36. *Warhafftige neue Zeittung von einer Frawen sampt dreyen Kindern wie sich selbst durch hungers noth erhangen, gesechhen in Brabant, in einer Statt Löwen genandt, den 4. Martij, Anno 1591* (Köln: Schreiber, 1591).
 37. Although Schreiber worked from Cologne and may have been Catholic, the motifs he employs are clearly coming from earlier Lutheran examples.
 38. *Warhafftige und erschreckliche Zeitunge, welche sich beggeben dieses 1612. Jahr, den 14. Martij, im Schweitzerland in der Stadt mit Nahmen Lucern...* (Erfurt: Jacob Singe 1612); *Eine Warhafftige und Erschreckliche Newe*

Zeitung, welche sich begeben und zugtraben hat im Elsass, in einer Statt Altendan genant (Strasbourg: Leonhard Straub the Younger, 1613). Both from Dorthy Alexander and Walter Strauss, eds., *The German Single-Leaf Woodcut, 1600–1700* (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1977), 593 and 628 respectively.

39. A *Tagweis* is a common evangelical hymn, often sung to accompany work.
40. There are several common variations of the *Tagweis*: see Albrecht Classen, *Deutsche Liederbücher des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts* (Münster; New York: Waxmann, 2001), 180.
41. Here we note the unsystematic nature of early modern orthography.

Divine, Deadly or Disastrous? Diarists' Emotional Responses to Printed News in Sixteenth-Century France

Susan Broomhall

This essay explores how sixteenth-century French diarists responded to a range of events that were presented to them through print media, arguing that their distinct, indeed often divergent, emotional responses to this information—as simple reports of deaths, miraculous evidence of divine intervention or as disastrous signs of End Times—depended strongly on their particular affiliation to one of the diverse confessional positions of sixteenth-century France. Lyon and Paris were leading centres of French current affairs and publishing, and were centrally concerned with disseminating news of the military and religio-political events that engulfed France in the second half of the century.¹ Such publications fostered a sense of the disastrous, as they reported repeatedly on wars, political disruptions, violence, rapes and murders, famines and plagues, and the century's unusual or miraculous weather and astrological events, prodigious births and monsters.

S. Broomhall
School of Humanities (History), The University of Western Australia, Perth, WA,
Australia

Scholars suggest that the printed words and images that churned off the presses with such rapidity in the sixteenth century exercised broad influence, shaping mentalities, emotional regimes and beliefs, pushing the state-building agenda of monarchs, driving religious reform and particularly the conflicts that threatened later sixteenth-century France.² Denis Crouzet, for example, has argued that print encouraged apocalyptic thinking among the intellectual elite, while popular *canards* were a significant part of the Catholic League's religious programme and practice.³ Yet there has been little scholarly work to date analysing who was reading such works, how they accessed them, and how they responded emotionally to the information that these texts contained, particularly beyond the milieu of elite men in the capital. Examining a range of manuscript journals by women and men, in the provinces as well as the capital and at court, this chapter explores the emotional dimensions of collection and reading of contemporary printed news for sixteenth-century diarists. It analyses how emotional responses to printed news were formed by confessional affiliations that saw readers understand contemporary events in terms that ranged from divine protection to apocalyptic signs.⁴

I read particular emotional articulations as reflective of confessional identities, which were performed through textual and material practices in these journals. The lens of 'performativity', first developed by Judith Butler to consider gendered identities as constructed through performed practice, helps us to consider how emotional articulations were generated within distinct gender, race, age and particularly confessional ideologies, and how they also constructed these ideologies in the same process.⁵ These considerations are key to the ways in which printed accounts shaped readers' affective responses, and diarists subsequently expressed feelings about such texts and their content in their journals. Butler's notion of performativity has since been fruitfully nuanced by scholars of emotions as a significant theoretical model for analysing historical emotional expression and experience.⁶ As Erika Kuijpers has argued of nuns' chronicles composed during the period of the Dutch Revolt, 'the narrative structuring of their experiences was an emotional practice in itself: a way to order the disorder, in coping with terrible memories and transforming them into a good story'.⁷ The sources I study here are primarily journals, written for the most part relatively soon after the events that they described; but they too contained narrative structures and exerted choices about what material to include and exclude, decisions that were making sense of their feelings about the world they lived in, particularly within specific confessional

frameworks. Emotional performances of these kinds shaped, produced and sustained often deeply divided faith communities of sixteenth-century France. Through the examples to follow, I explore how the specific content of news accounts made diarists feel and how they interacted with printed news in ways that were themselves responses to its content. These practices—textual, material and visual—both reflected their diarists' feelings and helped to generate productive emotions for their authors.

A number of diarists were careful to note the source of their information from printed texts. This enables us to see how far their vision ranged in establishing events that they perceived mattered to their lives. For some, printed sources provided destabilising evidence of events that had not been witnessed by the author, the careful noting of details and repeated inclusion of which seemed designed to establish the validity of print's unusual information. Thus, the unknown bourgeois diarist of Paris recorded in 1530 that

News came to Paris, in the letters sent by the bankers of Rome, of a great flood that had been in that town on 8 October last. Specifically that the river Tiber had become so swollen over two days that it broke its banks and flooded everywhere so that Rome was for two days, full of water everywhere in the town... These things were written in the first batch of letters. In the second, it was written that the river was so swollen that it was higher than a lance even in the highest places in the town, except the mountains. ... These things were printed in Paris.⁸

For this diarist, a whole series of earthquakes, floods, and other terrible events gathered meaning as a group, enabling him to build an apocalyptic narrative of natural disasters occurring widely across Europe during the 1520s and 1530s. 'Afterwards came news to Paris, by letters dated the 12 November, that after the flood and ruin, Pope Clement seventh of that name, to appease God's anger, called his council to know what would be best to do. ... There were some astrologers in Rome who had earlier predicted the Last Judgment would come, but *God knows and no other*'.⁹ Nonetheless, he recounted in November 1530 how

news came to Paris that there had been a great flood in Antwerp, in Flanders and its surrounds, as appeared in the printed letters in Paris ... several died and the wheat [was] ruined. ... At this time, in Zeeland, there was also a great flood, caused by the sea, which overflowed and drowned several people, villages, churches and houses.¹⁰

Significantly, this account rarely expressed explicit emotions and interpretations, but when it did so, it was principally in terms of the experiences of others. Earlier, for example, this diarist had recorded a violent and destructive wind ‘so great and marvellous’ that had swept through Paris and much of France in March 1520, knocking down houses and chimneys, uprooting trees and crops in its path. He had later reported that this destructive event was understood by some to have had a divine purpose: ‘it was said that it was a way in which God could help the poor, because beforehand wood had been very expensive’.¹¹ In this way, the diarist recorded interpretations and feelings that were not explicitly his own but reported as those of others, a technique that may have served to control, by distancing, typically negative emotions.

The journal of Jehan Glaumeau, a former Catholic priest who converted to Calvinism, likewise appeared to accumulate fearful signs of God’s wrath, but with a different confessional perspective in mind. His journal recorded a long list of unusual natural events in the Berry region, including flames of fire in the sky in 1541 (‘a wondrous thing to see’); ice and snow in the midst of the summer of 1542; a great thunderstorm in Bourges that destroyed the bell-tower of Saint-Pierre-le-Guillard (‘a quite remarkable thing to see as well as the things that were destroyed and broken’); and hail as large as nuts that destroyed crops around Bourges (‘elderly people said they never had seen or heard of the like, or in such abundance’).¹² Glaumeau recorded how local people were inspired to enact a series of penitential rituals to assuage such disasters, but pointedly doubted their efficacy. These passages numbered among a series of textual suggestions that Glaumeau had begun to question his Catholic faith.¹³

Significantly, Glaumeau was able to report on many unusual events that he had not seen himself, such as in 1549, on 21 March, when ‘between seven and eight at night, there appeared in the air over the area of Oriens a great planet all on fire and fell through the sky with a great, wondrous noise, very clearly. Those who saw the sign were very afraid’.¹⁴ Glaumeau made clear on occasion that some of this information came from prints. In 1543 for example, he recorded in his diary how ‘there were rumours that monsters had been born in several places’ and he was shown a portrait depicting the monster of Krakow. He found it ‘so horrible and wondrous that it would be difficult to describe’.¹⁵ Yet he managed to detail how

they say that it lived four hours and that it spoke these or similar words: “Repent, for your God is ready to come.” Similarly, there was a rumour

that another had been born in Paris, which had two heads, four arms and only two legs. Also, in this town of Bourges, they said that in the parish of St-Bonnet had been born a girl with two heads. Such a marvellous thing, indeed to hear talk of so many things to have happened and all in one year: God willing that the omen is a good one.¹⁶

At one level, few of these events affected Glaumeau personally, but on a spiritual level, they were all significant. The repeated appearance of unusual and sometimes deadly phenomena was not necessarily disastrous and frightening for Glaumeau however; it could be hopeful, as potentially indicative of a new order desired by God, and a future compact between the earthly and divine realms. For example, Glaumeau was able to record with absolute certainty thanks to a printed text that in 1557, 'on Tuesday 13 September, the river called the Tiber broke its banks, in such a way that a large part of Rome was ruined and destroyed, at least a thousand people were drowned by the flood, as can be seen and read in a little printed treatise made about the flood'.¹⁷ Glaumeau's documentation of a flood besieging the city of the popes may have been recorded as evidence that seemed to support his leaning towards Calvinist views in this period. These diarists were using published news accounts to sequence particular events that they knew of *only* through printed sources, the narrated accrual of which offered them evidence of deep fault lines in the relationship between humanity and the divine. The emotional significance of this evidence 'established' via print, however, could be poles apart, depending on the confessional position of individual diarists.

Other diarists transcribed passages directly from printed texts and copied or cut out their illustrations in practices that were both textual and material. These habits not only supported particular interpretations but also signified and created deep, often positive, emotional investment in their content. Nuns from the regional Benedictine abbey of Beaumont-lès-Tours, for example, implicitly contextualised their own experiences of the religious wars through printed Catholic propaganda about miracles, processions and the progress of wider military conflicts, all of which occurred well beyond their convent walls. While natural events that occurred locally were often simply recorded as inconvenient and unexpected difficulties, unusual natural events on land or in the sky that occurred far away, and which were most likely reported to them via print, were more commonly interpreted as miraculous.¹⁸ The nuns thus could celebrate distant miraculous events and the penitential processions in northern France and

Germany that these inspired during 1583. Their extensive information suggests they were copying directly from a printed source. Such entries were textually marked out as special; they were given titles and indented from the surrounding text.¹⁹

Similarly, copying published letters from factional leaders and printed broadsheets into the diary of the Beaumont nuns also served to support them emotionally during these difficult and dangerous times. The journal's extensive discussion of Catholic League political manoeuvres was as much an enactment of the enclosed women's allegiance to Guise, rather than to royal, religious politics, as it was a reinforcement.²⁰ Thus, the nuns' detailed coverage of a new manoeuvre led by the Guise faction in May 1585, which included a list of the major protagonists and towns that had given their support, and specified their demands of the king (all likely gained from widely-circulated broadsheets), represented material and textual forms of emotional, social and religious participation in the events themselves.²¹ The deep emotional and confessional significance of their decision to reference the king's edict, which called upon all his subjects to return to the Catholic Church, was reinforced materially when, several pages on, the printed edict itself was bound into the journal.²² Elsewhere, a letter written to Henri III by the Duke of Guise on 17 May 1588, high-profile correspondence being commonly reproduced in pamphlet form at the time, was transcribed into the journal.²³ Through these various practices, printed sources formed not only an important conduit for information about the wider Catholic community for this cloistered group of women, but inclusion of their contents, transcription of their phrasing, or physical binding into the journal, constituted their emotional and spiritual interaction in the religious wars. These were positive emotional engagements with printed news of the world. But significantly, the nuns only included printed news of events that confirmed their strong beliefs and suggested Catholic League successes stemmed from divine intervention.

The material practices of other diarists interacting with printed news could reflect, and generate, a more diverse range of feelings. It was not only printed words that found their way into contemporary diarists' work. The Catholic tanner Jean Burel, a supporter of the League, cut and pasted 14 printed images into a chronicle of sixteenth-century Le Puy that he had written, using them in addition to more than 50 of his own sketches to illustrate events throughout the century. Some of his illustrations extended across a whole page, many more were at the margins and edges, a few

were coloured, others executed simply in ink. These typically depicted key individuals from both sides of the conflict, as well as significant religious moments in the town's life and challenging events—from massacres and soldiers to be billeted, to famine—that had to be borne by townspeople. Many of these images were drawn from what Burel had himself seen, but a number derived from printed sources. Moreover, Burel's visualisation of the key events of his era appeared directly shaped by what he had seen in prints. For example, a hand-drawn illustration of a skeleton at the foot of the page on which Burel described the plague that hit Le Puy in July 1577 showed great similarities to a printed illustration of a skeleton he had pasted in elsewhere in the chronicle.²⁴ Printed news provided Burel with both woodcuts to paste as well as models for his own illustrations, expanding his visual and imaginative repertoire of death, disaster and the divine in action.

Burel pasted into his chronicle several full-page woodcuts from printed texts. Only a few special illustrations of his own were hand-coloured, generally religious figures or individuals whose views and activities Burel favoured. This suggests a significant emotional investment in these particular events and demonstrates how Burel's adaptation of printed sources could communicate the importance he attached to these moments as worthy of the historical record. In 1591, a year of sustained military degradation and violence in his region, he included several coloured depictions of military personnel. One showed 'Le Capitaine Enseigne' striding forth with his banner over his shoulder (Fig. 15.1); another 'un sergent de bande' (the officer in charge of bringing together the troops) with a halberd in his hand and sword at his side.²⁵ Each image was attached to a rhyming quatrain. For example, the Captain called 'journeymen and friends' to 'gather around the sign, to march into battle', before more menacingly warning: 'none of you disdain my command if you value your life and hold your honour dear' (see Fig. 15.1). These cut-outs, which appeared in Burel's chronicle during a year in which he noted billeted troops had placed severe strain on resources and there had been extensive military violence in the area, offered striking visual affirmation from a third-party source that implicitly acted to verify Burel's own experiences of these terrible years.

These printed images visualised difficult years of religious conflict in France, echoing Burel's own depictions of events that he had witnessed himself, not least the mutilated bodies of starved, attacked and murdered victims of war. However, not all illustrations of death were disastrous;



Fig. 15.1. *Le Capitaine Enseigne*, printed woodcuts, in *Mémoires de Jean Burel*. Le Puy en Velay, Bibliothèque municipale, ms. 39, fol. 252r

some were (in Burel's view) divinely ordained. In 1589, two cut-out prints filled almost a page of his chronicle: a coloured image of an elegant armoured man next to a second printed *memento mori* style image of a skeleton (Fig. 15.2). Burel's entry linked the two images through a narrative that highlighted the wheel of fortune in operation:

Here is the valiant captain Merle, he who took Ysoire, Mande and Malzieu twice as is written here, having debated whether to take Le Puy, [who was] surprised by death the same day that he made an attempt, falling out of his bed.²⁶

Mathieu de Merle was a Huguenot captain who had harassed the Auvergne, Gévaudan and Velay regions in a series of violent campaigns.²⁷ And yet the great scourge of the region had died not a glorious death in battle but far more ignominiously. It seems likely that Burel's enjoyment of, or at least surprise at, this almost miraculous event, which favoured the



Fig. 15.2. Two woodcuts celebrating the death of Captain Merle, in *Mémoires de Jean Burel*. Le Puy en Velay, Bibliothèque municipale, ms. 39, fol. 195v

Catholic protagonists and protected his beloved town, explains his attention to detail in combining these specific images. Burel's visual and material practice thus reflected both negative and positive emotional responses, and functioned to harness print sources to validate his own eyewitness experiences, both the terrible and the joyous, as both authoritative and worthy of record for posterity. The tanner, by no means a member of the Ponot elite, dedicated his ambitious history of Le Puy to the town's magistrates, consuls and citizens, adapting printed texts, and especially their images, so as to suggest that they confirmed his narrative of violent religious and military experiences.

Different emotional and confessional practices were textualised in the journals of the clerk-in-chief of the *Parlement* of Paris, Pierre de l'Estoile, a *politique*, supporter of the crown. L'Estoile is one of the best-known collectors of pamphlet literature in Paris, described by Antonia Szabari as a 'collector, reader, eye and ear witness, a chronicler and a compiler', and his collection bears witness to his interest in what was reported as unusual, miraculous or disastrous in the contemporary world.²⁸ His journals also

included a detailed record of his attempts to source particular texts, the network of booksellers with whom he negotiated, and the amounts he paid for these publications.²⁹ L'Estoile had even classed some 3,392 works of his total collection of almost 4,000 purchases into distinct collections: 'mostly defamatory', 'treatises about the Church with replies and responses from one side and the other', pieces against the Pope, about politics, Jesuits, 'nonsense' and superstitions.³⁰ The texts included a wide range of chapbook material on monsters, natural disasters, almanacs and predictions. In July 1606, he noted that he bought from a Caen packer 'five new drolleries, which cost 8 *sols*' and included 'a little treatise containing several natural secrets; the tears of repentance of a girl from Lyon'; and 'The true miracle of four monstrous children, born in Amsterdam'.³¹ In the same year, while away from Paris, L'Estoile recorded that he had been brought a collection of printed texts, 'bagatelles' from the city's booksellers, which included the following:

The very true history of the cruel death suffered by one of the order of hermits of Saint-Augustine, in the city of Marque in Barbary, together with the punishment of God on this great city. Two discussions: one of a child of Rémilly in Savoy, who hanged and strangled his mother; the other of a usurer at Charret in Provence who ate rats. The magnificent royal ceremonies conducted for the baptism of the children of France at Fontainebleau.³²

From across Europe, L'Estoile gathered together stories of unusual deaths and unnatural children to sit side-by-side with accounts of remarkable floods, ghosts, and religious and political propaganda of all kinds. In 1608, he noted: 'On Saturday 29, I bought for 3 *sols* two new bagatelles being announced', one of which was 'the vision of the 12,000 phantoms in the county of Angoumois'.³³ L'Estoile also recorded another important form of access to printed news, especially for those who could not read—the singing of texts in the streets and marketplaces by pedlars and performers.³⁴ He transcribed political songs he heard in 1590s Paris, some of which only survive in L'Estoile's diaries.³⁵

However, such printed ephemera were no mere bagatelles for L'Estoile. Clearly, he was deeply emotionally invested in his collection of such works. This was revealed starkly in an incident from January 1609, which he recorded: 'passing by the Palace, I saw by chance between the paintings and drolleries on the stalls the image of two marvellous and dreadful monsters'.³⁶ One was of a fearsome child, the offspring of a man and a goat,

born in Bohemia in 1577; the other of a woman, the wife of a doctor from Piedmont who in 1578 had produced a monstrous child.³⁷ L'Estoile wrote:

Both were drawn up and printed at Troyes by Denis Villerval, in the years 1577 and 1578, but I could not include them until today, even though I made mention of them in my *Mémoires-Journaux* of the reign of Henri III, as both were held as two prodigious signs of our time, true ones. I paid 3 *sols* for the packet of my monsters.³⁸

The entry revealed the degree of personal investment L'Estoile felt for the printed works that entered his journals. These were narratives some 30 years old by the time L'Estoile found them on the stall near the Palais, narratives he not only remembered well, but had been seeking out to 'complete' his collection. Moreover, his use of the phrase 'my monsters' suggests the strong degree of personal attachment to the collection of news that filled his volumes.

L'Estoile's unwillingness to provide meaning for the unusual, news-worthy events of his time reflected a confessional stance, as a *politique*, that distinguished him from those following the Catholic League whose explicit and emotionally resonant theorising about the meaning of such events has been well studied by Crouzet. Firstly, and by contrast to most of the diarists studied above, L'Estoile collated in his works a multiplicity of opinions and positions on the political issues of his day. On occasion, he criticised those who offered explanations for these events, and particularly directed scorn at astrological predictions that flourished among the learned, religious elite in Paris and at court.³⁹ He recorded one prediction of 1606 that suggested 'that the town would be destroyed on the 27th of this month, according to an almanac of a Capuchin monk, who had not been very well trained'.⁴⁰ His description of a series of prodigious events, including a fierce storm which wrought havoc across France and a new star which appeared in the sky, concluded with these words: 'matters of new discussion for the curious on the state of affairs which are stirred up, but of which they understand nothing at all.'⁴¹ L'Estoile consciously rejected his own ability and that of others to make meaning of these events; he had to trust in God for that.⁴² Yet the obsessive nature of his collecting and cataloguing represented a form of control over potentially frightening and destabilising events to which printed texts exposed him. In one revealing entry, L'Estoile reflected on his practice:

I know that the majority of these discussions are full of stupidity and trifles, but I can no more not do it (no more than Montaigne his own) without undoing myself. ... Thus, reading and writing, life goes on, thus I assuage my melancholy, and I parry with the pestilential poison of this implacable beast, the foul vapours and various kinds of fantasies and imaginings.⁴³

L'Estoile's melancholy was a crucial aspect of his impetus to collect and record what he discovered in print. Collecting, transcribing, and recording the news of his time seemed to be his way of attempting to manage his concerns about the world around him and its future.

To draw some conclusions, these examples demonstrate how diarists engaged in a range of textual, visual and material practices both to articulate their emotional responses to printed news of the world, and to generate other, more productive feelings. The recording of such events in these forms were individual processes not only of providing information, but also of exercising emotional management. Even though the events and experiences that these printed texts described were often physically distant from their authors, emotionally they occurred at close hand. News stories recounting tales of death, disaster and divine intervention clearly made a profound impact on contemporary readers and viewers, warranting reproduction within their own personal accounts of the world they perceived they lived in. The feelings that they generated, as the sociologist Sara Ahmed conceptualises in her term 'affective economies', were 'produced as effects of circulation'.⁴⁴ They did not 'reside in subjects or objects', but in the relationship and interface between the particular practices of individual readers and specific texts. In these cases then, affective states were produced firstly as these men and women negotiated printed texts as readers, and again, as they integrated and expressed their content in textual, visual and material ways within their journals as diarists.

Importantly, this exploration of journal accounts suggests that there was no consistent emotional response to such printed news reports, because there was no shared interpretation among readers. Jean Céard and Denis Crouzet have both suggested that the extensive, popular, sensational literature of this era in France was designed not just to entertain, but also to frighten its readers and generate a climate of apocalyptic fear.⁴⁵ However, while Glaumeau was both shocked and awed by a printed image of a monster, the bibliophile L'Estoile's entry celebrated his find of another pamphlet on monsters to add to his collection. Diarists articulated emotions, sometimes quite divergent emotions, from their diverse interac-

tions with printed sources and this range of different emotional responses to printed news of death and disaster, from fear to joy, from confidence to doubt, was clearly linked to confessional positions. Some were certain that the accumulation of disastrous events that print seemed to make visible, announced God's wrath; but this could result in not only fearful anticipation but also optimism for a new beginning. The sisters of the Abbey of Beaumont-lès-Tours found joy and pleasure in the news reports of unusual and deadly events that they copied into their journal of life in the convent. Their records of news accessed by print consistently affirmed the nuns' existing religio-political viewpoint. Similarly, Burel embedded printed illustrations in his work to confirm his own religious and political views. For the tanner, print provided an additional form of visual and textual authority with which to supplement his text. Thus, printed news provided authority and assurance for chroniclers and diarists such as the nuns of Beaumont and Burel, as much as it generated fear and terror in others.

Printed news could thus make readers and viewers very afraid, but it also had the power to provide reassurance of individual worldviews, confessional beliefs and political positions. Accounts of the kind studied here were part of a process designed to manage emotional and intellectual content. Diarised responses to printed news performed feelings in terms that made sense to their authors' own practices and beliefs, and attempted to control the meaning, substance and power of the information that such published texts presented. Diarists were thus practising both coping mechanisms and social and confessional identities as they articulated emotional responses to printed news. The evidence of these journals, composed by middling, regional men and women, suggests that readers manipulated print publications for their own uses and incorporated them into their pre-existing interpretive frameworks. Far from being constrained by such texts, many copied and embedded the words and images that told of death, disaster and destruction, effectively harnessing them to support their own views, and find positive meaning in these reports. People may have been unsettled by the power of print to bring them new and surprising information and to make them feel in different and unexpected ways; but diarists, at least, empowered themselves through compositions that managed their feelings and asserted their beliefs.

NOTES

1. See Cathy Leahy, Jennifer Spinks and Charles Zika, eds., *The Four Horsemen: Apocalypse, Death and Disaster* (Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria, 2012). On France particularly, Philip Benedict, *Graphic History: The Wars, Massacres and Troubles of Tortorel and Perrissin* (Geneva: Droz, 2007), 90–92. Research for this essay was funded by an Australian Research Council Discovery Grant.
2. Jean-Pierre Séguin, *L'Information en France avant le périodique. 517 canards imprimés entre 1529 et 1631* (Paris: Editions Maisonneuve et Larose, 1964); J. K. Sawyer, *Printed Poison: Pamphlet Propaganda, Faction Politics, and the Public Sphere in Early Seventeenth-Century France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990); Luc Racaut, *Hatred in Print: Catholic Propaganda and Protestant Identity during the French Wars of Religion* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002); Jennifer Spinks, 'Print and polemic in sixteenth-century France: the *Histoires prodigieuses*, confessional identity, and the Wars of Religion,' *Renaissance Studies* 27, no. 1 (2013): 73–96; Andrew Pettegree, *The Invention of News: How the World Came to Know About Itself* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014).
3. Firstly in his article, 'La représentation du temps à l'époque de la Ligue,' *Revue historique* 270, no. 2 (1983): 297–388, and then within his larger study of violence, *Les Guerriers de Dieu. La violence au temps des troubles de religion (v. 1525–v. 1610)* (Seysssel: Champ Vallon, (1990) 2005).
4. Elsewhere, I have explored the composition of French chronicles and journals in 'Disturbing Memories: Narrating Experiences and Emotions of Distressing Events in the French Wars of Religion,' in *Memory before Modernity: Memory Cultures in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Judith Pollmann, Erika Kuijpers, Johannes Müller, and Jasper van der Steen (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 253–68 and 'Reasons and Identities to Remember: Composing Personal Accounts of Religious Violence in Sixteenth-century France,' *French History* 27, no. 1 (2013): 1–20.
5. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1999); Roger Chartier, 'Le monde comme représentation,' *Annales ESC* 6 (1989): 1505–20; and his 'Texts, Printings, Readings,' in *The New Cultural History*, ed. Lynn Hunt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 154–75; Costas Gaganakis, 'Rival Constructions of "Frenchness" in the French Religious Wars, 1560–1590. The reading of Pierre de l'Estoile,' *Historien* 2 (2000): 165, following Paul Ricoeur, *Temps et récit, Le Temps raconté* (Paris: Seuil, 1985), 3: 228–63; Costas Gaganakis, 'Stairway to Heaven: Calvinist Grief and Redemption in the French Wars of Religion,' *Historien* 8 (2008): 102–7, and Monique Scheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (And is that what Makes Them

- Have a History)? A Bourdieuan Approach to Understanding Emotion,' *History and Theory* 51 (2012): 193–220.
6. William M. Reddy, 'Against Constructionism: The Historical Ethnography of Emotions,' *Current Anthropology* 38, 3 (1997): 327–351 and Scheer, 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice'.
 7. Erika Kuijpers, "'O, Lord, save us from shame": Narratives of Emotions in Convent Chronicles by Female Authors during the Dutch Revolt, 1566–1635,' in *Gender and Emotions in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Destroying Order, Structuring Disorder*, ed. Susan Broomhall, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2016), 131.
 8. 'vindrent nouvelles à Paris, par les missives envoyés par les banquiers de rome, du grand déluge qui fut en icelle ville le huitiesme octobre précédent. C'est assçavoir que le fleuve du Thibre fut si enflé par deux jours qu'il s'accrust et desborda tellement que fut Rome, par l'espace de deux jours, remplie d'eaue du dict fleuve par toute la ville ... Ces choses furent escrites par les premières lettres. Par les secondes fut escrit que le dict fleuve fut tant enflé qu'il estoit au plus hault lieu de Rome, de la haulteur d'une lance, réservés les montaignes. ... Ces choses furent imprimés à Paris.' Ludovic Lalanne, ed., *Journal d'un bourgeois de Paris sous le règne de François Premier (1515–1536)* (Paris: Jules Renouard, 1854), 419–21.
 9. 'Après vindrent nouvelles à Paris, par letters dattées du douziesme jour de novembre ensuivant, qu'après ce déluge et ruyne, le pape Clément septiesme de ce nom, pour appaiser l'ire de Dieu, convoca son conseil pour sçavoir qu'il estoit bon de faire. ... Il y eust aucuns astrologues à Rome qui avoient auparavant prédicit le Jugement advenir, mais Deus scit et non alius.' *Journal d'un bourgeois de Paris*, 421.
 10. 'Au dict an 1530, treiziesme jour de novembre, vindrent nouvelles à Paris, qu'il y eust un grand déluge en la ville d'Anvers, en Flandres, et ès environs, comme appert par lettres imprimés à Paris ... qu'il y an eust plusieurs noyez et les bledz gastez. ... En ce temps, au pays de Zélande, y eust aussi un grand déluge d'eaue, à cause de la mer qui si desborda et noya plusieurs gens, villaiges, églises et maisons'. *Journal d'un bourgeois de Paris*, 421, 422.
 11. 'si grant et merueilleux ... et disoit-on que c'estoit une manière de Dieu envoioit pour secourir et ayder son pauvre peuple, parceque auparavant on avoit du boys fort cher'. *Journal d'un bourgeois de Paris*, 81–2.
 12. 'chose merueilleuse a voir'; 'chose assez merueilleuse à voir ainsi que les choses estoient rompues et brisées'; 'disoient gens anciens que jamais de telle n'avoient ouyr parler, mesmement tomber en si grande habondance'. *Journal de Jehan Glaumeau, Bourges, 1541–1562*, ed. Alfred Hiver (Bourges: Just-Bernard, 1867), 3, 29, 51.

13. Denis Crouzet, Pierre Chaunu and Denis Richet, *Les guerriers de Dieu: La violence au temps des troubles de religion (vers 1525–vers 1610)* (Champ Vallon: Seyssel, 1990), 212.
14. ‘entre sept et huict du soir, s’apparut en l’air vers la partie d’Oriens une grande planète toute en feu et faisoit en tombant un grand bruit merveilleux avec grande clerté. Ceux qui virent ledict signe heurent grant tremeur.’ *Journal de Jehan Glaumeau*, ed. Hiver, 42–3.
15. ‘fut grand bruit qu’ils estoient nez des monstres en plusieurs lieux’; ‘si horrible et merveilleux qu’il serait difficile à descripre.’ *Journal de Jehan Glaumeau*, ed. Hiver, 17–18.
16. ‘et disoit-on qu’il avoit vesqui quatre heures, et qu’il avoit prononcé telles ou semblables paroles, *amendez-vous, car vostre Dieu est prêt à venir*. Samblablement fut bruit que à Paris en estoit né un aultre, lequel avoit deux testes, quatre bracs, et n’avoit que deux gembes. Aussi, en ceste ville de Bourges, disoit-on que en la paroisse St-Bonnet, estoit nez une fille, laquelle avoit deux testes. Tellement que ceste chose merveilleuse, d’ouyr parler de tant de choses estre advenues, et toutes en une mesme année: Dieu veille que le présage soit bon.’ *Journal de Jehan Glaumeau*, ed. Hiver, 18.
17. ‘mardy XIIIe jour de septembre, le fleuve qu’on appelle de Tybre ce déborda, de telle sorte que grande partie de la ville de Rome, fut ruynée et destruite; furent noyé audict déluge bien mille personnes, ainsi que le tout ay veu et leu en ung petit traité imprimé, faict dudict déluge.’ *Journal de Jehan Glaumeau*, ed. Hiver, 98.
18. These interpretive distinctions, and differences between their journal and later chronicle accounts, are explored more fully in Broomhall, ‘Disorder in the Natural World: The Perspectives of a Sixteenth-century Provincial Convent,’ in *Religion, the Supernatural and Visual Culture in Early Modern Europe: An Album Amicorum for Charles Zika*, ed. Jennifer Spinks and Dagmar Eichberger (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 240–59.
19. *De grands signes et faictz prodigieux advenus en ceste pnte annee 1583 A Paris et en la Brie*, Archives Départementales (AD) d’Indre-et-Loire, H796 *Journal historique de Beaumont-lès-Tours*, 72; ‘Des grands processions qui se sont faictes par les habitans des frontieres de la haulte Allemaigne des Ardenes et aultres pays de Brie et champaigne en ceste ann-1583.’ AD d’Indre-et-Loire, H796 *Journal historique*, 73. For scholarly analysis of these events, see Crouzet, *Les Guerriers de Dieu*, 298; see, for example, *Le vray discours des grandes processions qui se font depuis les frontieres d’Allemagne jusques à la France, dont jamais n’en fut faicte de semblable, & comme plus amplement vous sera monstré dans le discours* (Paris: A Paris, 1583). Madeleine Lazard, ‘Les processions blanches de la Ligue dans le *Registre-Journal* de Pierre de L’Estoile,’ in *L’Expression de l’inoublable*

- dans les mémoires d'Ancien Régime*, ed. Jean Garapon (Nantes: C. Defaut, 2005), 35–44.
20. AD d'Indre-et-Loire, H796 *Journal historique*, 172–5 and 219–28.
 21. For more on the abbey of Beaumont-les-Tours at this period, see Broomhall, *Women and Religion in Sixteenth-Century France* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), ch. 1; Broomhall, 'Convent Voices on Social and Familial Networks in Later Sixteenth-century France,' *Studies in Early Modern France* 11 (2007): 59–74.
 22. *Sur la reunion de ses subjects a l'église Catholique, Apostolique & Romains* (Tours: veufve de Rene Siffleau, 1585) in AD d'Indre-et-Loire, H796 *Journal historique*, 172, for the nuns' summary, and 175–90.
 23. AD d'Indre-et-Loire, H796 *Journal historique*, 226, and another example of the same, 228–31.
 24. Bibliothèque municipale (BM), Le Puy en Velay, ms. 39, fol. 96v.
 25. BM, Le Puy en Velay, ms. 39, fol. 258v.
 26. 'Voycy le vallereux cappitaine Merle cellui que ce prins Ysoire, Mande et Malzieu par deux fois comme ycy dans se livre escript ayant deslibéré de venir prandre Le Puy dont la mort le surprins le jour mesme que avoit faict l'entreprise tumber au lict.' BM, Le Puy en Velay, ms. 39, fol. 195v.
 27. *Mémoires de Jean Burel: Journal d'un bourgeois du Puy à l'époque des Guerres de religion publiés et annotés par Augustin Chassaing*, ed. B. and P. Rivet (Saint-Vidal: Centre d'Etude de la Vallée de la Borne, 1983), 1:40–41n3.
 28. Antónia Szabari, *Less Rightly Said: Scandals and Readers in Sixteenth-Century France* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 191.
 29. Florence Greffe and José Lothe, *La vie, les livres et les lectures de Pierre de l'Estoile: Nouvelles Recherches* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2004), 149–50.
 30. Greffe and Lothe, *La vie, les livres et les lectures de Pierre de l'Estoile*, 163.
 31. 'les cing drolleries nouvelles qui suivent, qui m'ont cousté huit sols.' These included a 'Petit Traicté contentant plusieurs secrets naturels; les Larmes de repentance d'un Fille de Lyon', and 'Miracle veritable de quatre enfans monstrueux, nés à Amsterdam.' *Registre-Journal de Henri IV et de Louis XIII*, ed. M. M. Champollion-Figeac and Aimé Champollion, in *Nouvelle Collection des mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France*, ed. J. F. Michaud and J. J. F. Poujoulat, part 2 (Paris: Editeur du commentaire analytique du code civil, 1837), 1:401.
 32. 'Histoire très-veritable de la cruelle mort soufferte par un de l'ordre des frères ermites de Saint-Augustin, en la cite de Marque en Barbarie; ensemble la punition de Dieu sur ceste grande cite. Deux discours: l'un d'un enfant de Rémilli en Savoie, qui a pendu et estranglé sa mere; l'autre d'un usurier mangé des rats à Charret en Provence. Les roiales magnificences faites au baptestme des enfans de France à Fontainebleau.' *Registre-Journal*

- de Henri IV et de Louis XIII*, ed. Champollion-Figeac and Champollion, part 2, 1:406.
33. 'Le samedi 29, j'achetai trois sols deux bagatelles nouvelles qu'on croit' one of which was 'la vision de douze mille fantomes au pais d'Angoumois.' *Registre-Journal de Henri IV et de Louis XIII*, ed. Champollion-Figeac and Champollion, part 2, 1:486.
 34. See Rosa Salzberg, 'In the Mouth of Charlatans: Street Performers and the Dissemination of Pamphlets in Renaissance Italy,' *Renaissance Studies* 24, no. 5 (2010): 638–53; Pettegree, *The Invention of News*, 121–9. On broadsheet ballads in particular, see Chapter 13 by Una McIlvenna in this volume.
 35. Pettegree, *The Invention of News*, 128. On L'Estoile's accuracy in reporting local, political matters compared to more distant, curious events, see Roger Trinquet, 'La méthode de travail de P. de L'Estoile,' *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 17 (1955): 286–91; Nerina Clerici-Balmas, 'Réalité et imaginaire dans les Mémoires-Journaux de Pierre de l'Estoile,' *Les Lettres au temps de Henri IV, Actes du Colloque Agen-Nerac (18–20 mai 1990)* (Association Henri IV 1989: J & D éditions, 1991), 227–35; Myriam Yardeni, 'Histoire et petite histoire chez l'Estoile,' in *Ecritures de l'Histoire (XIVe-XVIe siècles) Actes du colloque du Centre Montaigne, Bordeaux, 19–21 septembre 2002*, ed. Danièle Bohler and Catherine Magnien-Simonin (Geneva: Droz, 2005), 193–202.
 36. 'passant devant le Palais, je rencontre de hazard, entre ces peintures et drolleries qu'on y estalle, la figure de deux monstres merveilleux et espouvantables.' *Registre-Journal de Henri IV et de Louis XIII*, ed. Champollion-Figeac and Champollion, part 2, 1:491.
 37. *Registre-Journal de Henri IV et de Louis XIII*, ed. Champollion-Figeac and Champollion, part 2, 1:492.
 38. L'un et l'autre ont esté pourtraits et imprimés à Troie par Denis Villerval, ès dites années 1577 et 1578; mais que je n'avois peu recouvrir jusques à ce jour, encores que j'en aie fait mention en mes Mémoires-Journaux du Roy Henri III, comme estant l'un et l'autre tenus pour deux insignes prodiges de nostre temps, mais véritables. J'en ay payé trois sols, pour le paquet de mes monstres.' *Registre-Journal de Henri IV et de Louis XIII*, ed. Champollion-Figeac and Champollion, part 2, 1:492.
 39. On the popularity of astrology at court, see the recent study of Luisa Capodici, *Medicæ Medea: Art, astres et pouvoir à la cour de Catherine de Médicis* (Geneva: Droz, 2011).
 40. 'que la ville devoit abismer le 27 de ce mois, selon l'almanach d'un capussin, qui n'avoit esté bien dressé.' *Registre-Journal de Henri IV et de Louis XIII*, ed. Champollion-Figeac and Champollion, part 2, 1:402.

41. 'matières de nouveaux discours aux curieux sur l'état des affaires qui se remuoient, où toutesfois ils n'entendoient rien du tout,' *Registre-Journal de Henri IV et de Louis XIII*, ed. Champollion-Figeac and Champollion, part 2, 1:395.
42. On his more sceptical stance regarding their supernatural causes, see Claude-Gilbert Dubois, *La Conception de l'Histoire en France au XVIe siècle* (Paris: Nizet, 1977), 198–201.
43. 'Je sçai que la plus part de ces discours sont plains d'inanité et de fadaize, mais de m'en desfaire je ne puis (non plus que Montagne des siens), sans me desfaire moi-mesmes. ... Sic legendo et scribendo vitam procedo, sic melancoliae obviam eo, et hujus implacabilis bestiae virus pestilens, tetros vapores, diversa phantasmatum genera et imaginationes eludo.' *Registre-Journal de Henri III*, ed. M. M. Champollion-Figeac and Aimé Champollion, in *Nouvelle Collection des mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France*, ed. J. F. Michaud and J. J. F. Poujoulat, part 1 (Paris: Editeur du commentaire analytique du code civil, 1837), 1:1. This passage is not reproduced in the new editions published by Madeleine Lazard and Gilbert Schrenck, eds., *Registre-journal du règne de Henri III*, 6 vols (Geneva: Droz, 1992–2003), vol. 1 (1992). See Michel de Montaigne in his essay on vanity (ch. 9), 'Si les autres se regardoient attentivement, comme je fay, ils se trouveroient, comme je fay, plains d'inanité et de fadaise. De m'en deffaire, je ne puis sans me deffaire moy-mesmes.' Michel de Montaigne, *Essais*, ed. Alexandre Micha (Paris: Flammarion, 1979), 3:213. On L'Estoile's use of Montaigne, see Gilbert Schrenck, 'Pierre de l'Estoile et Montaigne, ou la "lecture en miettes,"' in *Esculape et Dionysos: mélanges en l'honneur de Jean Céard*, ed. Jean Dupèbe, Franco Giaccone, Emmanuel Naya and Anne-Pascale Pouey-Mounou (Geneva: Droz, 2008); and Margaret McGowan, "'La conversation de ma vie": la voix de Pierre de l'Estoile dans les Registres-Journaux,' *Travaux de Littérature: Mélanges Noémi Hepp* 3 (1990): 249–59.
44. Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 8.
45. Jean Céard, *La Nature et les prodiges* (Geneva: Droz, 1996); Crouzet, *Les Guerriers de Dieu*. By contrast, Philip M. Soergel's article ('Portents, Disaster, and Adaptation in Sixteenth-Century Germany,' *The Medieval History Journal*, 10, 1 & 2 (2007): 303–26) considers responses to natural disaster literature in contemporary Germany and emphasises their multi-faceted, and sometimes even optimistic, nature.

Samuel Pepys and the Great Fire of London: Trauma and Emotion, Private and Public

Stephanie Trigg

First-hand accounts of historical trauma can be intriguing but problematic texts for the study of emotions.¹ Samuel Pepys' journal entries for the first week of September 1666, when fire ravaged the city of London, are dramatic, expressive, and full of irresistible detail. Pepys observes the fire's progress and its effect on the citizens and residents as they scramble to move their goods out of the fire's path. He records his own emotional responses, implicitly testing and comparing them to those of other individuals and members of his community.

Public discourse about the fire, in the form of sermons, or ballads, or the lengthy inscriptions carved into the base of Christopher Wren's great Monument, often took a longer, providential view. For example, the Latin inscription on the north face of the Monument includes this summary of the fire's passage through the city: 'Merciless to the wealth and estates of the citizens, it was harmless to their lives, so as throughout to remind us of the final destruction of the world by fire.'² The final clause of the inscription declares the fire was quenched only 'at the bidding, as we may well believe, of heaven'. Such public statements about God's providence were

S. Trigg

ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, The University of Melbourne, Australia

not always uncontested. Famously, a sentence blaming ‘Popish frenzy’ for the disaster was added in 1681, and deleted in 1830.³

In contrast to such public and communal expressions of emotion and responses to the fire, Pepys’ diary is an utterly private document. Because it is written day by day, not at any great critical or temporal distance from the disaster, it charts his growing sense of the enormity of the fire’s devastation, and observes in great detail the struggles of Londoners to come to terms with the disaster as it unfolded. It thus charts emotional responses, practices, and gestures such as tears and weeping with unusual immediacy. But while Pepys’ journal is rightly celebrated for its first-hand account of the fire, it is nevertheless a carefully constructed, even self-conscious text: part of a much longer and very complicated writing project that stretches over nine years. The very materiality of his journal and the circumstances of its composition and re-writing cast doubt on its status as immediate eyewitness ‘evidence’ to the dramatic fire. Written under these conditions, how can we use it as a source text for historical emotions? Because Pepys wrote every day, however, about everything from household arrangements to affairs of state, his journal entries describing the disastrous fire and its aftermath are framed by his habitual recording of less dramatic events. This essay will focus on Pepys’ account of the fire, attempting to chart the private and public emotions produced by this trauma.

There are a number of methodological and disciplinary questions that come into play here, about the nature of ‘historical’ or ‘literary’ evidence for the history of emotions, and about the specific difficulties of narrative testimony about trauma. In my thinking about this chapter I have been haunted by a remark in a formal response to a seminar paper I gave several years ago on Pepys’ journal as a source text for the history of emotions.⁴ How was I going to manage the issue of Pepys’ unrepresentativeness? As a privileged, educated, literate man, with access to the corridors of power, as well as the means to write and preserve a journal, Pepys could hardly be said to speak for the majority of Londoners in 1666. This question goes to the heart of one of the central methodological issues for the history of emotions. The most dramatic and powerful expressions of emotion that survive from the past may have survived precisely because they are exceptional emotions, or because they are documented by exceptional writers or artists; or because they bear witness to exceptional events like the Great Fire of London. What can these ‘exceptional’ moments, or ‘exceptional’ people tell us about how the majority of people felt? And how may we measure the difference between normal and exceptional emotions and their expression in the written record?

In similar fashion, literary texts that foreground poetic, metaphoric, or heightened language, or that are framed by the generic conventions of fiction, lyric or epic poetry, or drama, for example, can seem to add another layer of mediation between us and the ‘real’ emotions of the past. They, too, can become subject to the critique of ‘cherry picking’: the selection and examination of particularly rich and juicy, but ‘unrepresentative’ examples of emotional expression. On the other hand, we might argue that literary texts are where emotions are most comprehensively foregrounded, analysed, and dissected, and where the rich language of emotions appears at its most highly motivated and nuanced. Literature is one of the cultural sites where emotions take centre stage, after all, without fear of embarrassment: why not examine its rich and varied testimonies of feeling, empathy and imagination? As an exceptionally thoughtful document of the self, Pepys’ journal is untroubled by any need to keep private and public separate; and nor is it concerned with our later, stricter distinctions between ‘history’ and ‘literature’: it belongs equally in both spheres.

Like many journals, Pepys’ diary moves back and forwards across different registers: the mundane, the political, the bureaucratic, the familial, the household, the erotic, and the personal. It sits comfortably across the twinned categories of ‘history’ and ‘literature’, though it has been discussed primarily and overwhelmingly as a historical source. More recently, it has been analysed as a more self-conscious document in the literature of the self in the seventeenth century, aligned with other literary narratives.⁵ The journal has rarely, if at all, been considered as a source for the history of emotions, but it offers rich rewards for a focus on the precise, textual nature of Pepys’ description of the fire and his representation of both private and public emotional practices. My aim here is to develop a reading strategy that might be sensitive to what we know about the writing of these entries and their relationship to the rest of the journal, and one that might also show how this journal—and its distinctive linguistic and textual formulations—can contribute to the history of emotions.

As the narrative of a traumatic event, Pepys’ account of the fire also participates in a distinctive genre that has come under increasing scrutiny in the last twenty or so years: first-person testimonial narratives about trauma. In 1983 R. J. Daly, a psychiatrist, analysed the journal as a diagnostic witness to post-traumatic stress disorder, identifying Pepys’ symptoms of sleeplessness, repeated thoughts and images of the fire, and so forth.⁶ But in the fields of literary and cultural criticism, autobiographical trauma narratives cannot easily be read as transparent witnesses either to traumatic events or to the emotional and mental state of the writer.

Trauma, indeed, is often understood as transforming, or breaking down the self who speaks or writes. As Leigh Gilmore remarks:

[c]rucial to the experience of trauma are the multiple difficulties that arise in trying to articulate it. ... Something of a consensus has already developed that takes trauma as the unrepresentable to assert that trauma is beyond language in some crucial way, that language fails in the face of trauma, and that trauma mocks language and confronts it with its insufficiency.⁷

Such insights do not render texts like Pepys' diary unreadable or unacceptable as a witness; but they do help sharpen our sense that his journal cannot be read as any kind of straightforward listing, naming, or analysis of pre-textual, or pre-discursive emotions. Unlike immediate somatic affects and gestures, emotions are mediated by language, and the compounding effects of trauma on the representation and expression of emotion cannot be underestimated.

This is a central paradox for the history of emotions and the problem of reading the emotional witness of the past: the very texts that give us the emotional complexity we crave as readers and as human subjects are often those that we teach ourselves to distrust on methodological and historiographical grounds. In my analysis of Pepys' diary of the fire, I will focus on this paradox as it is played out in the language Pepys uses to describe both his own and others' emotions.

The fire itself can certainly be classified as a traumatic event. Although surprisingly few lives were lost, the damage to the city of London was extensive, and the distress of those few days and their emotional aftermath was intense. Pepys was surely not the only person to experience the aftershock, when two weeks after the fire he writes of feeling 'much terrified in the nights nowadays, with dreams of fire and falling down of houses' (7: 287).⁸ Not only were an estimated 100,000 houses and buildings destroyed, the medieval profile, pathways, and familiar networks of large parts of London were razed to the ground and subsequently rebuilt in ways that rendered the city almost unrecognisable. Maps, statistics and images can help us reconstruct and realise the changes wrought to the city. Similarly, when we turn to assess the community's emotional response, there is a range of public and private texts, artefacts, and monuments that can help us evaluate and analyse the shared trauma, and the community's attempts to manage, recover from, and commemorate the event. Broadsheet ballads, sermons and other discourses can show us other forms

and genres of textual response. Sir Christopher Wren's towering monument erected on Fish Street Hill between 1671 and 1677 tells a different kind of story, though not an uncontested one, about the causes of the fire, its progress, and attempts to halt its progress. The preservation in the Museum of the City of London of burnt glass, nails, even humble buckets retrieved from the ruins of the fire, tells a different story again about the ongoing wonder of Londoners at the transformative effects of fire on their material environment. There are other well-known journals and diary writings about the fire too. John Evelyn paints a very dramatic picture of the fire as an apocalyptic event,⁹ and while Pepys' journal was still unknown, James Malcolm devoted the entire section of his *Londinium Redivivum* (1807) on the parish of St Magnus the Martyr, Bridge Ward, where the fire started, to quoting a wide range of letters and dramatic, even politicised accounts of the disaster.¹⁰ However, once Pepys' journal was transcribed and printed in 1825, it became one of the most popular accounts of both the fire and the plague of 1665.

Pepys' journal is full of quotidian, social, administrative, and political detail; but it is also underpinned by his interest in his sense of himself as a man living in interesting times and observing himself and his behaviour in private and public life. As Mark Dawson writes:

Almost without exception, the Pepys of the diary performs, or is getting ready to perform, before a contemporary audience. Thus the text involves no simple, free-flowing, spur-of-the-moment self-expression about what had happened in the past. It constitutes a broader process of self-evaluation and censorship in the present act of writing, writing very much reliant upon reading other texts.¹¹

Moreover, '[t]he diary is a social ledger, but more than this it is the text in which Pepys creates what he is endeavouring to be, but is unsure whether he will actually become'.¹² While many commentators have argued for the importance of the journal as a document in the history of the private, writerly self, Aaron Kunin and Benjamin Kohlmann both stress that the diary cannot be read as transparent witness: like all diaries it is an exercise in the construction of the self.¹³ Kohlmann, in particular, emphasises the significance of the 'public self' as it appears in the journal: this will be important when we examine Pepys' official role in the early management of the fire.¹⁴ The journal is a private document, but one rehearsing and improvising a self that negotiates a range of private and public spheres.

Yet while in theory this self is always under construction, Pepys' narrative voice is assured and established, partly as a result of his writing habits and methods of composition and revision. In his introduction to the edition of the journal by Robert Latham and William Matthews of 1971, Matthews untangles and identifies the five stages of composition through which Pepys wrote, showing how this method produced the '... unusual and brilliant quality of Pepys' style, its peculiar sensitivity to the moment'.¹⁵ Matthews distinguishes between 'historical immediacy', the effect of writing soon after events, from 'literary immediacy' as 'an effect of language and imagination'.¹⁶ Matthews argues that it is one of the paradoxes of this 'literary immediacy' that '... what is seemingly the most spontaneous and living series of events in the diary, the long account of the Great Fire, was, as Pepys himself states, entered into the diary-book three months and more after the events'.¹⁷

By 1666, Pepys was a practised diarist, as he had been keeping a regular diary since 1660. He was fluent in the shorthand he used to protect the diary from casual observation. He wrote in ink, spacing the lines evenly, and when he had leisure and time he wrote slowly, in elegant calligraphy.¹⁸ He wrote about every day's events, even if he did not always write on the day, and had to catch up later. He also seems to have rehearsed, or shaped his writing mentally, before he was able to write it down: a process familiar to many diarists or bloggers, who become accustomed to shaping verbal narratives around events they observe and dialogue they overhear, and who then record their descriptions later.

Space does not permit a full discussion of all the days of the diary written about the fire but a detailed analysis of the first day will indicate something of the subtleties of Pepys' emotional registers and the narrative means by which he conveys the dramatic and emotional dimensions of the fire's trauma. Reading these entries in the knowledge that they were composed later allows us to draw attention to those moments when Pepys seems to write with an eye to posterity, or at least, to the deliberate shaping of this unusually long, continuous, and dramatic sequence.

It has rarely been remarked that unlike most other daily entries that begin, for example, 'Up, and to my chamber', or 'Up and at the office', and that famously often end, 'and so to bed', or 'So home to supper and to bed', the entries for the days of the fire are not framed by either of these phrases. This is one of the clearest indications that the longer, more substantial accounts of these days in September were written up at a later date, and in a very different narrative mode from the rest of the journal. In these

days' entries, Pepys' customary concerns about his place in the world, the value of his estate, or his sexual desires and intrigues figure much less prominently: by contrast, his emotions and feelings are presented in sympathetic counterpoint to those of the social community around him. He may not be writing for this immediate audience, but he may be read as writing and feeling *with* them.

Pepys first becomes aware of the fire in the early hours of Sunday, 2 September. His household is planning a big lunch and he is woken by his servant, Jane, with news of the fire at three am, but he is not overly concerned. He looks again at seven am, but when he hears the fire has burned over three hundred houses, he walks out to see for himself at close hand. Having observed the fire from the Tower of London, he takes a boat toward the fire and sees that it is spreading rapidly. Already, his heart is 'full of trouble' and the fire is 'lamentable' (7: 268). This word evokes a semantic field that came to be associated with the fire, as, for example, in the broadsheet ballad, the *Londoners lamentations* ('Let water flow from every eye'), or the sermon by Nathaniel Hardy, *Lamentation, mourning and woe*.¹⁹ Narrating these events perhaps several months later, it is possible that Pepys picked up the resonance of this word. It also seems possible that he was anticipating that either he or someone else might want to consult this portion of the diary in the future, as a historical record of the fire. At the time of writing, he is conscious that the fire will last for several days and be utterly devastating, but he is careful to preserve the dramatic immediacy of his own gradual realisation of the extent of the fire. On this first day he emphasises the frenetic movement of people scrambling to save their possessions; but the constant movement of 'goods' out of the fire's path will be a persistent theme throughout all of his account, and an activity in which he himself participates. The attachment to houses and property is a strong emotional tie, to the extent of endangering lives:

Everybody endeavouring to remove their goods, and flinging into the River or bringing them into lighters that lay off. Poor people staying in their houses as long as till the very fire touched them, and then running into boats or clambering from one pair of stair by the water-side to another. And among other things, the poor pigeons I perceive were loath to leave their houses, but hovered about the windows and balconies till they were some of them burned, their wings, and fell down. (7: 268)

Pepys uses the dynamic participles 'endeavouring', 'flinging', 'bringing', 'staying', 'running', 'clambering'. Even 'staying' here seems active,

producing a sense of constant, uniform movement and panic. Pepys' own house in Seething Lane, just north-west of the Tower of London, remained untouched by the fire, and he is some distance west at this point, very much an observer, able to 'perceive' both people and pigeons from a similar distance, and observing the similarities of their behaviour, all unwilling to leave their houses until the very last moment when they are either 'touched' or 'burnt' by the flames.

To emphasise this comparison, the adjective 'poor' is used of both people and birds. It seems rather to express pity than poverty. Pepys will use the same adjective many times over the next few days to describe people living closer to the fire than he, as they attempt to save their property. Sometimes they are described collectively ('... poor wretches carrying their goods there, and everybody keeping his goods together by themselves' [7: 276]); or individually, by name. For example, '... poor Tom Hater came with some few of his goods saved out of his house, which is burned upon Fish-street hill' (7: 272); Mr Howells, '... whose goods, poor man (his trays and dishes, Shovells &c., were flung all along Tower-street in the kennels, and people working therewith from one end to the other), the fire coming on in that narrow street, on both sides, with infinite fury' (7: 274); and Mrs Turner, '... who, poor woman, was removing her goods all this day—good goods, into the garden, and knew not how to dispose of them' (7: 274). Pepys will also use it several times, with greater intimacy and empathy over the next few days, to describe 'my poor wife' (7: 272–3), Elizabeth, and her distress. As it is used here to describe the pigeons, the same adjective is used several days later, for '... a poor Catt taken out of a hole in the chimney joyning to the wall of the Exchange, with the hair all burned off the body and yet alive' (7: 277). The empathetic repetition of 'poor' has the effect of revealing Pepys' capacity to enter into the suffering of the city, through crowds, individuals, birds and animals alike. In his description of 'poor Tom Hater', we may also observe how Pepys is struck by the chaos wrought on mundane goods as well as 'good goods': both inspire pity for their owners.

On this first day, having observed no one attempting to 'quench' or stop the fire, Pepys proceeds upriver to Whitehall. When he gains access to the king's closet, '... people came about me and I did give them an account dismayed them all; and word was carried in to the King' (7: 269). Pepys puts himself at the centre of the action, taking news from the city to the court. He also asserts his own narrative authority over the events, as he commands the interest of the king. Expressions like this give us the

sense that Pepys enjoys observing himself at important historical junctures. Even if the diary was to remain secret, Pepys is still conscious of the emotional force of his verbal descriptions, and his capacity to frame a narrative. His ‘account’ to the Court places him directly at the centre of command, and his description of the fire inspires further action: thus, Pepys perceives and demonstrates the dramatic effect of his storytelling. Having given his advice to the king, he receives the royal command to go to the Lord Mayor and ‘... command him to spare no houses but to pull down before the fire every way’ (7: 269). Depriving the fire of further fuel was the only real means of stopping it.

Pepys returns to the City, and after getting a ride in Captain Cooke’s coach as far as St Paul’s Cathedral, he moves towards the fire against the flow of human traffic: ‘... walked along Watling-street as well as I could, every creature coming away loaden with goods to save—and here and there sick people carried away in beds. Extraordinary good goods carried in carts and on backs’ (7: 269). At this point, Pepys is both in the midst of the crowd but apart from it. Like them he is purposeful; but unlike them he is making his way *toward* the fire, struggling to pass back amongst the press. This is what gives us the sense of immediacy: whereas in the morning he observed the fire from the river, he is now caught up in the people, walking against the flow of traffic. Unencumbered by any load on his back or cart, he is freer to observe and report upon the scene, remembering details to write down later. Nowhere is this more marked than in his oft-quoted encounter with the Mayor, Sir Thomas Bludworth. After struggling past the anonymous crowds with their carts, the narrative suddenly slows down and becomes more particular:

At last met my Lord Mayor in Canning Streete, like a man spent, with a hankercher about his neck. To the King’s message, he cried like a fainting woman, ‘Lord, what can I do? I am spent. People will not obey me. I have been pull[ing] down houses. But the fire overtakes us faster then we can do it.’ That he needed no more soldiers; and that for himself, he must go and refresh himself, having been up all night. So he left me, and I him, and walked home—seeing people all almost distracted and no manner of means used to quench the fire. (7: 269–70)

This dramatic vignette is remarkable in many ways. Notably, it is the only example of direct speech in the entirety of Pepys’ account of the fire.²⁰ The passage begins with the usual honorific formula (‘met my Lord

Mayor'), but the official title soon gives way to the normative simile when Bludworth is described as 'like a man spent', appealing to a common or general type, or emblem, perhaps, of what exhaustion looks like. The visual detail of the handkerchief around the mayor's neck—to protect his mouth and nose from the smoke—is a dramatic sign of the Mayor's altered garb. Pepys delivers his message, but the Mayor responds 'like a fainting woman', as if utterly overcome by circumstance. Pepys uses two gendered images to represent these emotional extremes: 'like a man spent' and 'like a fainting woman'. Both expressions describe a state of exhaustion or collapse, and both indicate a dramatic falling away from the mayor's normal, official masculinity. The mayor has become *not himself* through exhaustion and incapacity. Instead of giving commands that people will 'obey', he cries out 'like a fainting woman'. Indeed, he echoes (or more strictly, perhaps, he influences) Pepys' description of his 'spent' state: 'I am spent', he says. There is nothing left of him, or his energies. He has been consumed, wasted, and feels he can be of no further use: this is the effect of being feminised by emotion, and enervated by the unfolding disaster. The mayor has been up all night and must refresh himself, though it is not clear whether he is saying he needs to go home and sleep, or to wash and change his clothes. Either way, he is 'like a fainting woman': he has become both unmayoral and unmanly, and cannot command the people.

Bludworth's reputation never recovered from the perception that he was not able to manage or control the fire. A week after the fire, Pepys writes, '[p]eople do all the world over cry out of the simplicity of my Lord Mayor in general, and more peticularly in this business of the fire, laying it all upon him' (7: 280). Meeting him again two months later, Pepys describes him as 'weak' and his discourse 'silly' (1 December 1666, 7: 393).

When Pepys draws attention to the Mayor's feminised behaviour, it gives the overall impression of emotion being indulged at the expense of decisive action. And yet, as an emblem of historical emotional response, it forcefully captures the sense in which a man of public office and dignity can be overcome emotionally by the natural force that is fire, and the difficulty of encouraging people to save the city, rather than their own possessions. Bludworth's own discourse about the fire compounds our sense that emotional language and anxious behaviour in the face of disaster might be gendered, a sense fortified by the report that when the mayor was awakened on the Sunday morning to observe the fire's progress, he had remarked 'with a pish ... that a woman might piss it out'.²¹

This is the most dramatic individual encounter Pepys documents. After meeting the mayor, Pepys then walks home, ‘seeing people all almost distracted, and no manner of means used to quench the fire’ (7: 269–70). The word ‘distracted’ echoes the Mayor’s incapacity, and is here used primarily to describe people both in individual terms but also in a way that suggests mass hysteria. Pepys will use the same word again in the entry for 7 September, when he writes that Sir William Coventry ‘hopes we shall have no public distractions upon this fire, which is what everybody fears—because of the talk of the French having a hand in it. And it is a proper time for discontents—but all men’s minds are full of care to protect themselves and save their goods’ (7: 279). ‘Distracted’ seems to signify both rebellion and chaos (the possibility of looting) as well as anxious cares for one’s own property.

After this meeting with the Mayor, Pepys returns home at midday and tries to entertain his guests, but ‘... we were in great trouble and disturbance at this fire, not knowing what to think of it’ (7: 270). Nevertheless, they ‘... had an extraordinary good dinner, and as merry as at this time we could be’ (7: 270). This candour about their good dinner is an example of the detail that gives the diary its immediacy: there is something irresistible about this quotidian, social pleasure and the delights it gives in the midst of trauma. Even though he did not finalise this entry until three months later, Pepys preserves great dramatic tension in his depiction of people going about their daily business in ignorance of what was to come.

After lunch, Pepys and his friend Moone go back into the City, and again Pepys describes ‘... the streets full of nothing but people and horses and carts loaden with goods, ready to run over one another, and removing goods from one burned house to another—they now removing out of Canning-street (which received goods in the morning) into Lumbard Streete and further’ (7: 270). The repetition of such descriptions of people moving their goods adds to the effect of the chaos and the ceaseless movement on the streets of London.

Pepys meets his wife and others and they go back on to the water again, ‘... and to the fire up and down, it still increasing and the wind great’ (7: 271). They are beset by smoke and sparks—‘... with one’s face in the wind you were almost burned with a shower of Firedrops—this is very true—so as houses were burned by these drops and flakes of fire, three or four, nay five or six houses, one from another’ (7: 271). Here Pepys evokes for his reader the sensory experience of turning towards the fire: ‘you were almost burned’. He underlines the exceptional nature of the burning heat,

feeling the need to affirm the truth of his account; another sign that he has readers other than himself in mind.

Eventually it becomes too hot on the river, and Pepys' party adjourns to an ale-house on the south bank of the river to watch the fire. Here again, Pepys' descriptive and emotive language of social behaviour frames his own personal feelings:

... a most horrid malicious bloody flame, not like the fine flame of an ordinary fire. Barbary and her husband away before us. We stayed till, it being darkish, we saw the fire as only one entire arch of fire from this to the other side the bridge, and in a bow up the hill, for an arch of above a mile long. It made me weep to see it. The churches, houses, and all on fire and flaming at once, and a horrid noise the flames made, and the cracking of houses at their ruine. So home with a sad heart, and there find everybody discoursing and lamenting the fire ... (7: 271–2).

The fire has become a grand spectacle, one it is easy to attribute with a malevolent intent. The flames themselves are personified in emotional language as malicious and horrid (Pepys will use *horridly* again the next day), and Pepys tries several times to paint an overall picture of the 'arch' or 'bow' of the fire that unites scenes in visual, almost pictorial terms, while at the same time insisting on the horror of the noise of the flames, as the houses 'crack' and break apart. Now at the end of the day, and in response to the spectacle of this civic tragedy, seen from his vantage point on the river, in all its sublime horror, Pepys' tears, in contrast to the emotional confusion of the Mayor, are an appropriate response. There is no threat to Pepys' masculinity here; he is lamenting the loss, not just of personal possessions, but of a large section of the city.

By the end of the first day, then, the fire has become a public spectacle. Pepys charts his own emotions in his tears and his own feeling—'so home with a sad heart'—but also describes the emotions of his group: 'we' stayed on the water as long as they could bear the heat; the fire seems to be 'at us'; and 'every body discoursing and lamenting the fire'. As earlier that day, when Pepys' account of the first stages of the fire 'dismayed' all the court, so too, everyone else is talking about the fire and comparing what they have seen. But only Pepys is recording it, taking mental or physical notes, as was his custom, even if he could not finalise the day's entry that evening. Pepys is *with* everyone else, acknowledging the emotions he shares with the rest of the court, and planning to record those feelings for

posterity. Emotions may be hard to separate from their complex rhetorical expression in textual form, but this complexity does not render them any less meaningful or significant.

Over the next few days, Pepys uses a similar narrative method to recount the spread of the fire, the constant movement of property and goods, and his anxiety about his own goods. On several occasions he moves his own goods, or buries them. On the second morning he puts himself in the midst of the crush: Lady Batten sends him a cart to move his ‘... money and plate and best things ... which I did, riding myself in my nightgown in the Cart; and Lord, to see how the streets and the highways are crowded with people, running and riding and getting of carts at any rate to fetch away thing[s]’ (7: 272). Again, Pepys is part of the scene but also observing the chaos. On the third day of the fire he is up at dawn to move more of his things, and in the evening, buries his ‘parmazan cheese’, some wine and other things in Sir W. Batten’s garden (7: 274).

Over the next week, Pepys continues to document social and communal emotions, as his narrative mode gradually returns to its customary, rather more abbreviated form. On 5 September, the fire is still burning, and people are still carrying their goods and possessions to safety. Pepys and his friends walk into the city ‘... our feet ready to burn, walking through the town among the hot coles’ (7: 276), and the day’s entry concludes, ‘[a]nd I had forgot almost the day of the week’ (7: 277). But as if to correct this disruption, the entry for the next day, 6 September, returns to the customary formula, ‘[u]p about 5 a-clock’ (7: 277). In the week following the fire, the journal tracks the gradual restoration of order to the city and reports the ‘confused’ discourse (7: 281), the gossip and rumour surrounding the fire, its origins, and the cleanup operations. Pepys’ sleep is disturbed by anxiety and unaccustomed noise (‘... both sleeping and waking, had a fear of fire at my heart, that I took little rest’ (7: 280).

By 9 September, a week after the beginning of the fire, the regular pattern of life has been somewhat restored. Pepys begins the day with a shave, and heads to church, ‘where our parson made a melancholy but good sermon—and many, and most, in the church cried, especially the women. The church mighty full, but few of fashion, and most strangers’ (7: 283). In this reflective context, melancholia and tears are appropriate, although the precise mathematics of Pepys’ phrase, ‘many, and most, in the church cried, especially the women’ are a little hard to compute. These tears seem penitential, and therefore highly appropriate, and yet they are also gendered, but not completely feminised. Pepys’ comment about the lack of

fashionable people further signals restoration of his customary social pre-occupations. Notably, he gives little indication of the content of the parson's 'melancholy' sermon; Pepys seems more interested in its emotional effects on the congregation.

There are further references during the days of the fire to private and public emotion, but these examples, focusing on tears and weeping, and the admixture of personal and communal feeling, testify to Pepys' art in representing his private self for his own records, while at the same time recording social emotions. Throughout the days of the fire, he expresses personal feelings and emotions, but carefully embeds them in his sympathetic account of social and communal reactions. The diary may represent a 'staging' of a self-conscious self; it is still a powerful record of emotional feeling.

Perhaps it is not surprising that the emotions described and represented in the journal should figure large in modern historical accounts of the fire. But the last word on the topic of Pepys' journal as a document in the history of emotions goes, perhaps ironically, to Robert Latham, the author of the discussion of Pepys as a historical source in the magisterial edition of 1971. While William Matthews discusses the journal 'as literature, Latham emphasises the journal as 'history'. He is interested in Pepys' diary for its 'realism', and assesses the sheer amount of information that it offers, its statistics, its historical evidence and so on. But in the end, he, too, cannot help emphasising the importance of the diary as a *combination* of public chronicle and private journal:

Because the diary tells an historical story in terms of an individual life, the reader is given not only an intellectual understanding of the period but also the means of achieving an imaginative sympathy with it. Reader and subject are united by a common humanity. This is not only one man's version of the history of a decade—this is what it felt like to be alive.²²

Intellectual and historical narrative are intriguing and significant, but what makes the journal so important is its powerful combination of self-awareness and the unmistakable impression of human sentiment, sympathy, and emotion reaching across the centuries—what it feels like to be alive. Not only does this make Pepys' journal a powerful document for the history of emotions; it also constitutes a compelling argument for the importance of that discipline.

NOTES

1. This essay could not have been written without the superb advice and assistance of Dr Helen Hickey and Dr Anne McKendry. This research was supported by the Australian Research Council's Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions (project number CE110001011).
2. <http://www.londonremembers.com/memorials/the-monument-west-and-north> October 1, 2015.
3. Frances E. Dolan, *True Relations: Reading, Literature and Evidence in Seventeenth-Century England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 102.
4. This was a symposium, 'Understanding Emotions: An Interdisciplinary Workshop', held at the University of Western Australia in 2010, sponsored by the Australian Academy of Social Sciences, and imaginatively convened by the late Philippa Maddern. I am very grateful to my two respondents, Susan Broomhall from the Discipline of History, and Angus Cook from the School of Population Health, both of the University of Western Australia, for their critical responses, and the different perspectives they brought to my work on Pepys.
5. See, for example, Berger's analysis of the 'documentary desire' that underpins the journal: Harry Berger Jr, 'The Pepys Show: Ghost-Writing and Documentary Desire in "The Diary",' *ELH* 3 (1998): 559; but also his critique of Francis Barker's claims about 'this founding moment of bourgeois subjectivity' (Berger, 'The Pepys Show,' 562).
6. R. J. Daly, 'Samuel Pepys and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder,' *British Journal of Psychiatry* 143 (1983): 67. See also the discussion of trauma narratives in Chap. 5 by Erika Kuijpers in this volume.
7. Leigh Gilmore, *The Limits of Autobiography: Trauma and Testimony* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 6.
8. All quotations are from *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. Robert Latham and William Matthews, 11 vols. (London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1971), cited by volume and page number in-text.
9. See *The Diary of John Evelyn*, ed. William Bray (New York and London: M. Walter Dunne, 1901), 2: esp. pp. 20–26. Available online at <https://archive.org/details/diaryofjohnevely02eveliala>.
10. J. P. Malcolm, *Londinium Redivivum or an Ancient History and Modern Description of London* (London: Nichols and Son, 1807), 4: 30–96.
11. Mark S. Dawson, 'Histories and Texts: Refiguring the Diary of Samuel Pepys,' *The Historical Journal* 43 (2000): 431.
12. Dawson, 'Histories and Texts,' 431.
13. Aaron Kunin, 'Other Hands in Pepys's Diary,' *Modern Language Quarterly* 65 (2004): 219; Benjamin Kohlmann, "'Men of Sobriety and Buisnes'":

- Pepys, Privacy and Public Duty,' *The Review of English Studies* 61 (2009): 554. See also Claire Tomalin, *Samuel Pepys: The Unequalled Self* (London: Viking, 2002), 81. In Tomalin's words, '[h]e had already tried his hand as a novelist and discovered a flair for reporting history in the making' (81). In Tomalin's reading, when he starts his diary, Pepys is a young man not yet sure of his destiny, but with a sense that he is 'singled out by fate' as 'a man who might do something in the world. ... The high drama of the world in which he had grown up, the still continuing conflict between republic and monarchy, the heroic figures set against one another, paralleled the conflicts of the ancient world he had studied in classical texts. And principally there was his curiosity about himself, which made him see his own mental and physical nature as not merely a legitimate but a valuable and glorious subject for exploration' (81).
14. Kohlman, "Men of Sobriety and Buisnes," 560.
 15. William Matthews, 'The Diary as Literature,' in *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, 1: cv.
 16. Matthews, 'The Diary as Literature,' 1: cv.
 17. Matthews, 'The Diary as Literature,' 1: cv. Pepys notes on 11 October that 'I had taken my Journall during the fire and the disorders following in loose papers until this very day, and could not get time to enter them in my book till January 18 ...' (7: 318).
 18. Tomalin, *Samuel Pepys*, 81–2.
 19. *The Londoners lamentation* (London: J. Clark, 1666), *Early English Books Online*, http://gateway.proquest.com.ezp.lib.unimelb.edu.au/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:47012512; Nathaniel Hardy, *Lamentation, mourning and woe. Sighed forth in a sermon preached in the parish-church of St. Martin in the Fields, on the 9th day of September* (London: Tho. Newcomb for William Grantham, 1666), *Early English Books Online*, http://gateway.proquest.com.ezp.lib.unimelb.edu.au/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:citation:13649878. For the use of 'lamentation' in such contexts, see Chap. 2 by Alex Walsham in this volume.
 20. Pepys does not often record direct speech, but it is usually a sign of high drama when he does so.
 21. 'Letters Concerning the Great Fire in London, September 1666', from a manuscript loaned to J. P. Malcolm by Richard Gough, dated from the Middle Temple on 24 and 29 September and 3 October 1666, and now Bodleian MS. Gough London 14, fols. 32–41, 33r, also cited in Malcolm, *Londinium Redivivum*, IV.74.
 22. Latham, 'Diary as History,' cxxxvii.

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