

Wittenberg History Journal

Spring 2016



UNEXPECTED TENSIONS: SOCIAL CONFLICT
FROM THE VIKING AGE TO WORLD WAR II

Wittenberg History Journal

Spring 2016

UNEXPECTED TENSIONS: SOCIAL CONFLICT
FROM THE VIKING AGE TO WORLD WAR II

Wittenberg History Journal

SPRING 2016 | VOLUME XLV

Unexpected Tensions: Social Conflict from the Viking Age to World War II

Wittenberg University
Springfield, Ohio

2016 Editorial Board

Senior Editors

Keri Heath '16
Kaitlyn Vazquez '16

Junior Editors

Kristen Brady '17
Vivian Overholt '17
Gil Rutledge '17

Faculty Advisor

Joshua Paddison

Wittenberg History Journal is affiliated with the Gamma Zeta chapter of Phi Alpha Theta.

The Hartje Paper

The Martha and Robert G. Hartje Award is presented annually to a senior in the spring semester. The History Department determines the three or four finalists who then write a 600 to 800 word narrative essay on an historical event or figure. The finalists must have at least a 2.7 grade point average and have completed at least six history courses. The winner is awarded \$500 at a spring semester History Department colloquium and the winner paper is included in the *History Journal*. This year's Hartje Award was presented to Keri Heath.

On the Cover

Louis Raemaekers, "To Your Health, Civilization!," *De Telegraaf*, September 20, 1914.

Address Correspondence to:

Editor
The Wittenberg History Journal
Department of History
Wittenberg University
P. O. Box 720
Springfield, OH 45501-0720

Contents

Hartje Award Winner

1 Half-Peace: The Successes and Failures of the Peace Process in Northern Ireland

Keri Heath

I. RENAISSANCE REVERSED: SOCIAL CONFLICTS

IN FLORENCE

5 The Tensions Hidden Beneath Religious Festivities and Carnivals: A Social Analysis of Public Celebrations in Renaissance Florence

Kristen Brady

11 From the Bottom Up: Influence on the Upper Class by the Florentine Underground in the Renaissance

Keri Heath

17 The Ospedale Degli Innocente: A Microhistory

Hannah Hunt

II. FORGOTTEN STORIES: CARTOONISTS AND KINGS

26 Kings at Sea: Examining a Forgotten Way of Life

Gil Rutledge

32 The Pictorial Stylings of Louis Raemaekers and David Low: A Comparison of Anti-German Cartoons from World War I to World War II

Melissa Newman

48 Author Biographies

Dedication

The History Journal senior editors thank Dr. Molly Wood for her continuous guidance and support of the senior class as they finish their years in the history department at Wittenberg. Dr. Wood, we appreciate the time and commitment that you have shown to the class of 2016 in all that you do.

Half-Peace: The Successes and Failures of the Peace Process in Northern Ireland

Keri Heath

On April 10, 1998, lawmakers in Northern Ireland attempted to put a stop to thirty years of sectarian violence with the Good Friday Agreement. Over the past three decades, Catholic Republicans and Protestant Unionists engaged in heavy fighting that turned the streets of Belfast into a battleground. The policy sought to reverse many of the injustices ingrained in the Northern Irish state. However, while the current peace process created progress towards relieving the tension on an official level, the contradictory communal identities within the state have remained intact, resulting in unresolved prejudices.

The Troubles in Northern Ireland stem from an issue of conflicted communal identities. Catholic views towards Unionists were jaded by decades of socio-economic oppression and by a government that was explicitly forged to serve Protestant people in a Protestant state. Throughout the Troubles, civil rights advocates complained that it was difficult for them to gain proper representation or to “maintain the balance of parties in Parliament” because of “the distribution of religious denominations throughout Northern Ireland.”¹ At the same time, Northern Irish Protestants felt their way of life threatened by the possibility of Catholic emancipation and integration into the government. By the time the Good Friday Agreement was signed, each group had developed its own mythology of hate towards the opposite group, an oral history of tragedy that sustained the anger.

In theory, the arrangement that the negotiators wrote would create policies to bridge this hatred and solve these problems. The Agreement called for a Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive to provide a Northern Irish government in which both Republicans and Unionists would have the opportunity to work together. Throughout the negotiation process, tensions between the Northern Irish and British governments eased. Now, many government officials in Ireland and the United Kingdom, notably David

Cameron and Enda Kenny, believe “Anglo-Irish relations are at an ‘all-time high.’”² While tensions still exist, the efforts of the North-South Council and British-Irish Council have helped the two governments find commonalities on which they can forge their relationship.

However, the Assembly was ineffective in the long run. Continuing IRA activities caused Unionist leadership to refuse cooperation, preventing any major decisions from taking place. The British government stepped in several times to continue the state’s functioning. By the time the Assembly was formed, the Northern Irish people were split at the roots in national identity. Politicians struggled to convince their voting base that agreement was in their best interest. Indeed, much “of the antagonism between the two communities was based on preconceived notions of the other.”³ While the peace process that set up this assembly made an effort toward finding common ground between these two groups, the result was not effective in providing a long-term solution.

This is the key to understanding the effects of the Good Friday Agreement. While living conditions have become markedly better for citizens of Northern Ireland and the warzone-like quality of the cities has ceased, officials’ efforts have been unable to completely eliminate the community’s discriminatory ideology. Even by 2013, “Northern Ireland [had] not carried out any socio-economic justice to redistribute resources between the two communities.”⁴ The process of the economic reform left many working class individuals with just as few opportunities as they would have had during the conflict due to hardened beliefs of social norms. With the lack of forced dialogue between the Republican and Unionist groups in the community, “it has become apparent that sectarian feeling has not only failed to dissipate but may even have hardened in some districts” and that the contrasting communal identities remain a strong part of Northern Irish society.⁵ Political antagonisms remain rife and factional allegiances

within the community continue to be strong. Instead of the hoped outcome, the contradictions and judgments between the two communities persist.

The Good Friday Agreement was able to produce some success in alleviating relations between Republicans and Unionists within the government. However, attempts to remove tension within the community itself through civil rights reform has not managed to cure the North of the deeper prejudices that sparked much of the conflict in the first place. Instead, this discrimination upon which Northern Ireland was founded has remained intact. While the peace process made advancement towards addressing the contradicting views within Northern Ireland's government, it failed to break down the differing communal identities between Catholics and Protestants, leaving deep fissures remaining in the state.

Endnotes

¹Thomas Hennessey *A History of Northern Ireland, 1920-1996* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan Ltd, 1997), 52.

²"Anglo-Irish Relations 'at Peak,'" *The Belfast Telegraph*, November 3, 2014, accessed January 5, 2016, <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/republic-of-ireland/angloirish-relations-at-peak-30083294.html>.

³Hennessey, *A History of Northern Ireland*, 110.

⁴Kerim Yildiz, *The Good Friday Agreement: An Overview* (London: Democratic Progress Institute, 2013), 53.

⁵Colin Coulter and Michael Murray, *Northern Ireland After the Troubles* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008), 16.

Bibliography

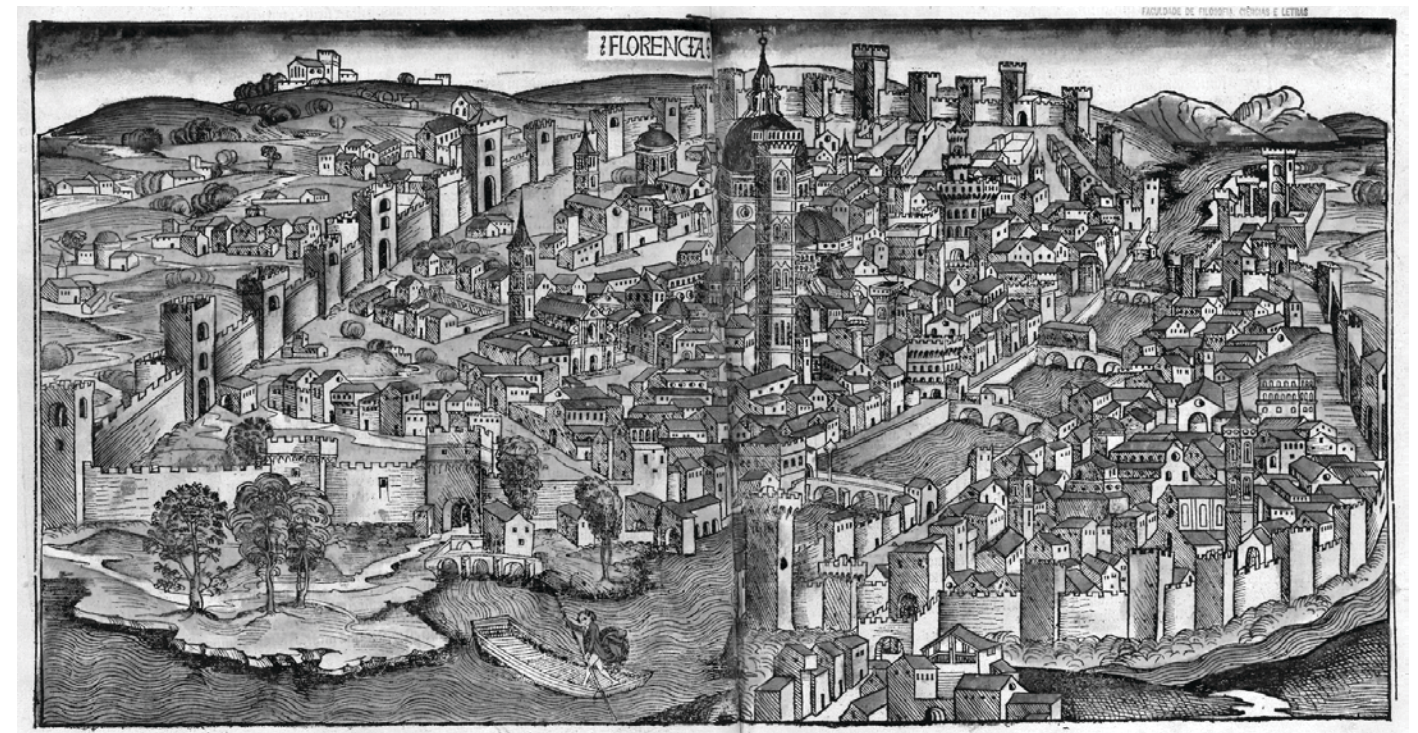
"Anglo-Irish Relations 'at Peak.'" *The Belfast Telegraph*, November 3, 2014. Accessed January 5, 2016. <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/republic-of-ireland/angloirish-relations-at-peak-30083294.html>.

Coulter, Colin, and Michael Murray. *Northern Ireland After the Troubles*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008.

Hennessey, Thomas. *A History of Northern Ireland, 1920-1996*. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan Ltd, 1997.

Yildiz, Kerim. *The Good Friday Agreement: An Overview*. London: Democratic Progress Institute, 2013.

Section I. Renaissance Reversed: Social Conflicts in Florence



"Florence," Nuremberg Chronicle, 1493.

The Tensions Hidden Beneath Religious Festivities and Carnivals: A Social Analysis of Public Celebrations in Renaissance Florence

Kristen Brady

Whether it be the annual carnival preceding Lent or the feast days of their patron saint John the Baptist, Renaissance Florentines wildly prepared for—and indulged in—the splendors and exuberance that these types of celebrations fashioned. “The whole city is engaged in preparing for the feast,” said Gregorio Dati, a prominent silk merchant, on the feast of St. John the Baptist. “Everyone is filled with gaiety.”¹ Religious celebrations as such were open to the entire community, no matter if the citizens were part of the aristocracy, the clergy, or even the lower class. Not only were the festivities intended for the public, but they involved people of all trades and skills: architects, astrologists, craftsmen, painters, poets, sculptors, and more.² However, despite the unifying effect of public celebrations on the entire Florentine community, the events themselves were managed by an elite group of the aristocracy, leading to an exhibition of strong class divisions and tensions.

There were numerous festivals and feast days celebrated during this time in Florence, such as the feasts of Cosmas and Damian in September, the feast day of St. Barnabas, May Day, Epiphany, Palm Sunday, and the anniversary of the battle of Campaldino.³ While many feast days revolved around religion, others sprang from political scenarios. The anniversary of the battle of Campaldino celebrated the Guelphs’ defeat of the Ghibellines, and the feasts of Cosmas and Damian represented the reaffirmation of Medici power. What happened throughout Florence politically, and even in the rest of the nearby countries and city-states, generally affected which festivities were celebrated. Cosimo I civically celebrated the anniversary of his election, for example, and it is unlikely that this was celebrated as extravagantly after the Medici reign diminished.⁴ Due to the annual consistency of and excitement for the carnival and the feast of St. John the Baptist, there are a great deal more

documents speaking on those events than the lesser known feasts, and thus more that can be learned about the way the classes and groups interacted.

According to Gregorio Dati, Florence began preparing for the feast of St. John the Baptist at least two months in advance. Adjacent celebrations such as weddings were planned to coincide with these feast days, as joining them would bring more honor to their patron saint.⁵ Honoring the deceased was, in fact, of primary importance to these festivals. “Mass and meal,” wrote historian Richard C. Trexler, “the propitiative and assertive aspects of the affair, were viewed as equal parts of the total honor paid the deceased.”⁶ This not only helps us to understand why the processions associated with the carnival often had allegorical themes and decorations associated with death, but gives insight into why celebrations possessed seemingly hypocritical facets of debauchery, secularity, and ceremony.⁷ Bonfire dances and solemn church services all led to the same goals of respect, honor, and group solidarity.⁸ This resulted in both licentious and lavish celebratory affairs which offer insights into the conflicts that ballooned, especially considering that these events required total unity between the church and the aristocracy and among the social classes themselves.

A Power Struggle Between the Church and Community

The carnival, one of Renaissance Florence’s most anticipated celebrations, was a three-day string of festivities, games, and processions that preceded the period of Lent. Carnival typically began with the ornate masquerades of songs specific to the festival called the *bufole*. In 1546, on Shrove Tuesday of the carnival alone there were six processions, all with varying themes. A contemporary letter writer recounted some of the lavish aspects of the festivities: “This was so rich and well

decked out that I could not describe it if I tried.” However, the overwhelmed writer managed to get across his sights of red satin, gold cloth, horses, masks, shields, and pearl-laden leggings. At the end of the procession, fourteen cannons were fired and “there was so much smoke and noise that it seemed to be hell.”⁹

In 1550, there are accounts of a quintain on the last day of the carnival, ending with prizes. Following, a painter was brought in who depicted the seven deadly sins (a frequent theme among carnivals in the era), each sin painted as a man. One document mentions that, later in the evening, 400 torches were lit, and, while the procession would have normally stayed out late into the night, the citizens were ushered inside due to rain.¹⁰ Other important aspects of the carnival included pageant wagons, caccia (a battle between lions, bulls, and dogs), traditional stone-fighting (which usually resulted in many injuries, and sometimes even death), religious processions, buffalo races, soccer games, hunting, plays, torches, bonfires, jousts, masquerades, and Catherine-wheels.¹¹ The planning which went into the carnival had to be as extensive as the list of festivities themselves.

Despite the wide array of events, Walter B. Scaife has argued that “the greatest and most original feature of the Florentine carnival was the allegorical procession.”¹² Oftentimes, the carnival masquerades focused on a theme, similarly to the painting of the seven deadly sins mentioned earlier. These themes revolved around the political, religious, and social situations that were occurring around them and affecting their lives accordingly. An example of a politically relevant theme used would be peace prevailing over discord and disunity, their interpretation and hope for the threat from the French.¹³

Given the excessive amount of elaborate and expensive physical decorations and processions, and the rhetorical and allegorical meanings behind them, it is important to question where the Florentines got their provisions and precisely whose political and religious opinions were being used to represent the mass community. Michel Plaisance believed it was an amalgamation of the government and the local duke who held vital positions in organizing and funding the carnival presentations, but contemporary letters written to and from the Medici family seem to indicate that the duke, or most noble man of the city, held almost all key responsibilities for funding and organizing the festivities of both the carnival and the feast of St. John the Baptist—a fascinating notion as both of these festivals are religious.¹⁴ Pier Francesco Riccio wrote to Cosimo de’ Medici in 1545 on the subject of fireworks ordered by

Cosimo for the feast of St. John the Baptist, and his letter includes discussions of mock battles and cannons.¹⁵ A letter from the Priori e Confalonieri di Prato written eleven years later to Francesco de’ Medici mentions his donation of forty small birds for the feast of St. John the Baptist.¹⁶ There are many other similar letters written to members of the Medici family that contain notes about donations and purchases on their behalf for the celebrations. Documents as such present a strong case for the power of men in prominent and wealthy families, perhaps even more so than the church itself. Another contemporary document from 1545 records that a successful feast of St. John the Baptist attributes honor to the duke himself.¹⁷

It might also be questioned, then, if the power of men like Cosimo de’ Medici undermined that of the church by going forth and adding vast and expensive facets to the festivals. It is obvious that the general public greatly enjoyed the additions that the Medicean legacy brought to the carnival and the feast, but there are indicators of possible tensions between the church and the community.

The ecclesiastical community exercised its control over the court and its penal system during the feast days of St. John the Baptist, keeping their judgment in constant reminder at the back of the minds of citizens and, potentially, even the Medici or other dukes and aristocratic families. It was customary that the church granted a small number of prisoners full absolution on the feast day. Records account that one year, a man named Anastasio di Ser Domenico di Ser Salvi Gai murdered his own mother with a piece of wood. He was sentenced to perpetual imprisonment for his crime. However, because he was deemed insane at the time of the murder, his punishment was reduced. This is a fascinating example of a plea of insanity in a court system where it is typically thought that insanity and fugue played little factor in punishment, especially in a time of concern for witchcraft and sorcery. The court decided that if he went along with a ceremony on the feast day of St. John the Baptist, presented himself before the Baptistry with a torch in his hands (with several other ceremonial factors), he would be granted full absolution.¹⁸ While they could have granted him absolution for insanity in the first place, the judges did not want to encourage or perpetuate any ideas among the citizens that they could be granted absolution for similar crimes. The church, it seemed, was employing its ability to grant mercy, but it can perhaps be questioned whether their “mercy” was an ease on their conscience or a way to demonstrate their power to the public.

Nonetheless, the religious aspects of the feast of St. John the Baptist weren’t always appreciated, and sometimes were publicly scorned by adolescents or the lower class. A piece of writing from Piero Parenti accounts the mass before the carnival began, and then delves into an explanation of several impediments that affected the morning procession led by Girolamo Savonarola. Parenti wrote of the first incident:

At the bridge of Santa Trinita, where rock-throwing ordinarily occurred, the procession was impeded, but Messer Luca Corsini, a doctor [of law], was not ashamed to draw off his mantle and reply, with stone in hand, to any who impeded the procession, that for the faith he would put his life on the line. This was accounted the greatest foolishness, since such action was neither necessary nor suitable for him.¹⁹

While it is logical that there would be plenty of people like Piero Parenti who enjoyed the religious aspects of such celebrations and felt it ignorant to even acknowledge the ruckus and distractions that others created, it is not surprising that there were also Florentines who hurled around dead cats in order to block a religious procession.²⁰ We cannot know for certain whether comparable incidents occurred in result to a lack of respect for the church, Savonarola himself, or simply as a means of mischief, but such actions did lead to a fear among the Signoria for civic disunity. Fra Timoteo Bottonio recorded that preachers could not enforce a ban on rock-throwing during the carnival, no matter how many people were killed in its participation each year.²¹ This calls into question how much control the church really had over what happened at their own religious festivals. “Lorenzo Medici and other celebrated men wrote songs to be sung with the street amusements of the day, and paid their share of the expenses of the great public entertainments someone who puts on a costume for a masquerade, and dressed in silk and gold looks rich and powerful and then, when he takes off the mask and the costume, is still the same as he was before.”²⁷

In a particular instance of disunity, during the annual carnival the clergy did not participate at all in the processions. Considering that the clergy were usually involved along with the rest of the community in the festivities, this was a sign that there were deep internal conflicts among the church, the religious orders, and the man with all the power at the time, Cosimo I. In Dati’s account, the religious procession included clerics, priests, monks, friars, religious orders, and relics.²⁸ How might the procession be affected without any number of these important religious players? And what would this

say to the townsfolk? Plaisance writes that “their absence may be a reflection of the fact that the relationship between Cosimo and the religious orders was not good at this time. The following August, in fact, the Dominicans would be expelled from the convent of San Marco.”²⁹ Looking at what may have been missing from the usual festivals year by year may give us a glance into the hints of discord among the Florentine community. Or, similarly, looking at why the festivals were cancelled could tell us just as much. For a community that planned two months in advance for a festival for which “the whole world rejoices,” it shows up as a very large red flag when the events themselves do not actually happen.³⁰

Trexler remarks that postponements and cancellations usually only happened when there was a severe disunity among the city. There was a general concern that, with such discord among the people, mass gatherings might precipitate even larger disorders or riots. “The danger that a gathering might display the weakness of the public authority was, however, only one part of a larger whole,” writes Trexler. They were also concerned that “a public scandal would not have pleased the honored saint. . . . Disorder was in some sense a demonstration of divine weakness as well as a challenge to divine and temporal authority.”³¹

The carnival and the feast of St. John the Baptist were instances when Florence presented itself not only to the direct community, but to the outside world. It is possible that “Florentine civic identity was most clearly described through the ritual presentation of the city to visiting dignitaries and ambassadors. In such cases, the presentation of a united civic front through a procession that involved the city’s multiple collectivities assumed a vital political importance in terms of the city’s credibility with the outside world.”³² In this view, impediments to a festival, such as the slinging of dead cats through a religious procession, would indicate a weakness to visitors from other countries or cities, and might even be enough to rile up questions of strength from rival states of Milan or Naples. The idea of presenting to the foreign public a strong united front of the church, the state, and the citizens could almost be seen as a militaristic defense strategy.

On a smaller scale, there was also the concern that these large gatherings would stoke the flames of tension and the communal breaking of city laws and regulations. Not only could there, at any time, grow friction between the confraternities or the old families of Florence, but there was always the potential of the common populace to get into trouble with the authorities. Sharon Strocchia remarks that crowded streets and fairs opened up grounds for same-sex encounters, which was strictly prohibited under the

government.³³ Because of these possibilities for riots and illegalities, both the Signoria and the familia played important roles in the ceremonial life of Florence.³⁴ Whether it be restlessness of the common people or questions of their public image to foreign states, Florence was very cautious to hide its inner agitations behind the masks used in their bufole.

Gender Tensions: Women Behind Windows

All of these ceremonies happened on the common, mundane, public streets of Florence: the everyday, for several days a year, became exquisite and magnificent by the passing of processions, masquerades, and animals right next to the markets, guilds, churches, and homes.³⁵ It was an extraordinary event for the entire city, but not every Florentine got to experience its splendor at the same level of involvement. During most of the processions, women were forced to watch from the windows of their homes. According to Strocchia, the vertical distance also buffered spectators in important ways and reinforced Florentine gender ideologies. The physical gap separating streets and windows protected the purity and safety of “respectable” women who listened to the bawdy Carnival songs directed at them by street singers; it further suggested a courtly elevation of women’s place in erotic contests that both constrained and enabled women’s participation in these important festivals.³⁶

Because many of the carnival songs involved mild ridicule about Renaissance personalities, and were oftentimes not entirely “appropriate” for feminine ears, women (particularly of the upper and aristocratic classes) spent most of the carnival time watching from their window or terrace. This left women almost entirely out of the more imaginative and playful aspects of the carnival and St. John the Baptist activities. It was also understood that bull fights and stone-throwing fights were no places for women, who, according to social custom, were the gentler gender.

Women were heavily involved in the religious processions. Lorenzo de’ Medici planned 8000 boys and girls for a Palm Sunday procession to march in white, giving a sense of gender equality among the church.³⁷ However, this gender equality was more prevalent among children in the processions, and sometimes women were even clumped together with them, showing their place in the culture. There are only a few available sources from the time that mention women in the religious festivities themselves, and they primarily only revolve around Palm Sunday. One account tells us the order in which people went through the procession: first children, then the religious, then laymen, and then the women, with girls following last.³⁸

Of course, not all women in this era were strictly limited to “window-watching” their lives away. It was common for the artisan and merchant class ladies to venture into the streets to peruse the markets and carts which set up shop. Likewise, it is not impossible that some women (although most likely the lower class) ignored their placement in social class and watched the elaborate masquerades from the sidelines. However, for the upper class and noble women, the streets during the more rambunctious parts of festivals were almost completely off-limits, unless a lady wanted to tarnish her reputation and dance with the lower class girls at the bonfires. For the aristocratic women, a unique type of public sphere was permitted to them; however, that sphere was primarily made up of the Medici Palace for dinners, balls, and theatricals that went along with the feast of St. John the Baptist and the carnival.³⁹ Theoretically, though women rarely ventured over their own threshold, all of these precautions were done to preserve their honor. Their enclosed domain was, in a sense, due to the fact that women were held to a far higher accountability for their piety than Florentine men at the time, although it can be questioned whether they were viewed more as “objects of furniture” or exemplars of chastity far beyond that of men.⁴⁰ No matter how male Florentines truly viewed women, there can be little doubt that these women felt left out of the majority of celebrations, and no declaration of honor can make up for the missed amusements that they only witnessed from afar in their high Florentine windows.

Conclusion

Festivals such as the feast of St. John the Baptist and the carnival preceding Lent were some of the world’s greatest religious celebrations during the time, connecting all social, religious, and political aspects of the community in one large commemoration both mischievous and solemn. While there were quite easily hundreds of tensions, quarrels, and dangers pulsing through the city during those three days of carnival, keeping the clergy on their toes, the Signoria on the watch, and the Medici staking claim over their purchased prowess, it can also be determined that, at the same time, Florence was one of the most united city-states of the time, and not only for their front of magnificence and beauty.

The glamor and glory may not be exactly what meets the eye in the accounts of star-dazzled citizens, but Renaissance Florence was a community that enjoyed celebrating together, reigning in every aspect of artisan life with games, plays, feasts, and songs. At the start of the next day, they joined in communion together for a dignified

ceremony to celebrate their passed patron saint. Despite all of their extensive misgivings with one another, in the end, Florence was still a community that could pull together, annually, creating one of the world’s most renowned and ravishing celebrations that attracted dignitaries from countries seas away.

Endnotes

- ¹ Gregorio Dati, “An Occasion of Solidarity,” in *The Society of Renaissance Florence: A Documentary Study*, ed. Gene Brucker (Toronto: Renaissance Society of America, 1971), 76.
- ² Michel Plaisance, *Florence in the Time of the Medici: Public Celebrations, Politics, and Literature in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*, ed. Nicole Carew-Reid (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2008), 107.
- ³ Walter B. Scaife, *Florentine Life During the Renaissance* (Whitefish: Kessinger Publishing, 2005), 203.
- ⁴ Plaisance, *Florence in the Time of the Medici*, 112-3.
- ⁵ Dati, “An Occasion of Solidarity,” 75.
- ⁶ Richard C. Trexler, “Ritual Behavior in Renaissance Florence: The Setting,” in *Medievalia et Humanistica*, ed. Paul Maurice Clogan (Denton: North Texas State University, 1973), 138.
- ⁷ Scaife, *Florentine Life During the Renaissance*, 206.
- ⁸ Trexler, “Ritual Behavior in Renaissance Florence,” 137.
- ⁹ Michel Plaisance, trans., “The Bufole for Shrove Tuesday, 10 February 1546,” in *Florence in the Time of the Medici: Public Celebrations, Politics, and Literature in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*, ed. Nicole Carew-Reid (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2008), 125-6.
- ¹⁰ Michel Plaisance, trans., “The Carnival Celebrations of 1550,” in *Florence in the Time of the Medici*, 127-9.
- ¹¹ Plaisance, *Florence in the Time of the Medici*, 104-6.
- ¹² Scaife, *Florentine Life During the Renaissance*, 206.
- ¹³ Plaisance, *Florence in the Time of the Medici*, 110.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 102-3, 111.
- ¹⁵ Pier Francesco Riccio, letter to Cosimo de’ Medici I, 20 April 1545, *The Medici Archive Project Volume 1171*, Folio 265, Insert 6, Document ID 7002, accessed 13 March 2015, <http://www.medic.org>.
- ¹⁶ Priori e Confalonieri di Prato, letter to Francesco de’ Medici I, 23 June 1566, *The Medici Archive Project Volume 521a*, Folio 1097, Document ID 20641, accessed 13 March 2015, <http://www.medic.org>.
- ¹⁷ Michel Plaisance, trans., “The Feast of St. John the Baptist in 1545,” in *Florence in the Time of the Medici*, 130-4.
- ¹⁸ “A Plea of Insanity,” in *The Society of Renaissance Florence: A Documentary Study*, ed. Gene Brucker (Toronto: Renaissance Society of America, 1971), 170-1.
- ¹⁹ Piero Parenti, “Storia Fiorentina,” in *Selected Writings of Girolamo Savonarola: Religion and Politics*, 1490-1498, ed. and trans. Anne Borelli and Maria Pastore Passaro (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2006), 337-8.
- ²⁰ Piero Parenti, “Storia Fiorentina,” 338.
- ²¹ Timoteo Bottonio, “La vita del Beato Ieronimo Savonarola,” in *Selected Writings of Girolamo Savonarola*, 213.
- ²² Scaife, *Florentine Life During the Renaissance*, 204.

²³ Dati, “An Occasion of Solidarity,” 76.

²⁴ Scaife, *Florentine Life During the Renaissance*, 206.

²⁵ Dale V. Kent, *Friendship, Love, and Trust in Renaissance Florence* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 125-6.

²⁶ Timothy J. McGee, “Dinner Music for the Florentine Signoria, 1350-1450,” *Speculum* 74, no. 1 (January 1999): 100.

²⁷ Plaisance, *Florence in the Time of the Medici*, 101-2.

²⁸ Dati, “An Occasion of Solidarity,” 76.

²⁹ Plaisance, *Florence in the Time of the Medici*, 118.

³⁰ Dati, “An Occasion of Solidarity,” 75.

³¹ Trexler, “Ritual Behavior in Renaissance Florence,” 139-40.

³² Stephen J. Miler, “The Florentine Piazza della Signoria as Practiced Place,” in *Renaissance Florence: A Social History*, ed. Roger J. Crum and John T. Paoletti (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 94.

³³ Sharon T. Strocchia, “Theaters of Everyday Life,” in *Renaissance Florence*, 61.

³⁴ Gene Brucker, “Bureaucracy and Social Welfare in the Renaissance: A Florentine Case Study,” *Journal of Modern History* 55, no. 1 (March 1983): 5.

³⁵ Crum, Roger J. and John T. Paoletti, “Introduction: Florence—The Dynamics of Space in a Renaissance City,” in *Renaissance Florence*, 7.

³⁶ Strocchia, “Theaters of Everyday Life,” 62.

³⁷ Scaife, *Florentine Life During the Renaissance*, 204.

³⁸ Girolamo Savonarola, “Palm Sunday Procession,” in *Selected Writings of Girolamo Savonarola*, 227.

³⁹ Judith Bryce, “Performing for Strangers: Women, Dance, and Music in Quattrocento Florence,” *Renaissance Quarterly* 54, no. 4, part 1 (Winter 2001): 1075.

⁴⁰ Sandra Weddle, “Women’s Place in the Family and the Convent: A Reconsideration of Public and Private in Renaissance Florence,” *Journal of Architectural Education* 55, no. 2 (November 2001): 64-66.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

- “A Plea of Insanity.” In *The Society of Renaissance Florence: A Documentary Study*, edited by Gene Brucker. Toronto: Renaissance Society of America, 1971.
- Bottonio, Timoteo. “La vita del Beato Ieronimo Savonarola.” In *Selected Writings of Girolamo Savonarola: Religion and Politics*, 1490-1498. Translated and edited by Anne Borelli and Maria Pastore Passaro. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2006.
- Dati, Gregorio. “An Occasion of Solidarity.” In *The Society of Renaissance Florence: A Documentary Study*, edited by Gene Brucker, 75-8. Toronto: Renaissance Society of America, 1971.
- Parenti, Piero. “Storia Fiorentina.” In *Selected Writings of Girolamo Savonarola: Religion and Politics*, 1490-1498. Translated and edited by Anne Borelli and Maria Pastore Passaro. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2006.
- Plaisance, Michel, trans. “The Bufole for Shrove Tuesday, 10 February 1546.” In *Florence in the Time of the Medici: Public Celebrations, Politics, and Literature in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth*

Centuries. Translated and edited by Nicole Carew-Reid. Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2008.

Plaisance, Michel, trans. “The Carnival Celebrations of 1550.” In *Florence in the Time of the Medici: Public Celebrations, Politics, and Literature in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*. Translated and edited by Nicole Carew-Reid. Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2008.

Plaisance, Michel, trans. “The Feast of St. John the Baptist in 1545.” In *Florence in the Time of the Medici: Public Celebrations, Politics, and Literature in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*. Translated and edited by Nicole Carew-Reid. Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2008.

Priori e Confalonieri di Prato. Letter to Francesco de’ Medici I. 23 June 1566. *The Medici Archive Project*. Volume 521a, Folio 1097, Document ID 20641. Accessed 13 March 2015. <http://www.medici.org>.

Riccio, Pier Francesco. Letter to Cosimo de’ Medici I. 20 April 1545. *The Medici Archive Project*. Volume 1171, Folio 265, Insert 6, Document ID 7002. Accessed 13 March 2015. <http://www.medici.org>.

Savonarola, Girolamo. “Palm Sunday Procession.” In *Selected Writings of Girolamo Savonarola: Religion and Politics*, 1490–1498. Translated and edited by Anne Borelli and Maria Pastore Passaro. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.

Secondary Sources

Brucker, Gene. “Bureaucracy and Social Welfare in the Renaissance: A Florentine Case Study.” *Journal of Modern History* 55, no. 1 (March 1983): 1–21.

Bryce, Judith. “Performing for Strangers: Women, Dance, and Music in Quattrocento Florence.” *Renaissance Quarterly* 54, no. 4, part 1 (Winter 2001): 1074–1107.

Crum, Roger J. and John T. Paoletti. “Introduction: Florence—The Dynamics of Space in a Renaissance City.” In *Renaissance Florence: A Social History*, edited by Roger J. Crum and John T. Paoletti. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. 7.

Kent, Dale V. *Friendship, Love, and Trust in Renaissance Florence*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009.

McGee, Timothy J. “Dinner Music for the Florentine Signoria, 1350–1450.” *Speculum* 74, no. 1 (January 1999): 95–114.

Milner, Stephen J. “The Florentine Piazza della Signoria as Practiced Place.” In *Renaissance Florence: A Social History*, edited by Roger J. Crum and John T. Paoletti. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Plaisance, Michel. *Florence in the Time of the Medici: Public Celebrations, Politics, and Literature in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*. Translated and edited by Nicole Carew-Reid. Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2008.

Scaife, Walter B. *Florentine Life During the Renaissance*. Whitefish: Kessinger Publishing, 2005.

Strocchia, Sharon T. “Theaters of Everyday Life.” In *Renaissance Florence: A Social History*, edited by Roger J. Crum and John Paoletti. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Trexler, Richard C. “Ritual Behavior in Renaissance Florence: The Setting.” In *Medievalia et Humanistica*, edited by Paul

Maurice Clogan. Denton: North Texas State University, 1973.

Weddle, Sandra. “Women’s Place in the Family and the Convent: A Reconsideration of Public and Private in Renaissance Florence.” *Journal of Architectural Education* 55, no. 2 (November 2001): 64–72.

From the Bottom Up: Influence on the Upper Class by the Florentine Underground in the Renaissance

Keri Heath

Lorenzo Medici, Dante Alighieri, Giovanni Boccaccio, Leonardo da Vinci: these great men paved the way toward artistic and societal revolutions of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries and serve as symbols of the power of Renaissance Florence. But the real history of the city was not solely held by the artists, merchants, and wealthy. Contrary to popular belief, the Florentine “underground” had a considerable influence on the politics of the ruling citizens as an increasingly drastic gap between the rich and the poor created class tensions that forced the ruling class to consider the demands of the working class. Although the upper and lower classes of Renaissance Florence led physically and socially separate lives, the ruling class’s preoccupations with the demands of the poor underground played a significant role refocusing the political attention of the elite towards the lower classes.

Upper Class Attitudes

To understand the class divisions within Florence, it is important to take note of the social and economic structures prevalent within the city. Florentine social classes were primarily based on constructions of wealth, with the rich magnate occupying the ruling seats, and a middle and lower class occupying a spectrum of economic statuses falling beneath them. The individuals making up this “underground” came primarily from the Ciompi class who were “the most numerous class of day-laborers (dismissible without notice) in Florence’s chief industry” of cloth manufacturing, among other occupations.¹ The term “underground” also denotes a lack of direct connection to the popular proceedings within the city, an association that includes criminals and members of the popolo minuto, or lower-middle class. For this reason, the term “underground” will be used here to refer to Florentine individuals who had no formal representation or influence on the politics or proceedings within the city.

The first significant demonstration of the power this “underground” possessed came during the Ciompi revolt of 1378. During the events of that summer, when the wool workers managed to gather their power together to overthrow the government, the Signoria and other magnates became acquainted with the power the lower classes had when bonded together. For the first time during the Renaissance, the ability of the populu minuto to “make certain demands by means of petitions, which were just and reasonable” became apparent.² While the events itself shook the magnate, the demonstration of mob power within Florence firmly stamped terror into ruling minds, a fear that continued throughout ensuing centuries as the effects of this revolutionary event continued to reverberate in the magnate’s minds. The revolts of 1378 demonstrated, among other things, the strong sense of identity that the lower classes could create, an identity that Samuel Cohn, Jr. describes as similar to that of working class unions during the industrial revolution.³ Indeed, the growing communal identity of the lower classes was an increasing concern of the magnate, a threat of uprising and social disorder that had to be worked into their policy planning.

Now more on the minds of the oligarchy, the poor began to create anxiety and fear for the magnate, who were already dealing with political strife within their own social class and threats from outside the city. This fear aggravated a more and more prejudiced view of the lower classes, whose “evil” and “laziness” increasingly became a matter of fact in the minds of the ruling class. By the end of the fourteenth century, the oligarchy began to “assimilate the undisciplined and undisciplinable poor to the familiar image of the rogue” and to associate poverty with criminal intentions.⁴ Labor soon became the only role that upper classes believed the lower classes should possess, a mindset that led to increased class tensions later in the fifteenth and sixteenth century. This pervasive view of evil trickled into court records, public

dealings, and urban development. Indeed, in the court trial of Giovanni and Lusanna, in which the later accused the former of breaking their marriage contract, the lower social status of Lusanna contributed to the factors leading to her eventual loss of the case, by the determination of the Pope. While Giovanni was declared by all but the plaintiff to be an honorable man, many wished for Lusanna that “the devil take her soul for she has brought shame and dishonor to [the] family.”⁵

The Lusanna story also indicates the classifications of good and evil that the magnate assigned to male and female members of the *popolo minuto*. While men who did not have a job were considered lazy and a detriment to society, women who actively left their home on a regular basis became associated with promiscuity and prostitution. Such conservative views were also applicable to wealthy women, but “the poor did not and could not possess honor.”⁶ To regulate the roles of poor men and women within Florence, the government issued strict sumptuary laws restricting the clothing that certain classes could wear, claiming to protect the populace against “the barbarous and irrepressible bestiality of women, who, not considering the fragility of their nature . . . force their men . . . to submit.”⁷ The assumption of guilt is evident in the strong hatred communicated in court records such as this one. This visual separation preempted other forms of separation between the wealthy and the underground.

Despite these prejudices, there were several attempts prior to the seventeenth century to give relief to the poor. The church provided social welfare, meals, and workhouses for disenfranchised individuals. Confraternities distributed alms; at times, members of the underground who were wrongly accused in court even found a friendly witness to testify for their innocence. When one Angelo di Taddeo Gaddi was accused of violently attacking a man, a witness provided testimony that “Angelo attacked Miniato because he had been most grievously injured by him [and] . . . is a pauper and cannot pay that fine.”⁸ While many of these efforts were headed by the church, powerful families within Florence also sponsored many poor relief efforts. The Medici, who were eager to equate their name with good fortune for the masses, were especially active in this regard. Cosimo Medici “made loans to impecunious farmers with undowried daughters” and sponsored work projects to benefit the *popolo minuto*.⁹ These efforts helped ensure the Medicis’ political stability and brought the favor of the populace to their side.

While this poor relief may have been enacted out of some sympathy, it is also one of the first examples of social control methods used to quiet any uprisings of the poor class.

These efforts became much more difficult in the sixteenth century when the population of Florence grew and became less manageable. Attitudes about poor relief shifted from individual aid toward population appeasement and control. More and more, views toward the poor tended to be practical: ensuring that the wrongly accused stayed out of the jails also secured their continued production in the city. A rising population control saw “the development of more systematic and more discriminating poor relief, and of attitudes to the poor which were more practical but less humane.”¹⁰ The government’s attitudes toward the poor focused on productivity and separation, a theme that would continue in other control efforts. After 1621, these efforts were still in existence, but with less fervor.

Social and Physical Separations of Rich and Poor

However, the fact that the underground was not being provided for is clear from the revolts that ensued throughout the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries. The economic recession of the fourteenth century reverberated harshly on the *popolo minuto*, evident by the fact that “poverty rates of 50 to 70 percent maintained pressure on wages.”¹¹ The effects of the plague, the economic downturn, and a lack of representation in the political sphere all contributed to the discontent stewing in the minds of the populace. While Niccoló Machiavelli, author of *Florentine Histories*, did not necessarily condone the violence used by the Ciompi, he did admit that “we are on our way to a sure acquisition, because those who could hinder us are disunited and rich.”¹² The Signoria’s refusal to fully address these demands, or provide fairer taxes, more relief during the plague and the famine, and increased support of those in power, ultimately led to the Ciompi revolt and increased the gap between the wealthy and the poor.

Even after the Ciompi revolt, political revolts continued into the fifteenth century, if only in smaller, more personally centered struggles. The fear of this is shown by one warning to the lords of Florence that “if [they] don’t do something, [they] will discover that no one in Florence will be able to save [them and] . . . there will be an uprising.”¹³ Grain workers, cloth laborers, and other poor workers who felt uncompensated by the government’s policies continued to protest the actions of their government. The Signoria and other ruling bodies took responsive action, in some cases ordering that “since not all are quiet, and in order to

instill fear into some, foot soldiers should be hired.”¹⁴ The continued fear of the upper class is clear from these warnings. While the revolts and uprisings of the post-Ciompi era were more controlled and less impactful than that of 1378, the government evidently still worried about a repeat of those events.

The reasons for this fear were well grounded. During the Ciompi revolts, the underground of Florence for the first time “had some form of illegal institutional continuity, betrayed in their flag” and developed a community identity amongst the protesters.¹⁵ This identity came largely through the validity that the lower classes attempted to add to the campaign. The use of their flag, uniting the various guilds under one order, was perhaps the more important step toward creating a community among the protesters. To the protestors, the flag—one of the most notable that was used had the word “liberty” on it—represented a bonding of their various guilds under a common goal. Indeed, under this flag, the Ciompi were more loyal and disciplined than under the flag of their own guilds.¹⁶ Uniting under Michele di Lando and the Otto government also allowed the Ciompi to believe in their ability to unite as a force and to “cut across old communal networks of association, [which] challenged the domination of a state that was still medieval.”¹⁷ This growing sense of identity terrified the upper class, as they realized the ease with which the Ciompi could gather support and form a revolt against the power of the wealthy.

It is for this reason that the Florentine underground was so influential on the upper class. Though some historians choose to focus only on the upper class as the driving force of social structure during the time, “a statistical analysis of social networks of association among laborers and artisans . . . have shown that their social structure and community organization were not so static as historians have assumed.”¹⁸ In addition to encouraging some social welfare programs and reforming of the tax code, the effects that the underground’s uprising had on the government were significant in furthering the political progress of Florence. In response to the revolts, the government established the Otto di Guardia in 1378 to use a network of spies to detect plots before they could come into fruition. In addition, the government granted amnesty to many political exiles, a measure they would have never taken without their desire to control the lower classes. These policies contributed to a new political environment within Florence. A tense political atmosphere of secrets, plotting, and distrust emerged among the magnate, one that Buonaccorso Pitti demonstrated in his own diary. When Pitti and his brother agreed to help the Abbot of

S. Piera a Ruota in Valdambra instate one of their sons as abbot, “henchmen contrived to implicate him in a sham conspiracy” and “would not rest until by force or trickery they had got their hands on the abbey.”¹⁹ This political environment of conspiring was born partly from this Otto network, revealing the effects of the poor on Florentine policy. 1494 saw another result of the government’s efforts to prevent future revolts with a more democratic government, and while the oligarchy may have quickly reinstated itself, the episode revealed a shifting mentality within the city.

The magnate also addressed their fear of the lower classes by creating new policies that developed rituals of separation within the city. First and foremost, the government forced the Ciompi “to give over their flags to the Palace . . . [because] understanding that obedience to this demand would destroy their occupational identity.”²⁰ Separated from their unifying flag, the poor were forced to recognize the leadership of magnate. In addition, the ruling body used rituals such as feasts, religious holidays, and processions as means through which to unify the city, more specifically the poor towards the main culture of Florence. Parades that celebrated Florence and Christianity were especially popular because these universal ideals could appeal to the entire city and thus were key to the magnate’s attempts to bring the populace back under their control. However the government recognized the gamble they were taking by relying on processions to increase public unity: processions “were absolutely necessary for social order yet endangered it, for the procession was a social order.”²¹ While the processions could bind together the poor under the banner of Florence, it also gave the *popolo minuto* a gathering place to breed further discontent. Still, the magnate was willing to take this risk in order to preserve the current balance of power.

These social separations were coupled by similar physical manifestations of the magnate’s fear. While not an intended measure of separation put forth by the government, the urban geography of Florence began to reflect the desire of the upper class to separate from the underground, with the poor pushed the margins of the city and streets increasingly segregated by economic status. Through the use of mapmaking, powerful families and government officials were able to paint a new image of the city. Figure 1²² especially shows how a certain powerful family was eager to create “a new Medici Florence, a city reborn with the arrival of the Medici dukes” and revealed how urban constructions of the time were “outdated modes of cartographic technique that favored bias and fictive distortion to symbolize the city.”²³ Yet, these constructions, however inaccurate to the



Figure 1: Stefano Bonsignori, Plan of Florence, 1584.

layout of Florence, did demonstrate a trend within the city towards pushing the poor further towards the margins, away from the eyes of the magnate. Evidence in the 1427 catasto shows that a household's address and gross income had a significant correlation. Though the neighborhoods did see a degree of overlap between classes, "the physical changes accompanying the street's transformation into a genuinely patrician thoroughfare resulted in the displacement of the poorer families into surrounding backstreets and alleys."²⁴ This physical separation, though not an intended effect of the government's efforts, clearly revealed the mindset of the wealthy and showed how the lower class was ostracized.

It is important to note, however, that in spite of the increasingly physically divided nature of Florence, evidence shows that there was no true central underground for the city. Crime did not center around one specific street or area.²⁵ Instead, gambling, prostitution, and theft took place across the city. Thus the above discussion serves not as an attempt to point out one neighborhood as more likely to revolt than another—for, indeed, the levels of class wealth did overlap within individual neighborhoods—but to show the separation that the wealthy began to put between themselves and the poor, without the insistence of the government.

The Poor and Criminality

The lack of one central, physical underground, of course, does not imply the nonexistence of a criminal underground at all. Despite the efforts of the upper class, the lower classes still felt dispossessed and attempted to meet their own needs and create their own political activism through criminal activity. Probably the most prevalent of crimes, grain revolts and other similar events throughout other industries continued to cause strife for the upper class. In addition, those who were especially desperate could take the example of one house owner who had "six little shops beneath that house which are rented to prostitutes, who usually pay from 10 to 13 lire per month."²⁶ Though criminalized by the magnate, these and other illicit activities were the product of a society in which every citizen was not provided their necessary resources. Some acts of crime were also assigned to the lower class through societal norms, such as adultery or the case of the ten-year-old daughter of Niccolò Soderini who "was discovered wearing a dress made of two pieces of silk, with tassels."²⁷ The girl violated sumptuary laws and thus the magnate assigned to her the status of a criminal, a label that reflected the upper class' perceived criminality of all the popolo minuto.

The prevalence of these crimes was not hard for the wealthy to believe. In fact, "by the sixteenth century, poverty had become associated with sin, a totally new development."²⁸ Separated from the wealthy through their clothing, address, and political representation, the popolo minuto took on the role of the scapegoat or the "other" in the eyes of the magnate. Francesco Guicciardini in his account of the Florentine poor called the class "an insane animal, full of a thousand errors, of thousands of confusions, without taste, without refinement [diletto], without stability."²⁹ Reactions such as this further reveal assumptions about the poor's evilness and the ease with which the magnate associated them with criminal activity.

In order to deal with this "criminal poor," the government created a new judicial system as part of the Otto di Guardia that focused more on approval from the masses than it had in the past. While certain crimes, such as rape, adultery, and sodomy, increased after the installation of the Otto, most crimes, such as homicide and theft decreased from the 1350s to 1380s. The magnate's new judicial system attempted to reduce "the number of witnesses reluctant to testify in criminal and civil cases"³⁰ and to keep urban peace "through systematic court initiative rather than by private agreement or clan agreement."³¹ These attempts to make the justice system more accessible to the lower classes serve as

another example of the shift in awareness the magnate were making. In order to ensure the satisfaction of the poor and prevent popular uprisings, these methods became a common feature of Florentine courts.

The lower classes also began to be associated with sorcery and the occult. While Florence did not experience a witch frenzy like other European cities did, there is no doubt that it was touched by the fear. In one 1375 case against the condemned witch Monna Caterina di Agostino, the women's acts were said to have caused "disorder, tumult, and scandal . . . in the city of Florence between the citizens of this city."³² While this reaction may seem somewhat melodramatic by modern standards, the issue was obviously of grave seriousness to the magnate at the time. Other instances show that "the authorities viewed these cases with the utmost gravity [and] . . . in both cases, the principals were sentenced to death."³³ Through these incidents, the upper class assigned devilish characteristics to the poor. These trials reveal an obsession on the part of the magnate to characterize the unholy, criminal nature of the poor and to separate themselves from the "other" of the popolo minuto. What this criminalization ultimately reveals, however, is the fear that the magnate felt towards the poor. Stemming from the enormity of the 1378 Ciompi Revolt, the upper class began to see the popolo minuto as a disrupter of the social order of Florence and feared the political upheaval that a unified force of the poor could cause to the system. Because of this preoccupation, the actions of the poor forced the ruling class to shift their political attentions toward issues of the less wealthy. This influence on policy and political thought played a significant role in the development of the Renaissance, just as much as the influence of Lorenzo Medici, Dante Alighieri, Giovanni Boccaccio, or Leonardo da Vinci.

Endnotes

- ¹ "Ciompi," in *A Concise Encyclopedia of the Italian Renaissance*, ed. J. R. Hale (New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1981), 85.
- ² "The Demands of the Ciompi, 1378," in *The Society of Renaissance Florence: A Document Study*, ed. Gene Brucker (Buffalo: Harper & Row, 1971), 236.
- ³ Samuel Kline Cohn, Jr., *The Laboring Class in Renaissance Florence* (New York: Academic Press, 1980), 133.
- ⁴ William J. Connell, ed., *Society and Individual in Renaissance Florence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999) 314.
- ⁵ Gene Brucker, *Giovani and Lusanna* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 78.
- ⁶ Connell, *Society and Individual*, 304.

- ⁷ “The Social Rationale, 1433,” in *The Society of Renaissance Florence*, 181.
- ⁸ “The Excuse of Poverty,” in *The Society of Renaissance Florence*, 176-77.
- ⁹ Gene Brucker, *Renaissance Florence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 159.
- ¹⁰ “Poverty, Relief of,” in *A Concise Encyclopedia of the Italian Renaissance*, 266.
- ¹¹ Yves Winter, “Plebeian Politics: Machiavelli and the Ciompi Uprising,” *Political Theory* 40, no. 6 (2012): 741.
- ¹² Niccolò Machiavelli, *Florentine Histories*, quoted in Winter, “Plebeian Politics,” 758.
- ¹³ “Justice for the Poor,” in *The Society of Renaissance Florence*, 234.
- ¹⁴ “Plague, Famine, and Civil Disorder,” in *The Society of Renaissance Florence*, 230.
- ¹⁵ Richard C. Trexler, “Follow the Flag: The Ciompi Revolt Seen from the Streets,” *Bibliothèque d’Humanisme et Renaissance* 46, no. 2 (1984): 389.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 366.
- ¹⁷ Cohn, Jr., *The Laboring Class in Renaissance Florence*, 206.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 208.
- ¹⁹ Buonaccorso Pitti, “The Diaries of Gregorio Dati,” in *Two Memoirs of Renaissance Florence*, ed. Gene Brucker, trans. Julia Martines (Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, 1967), 89.
- ²⁰ Richard Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1980), 346.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, 340.
- ²² Stefano Bonsignori, *Plan of Florence*, 1584, in Adam Drisin, “Intricate Fictions: Mapping Princely Authority in a Sixteenth-Century Florentine Urban Plan,” *Journal of Architectural Education* 57, no. 4 (May 2004), 42.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, 43-46.
- ²⁴ Nicholas Eckstein, “Addressing Wealth in Renaissance Florence: Some New Soundings from the Catasto of 1427,” *Journal of Urban History* 32, no. 5 (July 2006): 723.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, 720.
- ²⁶ “Profits of Prostitution,” in *The Society of Renaissance Florence*, 190.
- ²⁷ “Prosecutions and Penalties, 1378-97,” in *The Society of Renaissance Florence*, 181.
- ²⁸ Connell, *Society and Individual*, 304.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, 308.
- ³⁰ Marvin Becker, “Changing Patterns of Violence and Justice in Fourteenth- and Fifteenth-Century Florence,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 18, no. 3 (July 1976): 290.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, 290.
- ³² “The Enchantress,” in *The Society of Renaissance Florence*, 261.
- ³³ Gene Brucker, “Sorcery in Early Renaissance Florence,” *Studies in the Renaissance* 10 (1963): 13.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

- Bonsignori, Stefano. Plan of Florence. 1584. In Drisin, Adam. “Intricate Fictions: Mapping Princely Authority in a Sixteenth-Century Florentine Urban Plan.” *Journal of Architectural Education* 57, no. 4 (May 2004): 42.
- Brucker, Gene, ed. *The Society of Renaissance Florence: A Document Study*. Buffalo: Harper & Row, 1971.
- Machiavelli, Niccolò. *Florentine Histories*. In Winter, Yves. “Plebeian Politics: Machiavelli and the Ciompi Uprising.” *Political Theory* 40, no. 6 (2012): 736-66.
- Pitti, Buonaccorso. “The Diaries of Gregorio Dati.” In *Two Memoirs of Renaissance Florence*, ed. Gene Brucker, trans. Julia Martines. Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, 1967.

Secondary Sources

- Becker, Marvin. “Changing Patterns of Violence and Justice in Fourteenth- and Fifteenth-Century Florence.” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 18, no. 3 (July 1976): 281-96.
- Brackett, John. “The Florentine Criminal Underworld: The Underside of the Renaissance.” In *Society and Individual in Renaissance Florence*, ed. William J. Connell, 293-362. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.
- Brucker, Gene. *Giovani and Lusanna: Love and Marriage in Renaissance Florence*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.
- . *Renaissance Florence*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969.
- . “Sorcery in Early Renaissance Florence.” *Studies in the Renaissance* 10 (1963): 7-24.
- Cohn, Jr., Samuel Kline. *The Laboring Class in Renaissance Florence*. New York: Academic Press, 1980.
- Connell, William J. ed. *Society and Individual in Renaissance Florence*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.
- Drisin, Adam. “Intricate Fictions: Mapping Princely Authority in a Sixteenth-Century Florentine Urban Plan.” *Journal of Architectural Education* 57, no. 4 (May 2004), 41-55.
- Eckstein, Nicholas. “Addressing Wealth in Renaissance Florence.” *Journal of Urban History* 32, no. 5. (July 2006): 711-28.
- Hale, J. R. ed. *A Concise Encyclopedia of the Italian Renaissance*. New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1981.
- Trexler, Richard. “Follow the Flag: The Ciompi Revolt Seen From the Streets.” *Bibliothèque d’Humanisme et Renaissance* 46, no. 2 (1984): 357-92.
- . *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1980.
- Winter, Yves. “Plebeian Politics: Machiavelli and the Ciompi Uprising.” *Political Theory* 40, no. 6 (2012): 736-66.

The Ospedale Degli Innocente: A Microhistory

Hannah Hunt

In many history courses, the Ospedale degli Innocenti is presented as an architectural feat, summarized as the first designated orphanage in western Europe, and passed over. Scholar Eugenio Battisti writes, “In [1419] the Silk Guild began building the Spedale degli Innocenti in Florence. . . . The Innocenti is included in every survey and handbook of architectural history. It is also Brunelleschi’s architectural debut and, as such, is expected to shed light on his later development. What’s left to be said?”¹

What’s left to be said? A lot.

What Battisti and others overlook is the fact that the Innocenti did much more for the city of Florence and held a life of its own that extended far past Brunelleschi’s arched loggia. It became a small city in itself, run by administrators with the aims of helping orphaned or abandoned children become integral members of Renaissance Florentine society by the time they reached adulthood. The Innocenti provided jobs for community members and its residents, grew wheat for the community, and helped encourage female residents to work in household services to support meager dowries for their marriages—to name a few functions.

Many, however, assume the building was nothing more than a single-purpose orphanage, housing the abandoned youths of Florence. It is important to realize that this building played a large role in capturing the culture of Florence, and to understand the origins of the Innocenti as a whole to see how it fulfills its role as an institution and microcosm of Florentine society. This was most obviously seen in the building’s conception, headed by the Silk Guild, its construction, run by Filippo Brunelleschi and Francesco della Luna, its roles as an orphanage, seen through the increase in baptisms across Florence due to its opening, and the economical roles it took on in providing positions to the women of Florence as well as giving back to the community.

The Need for the Innocenti

The socio-economic roles of Florentine guilds play a large part in the creation of the Innocenti. The city’s Silk Guild, despite some monetary issues in the early years of construction, wanted to supply Florence with a dedicated home for the orphans of the city. The future tenants of the Innocenti came from everywhere: they were the children of slaves and the illegitimate offspring of prostitutes, they came from impoverished homes that could not support another mouth to feed, sometimes after the deaths of their parents, and from the highest ranks of Florentine society such as: the “Adimari, Bardi, Capponi, Cerrentani, Medici, Della Stufa, Pitti, Rucellai, Ridolfi, Salviati, Strozzi, Tornabuoni, and Vespucci.”² These children were brought to the Innocenti to escape the entrapment of slavery during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century due to their “mixed” breeding.³ They would be absolved of their mixed-class status, so to speak, as the Innocenti was seen as a free-standing and fully legitimate institution of Florentine society, meaning its residences became legitimate citizens of the city state upon passing through the doors.⁴

It is clear how some families—the mothers of those mixed-class children in particular—would view the Innocenti as a refuge. But the need for the orphanage itself arose due to the plague, diseases, poverty, and problems with illegitimacy and infanticide running not only through Florence, but also the rest of Italy. It was not uncommon for a struggling parent to abandon a child due to poverty or illegitimacy. Luca Landucci’s diary provides a record of tragic events from war to famine to plague and flooding that occurred from the mid-fifteenth century to early-sixteenth. One can only assume that the death of loved ones was a prominent cause for abandonment.⁵ Events such as “a bad harvest and a recurrence of plague, [which] intensified the sufferings of the poor,” could also prompt the abandonment of a child at the Innocenti.⁶ Philip Gavitt, who has done

extensive research on the Innocenti and its charges, found one case: a mother abandoned her child because the father had died. The child, who was left at the Innocenti in 1462, was named Giovanni da Scotia, “John of Scotland”: “She said that he had been born from her and her legitimate husband who had died at Santa Maria Nuova. . . . She said that they were from Scotland and that the boy was one year to fourteen months old—at least as far as we could understand, since we could not understand her language very well.”⁷

This and other cases led Gavitt to the question the structure of the Florentine family, stating, “Fathers seemed incapable of, or ill suited to, the task of raising children in the mother’s absence. Certainly the late weaning of children . . . may have made Florentine fathers fear starvation. Yet this still begs the question of the absence of support from any kind of extended family structure.”⁸ This could be because of the low status of illegitimate children in Florence at the time. Whether the child of slave and master or an adulterous rendezvous, these children were frequently abandoned with condemnation.⁹ Many parents, especially those of the upper classes, abandoned their children at the care-giving homes or other hospitals before the Innocenti’s inception to avoid the

social disapproval of raising them.¹⁰ For example, “a Florentine who turned over a child . . . explained that he did so not because of poverty or an unwillingness to care for the infant, ‘but it is much more fear of scandal that could take shape if such a thing were known.’”¹¹

Without the Innocenti, these children would be left to seek shelter, counting on the Italian hospitality of their neighbors more than anything. Most of the charges in the Innocenti appear to have been infants, needing extensive care. Even those parents who could find wet nurses for their children still at times engaged in infanticide.¹² Those older children who wandered the streets could stumble into bad neighborhoods or gangs.¹³ The south side of Florence had tough neighborhoods, “home to many of those charged with . . . rapes, assaults, and frauds.” This put children “in danger of going adrift.”¹⁴

With such city-wide crime, child prostitution for young girls, and general poverty, it is clear that orphans “were truly unfortunate, truly outside the familial organization of Florence, and [...] were first among the liminal lay groups of Florence to assume a formal public role in the salvational work of city ritual.”¹⁵ With children on the streets, it

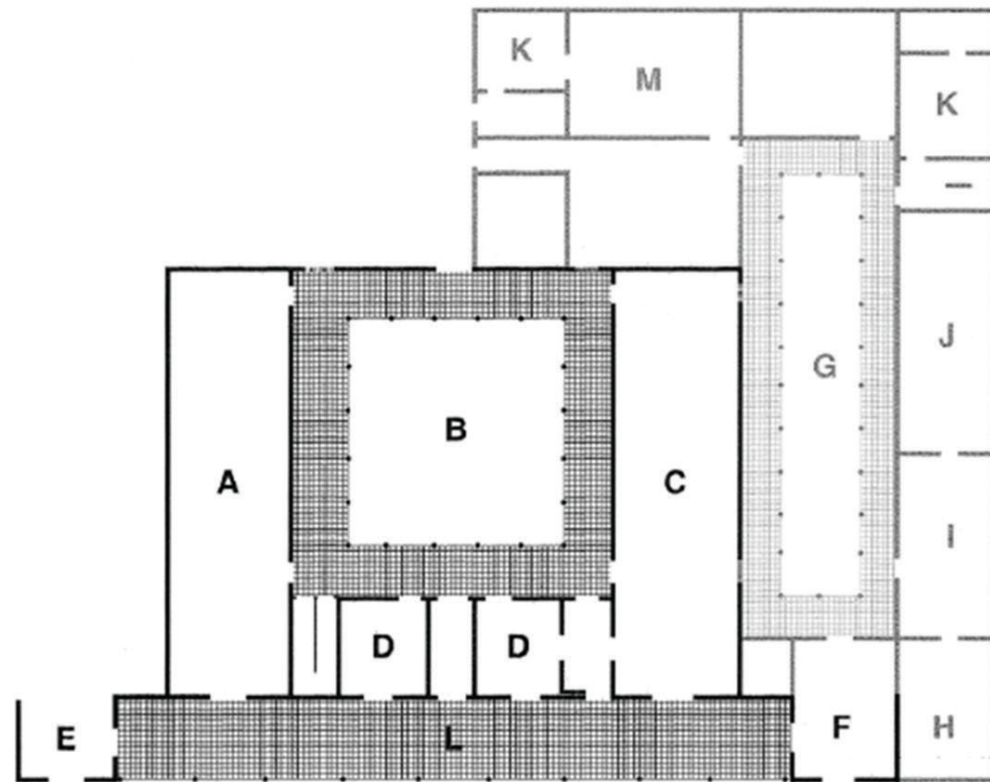


Figure 1: Filippo Brunelleschi’s design for the Ospedale degli Innocenti is shown in bold lines; the shaded lines show the modifications to his original design. From Lawrence Kahn, “The ‘Ospedale degli Innocenti’ and the ‘Bambino’ of the American Academy of Pediatrics,” *Pediatrics* 110, no. 1 (July 2002): 175–80.



Figure 2: Loggia, Ospedale degli Innocenti.

increased their risk of falling ill and spreading such diseases as tuberculosis, which was a ravaging illness among the urban population of northern Italy.¹⁶ Ultimately, in a desperate attempt to aid the other all-purpose hospitals in the area, the Silk Guild of Florence looked to build a revolutionary home for these abandoned children.¹⁷

Construction of the Innocenti

Space for the new Innocenti was hard to find, however. Florence was a constantly expanding city, experiencing dramatic population growth due to its military endeavors and fluctuating economy. “The location of [...] new hospitals depended on the availability of land, and the tendency to build on the edge of built-up areas; the Innocenti looked out over a series of gardens and fields toward the city walls rapidly built up as [they] developed the city.”¹⁸ The images of the Innocenti that one may find today in Florence are dramatically different from the building at the time of its construction in terms of the environment surrounding it, as “the urban sprawl [of Renaissance Florence] had little overall organization (beyond the grid pattern at the core that was predetermined by the city’s Roman foundation) and few points of focus to pull parts of it together.”¹⁹ Therefore, the children of the Innocenti could have been surrounded by numerous environments, and the expansion of the city must have been taken into consideration by the Silk Guild when selecting an architect. Humanist Poggio Braccionlini was quoted as saying, “I think [there are] several men of our own time who have earned great renown by doing remarkable things, and their names will be known through the ages,”²⁰ and many scholars would agree that his evaluation of the men during the Florentine Renaissance is true—especially

for the craftsmen. The silk guild had 1,000 florin from the city to start the construction of the foundling home, and they chose Florence’s future favorite architect for the job: Filippo Brunelleschi.²¹

Brunelleschi took the credit for the design and construction of the Innocenti, but the building would not have survived if it were not for the expansions added by his former apprentice, Francesco della Luna, in 1427—a year after Brunelleschi left the project. During Brunelleschi’s time on site, he worked to design the Innocenti to include a church, a central courtyard, separate entrances for women and men, a dormitory on the first level, offices, a reception hall, refectory, kitchen, infirmary, and dormitory for the women living there, as shown in figure 1.²² However, when building, Brunelleschi was only on the project to supervise the loggia and a handful of basic rooms. It was Francesco della Luna who added:

a narrow courtyard, the southern wing with a common room for the nursing women, a refectory hall, service space for the refectory and kitchen, and the actual kitchen were begun in 1427. Along with the infirmary, a service kitchen for the infirmary, a central courtyard, an infirmary laundry room (beneath the infirmary), and a covered passage to the chicken coop.²³

When Brunelleschi left the project in 1426, the Innocenti “was minimal. There was no separate refectory, no kitchen, no infirmary, no laundry, no separate day room for the nurses to gather away from the hoards of screaming infants to be housed in the spedale.”²⁴ Yet Brunelleschi is still attributed to the full construction of the building. Truly, Francesco della Luna was the one who finished the Innocenti and ensured

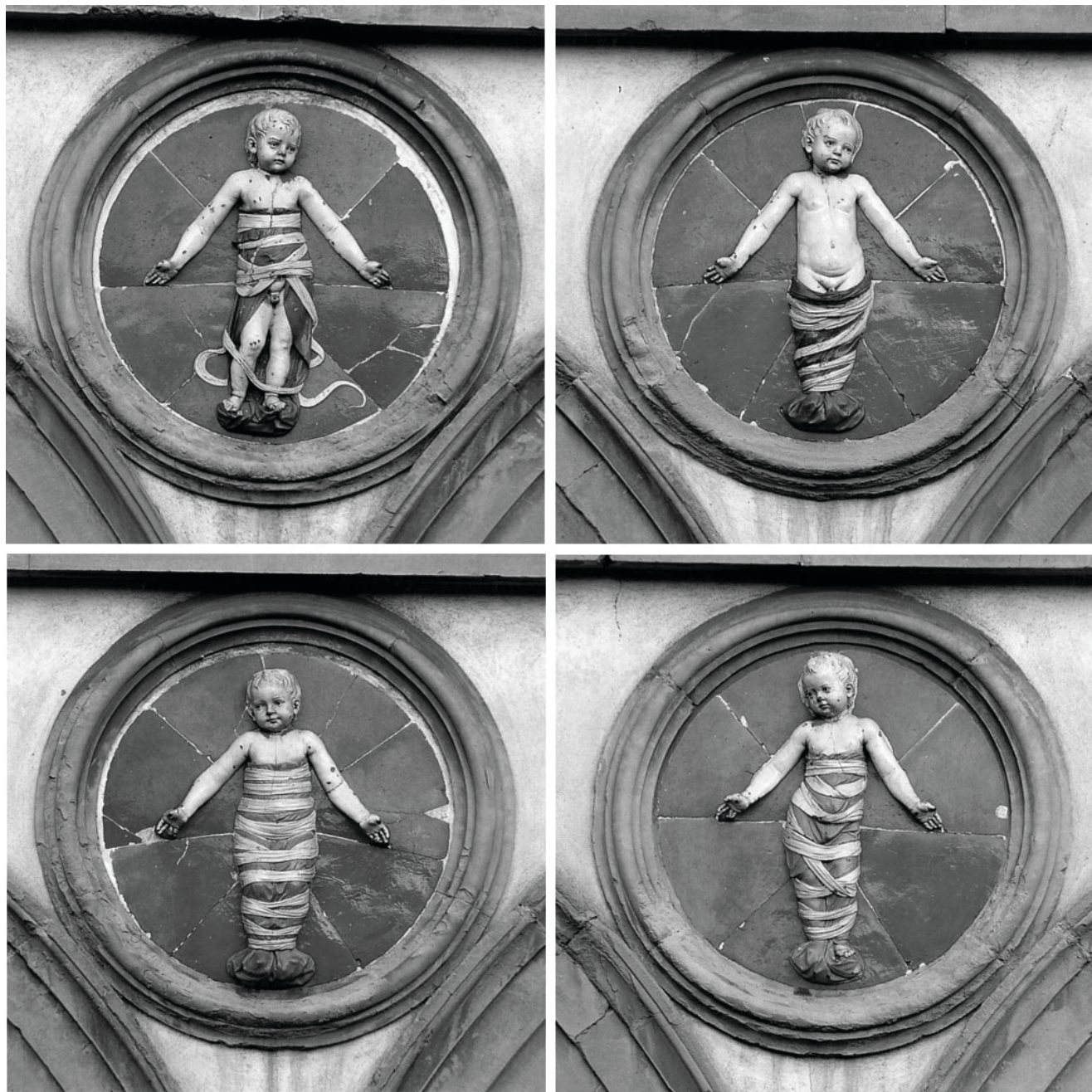


Figure 3: Andrea Della Robbia's bambini, Ospedale degli Innocenti, 1487.

they had the facilities they needed to operate (and also some debt to repay as the additions cost an additional 2,000 florins).²⁵

Perhaps Brunelleschi received credit because he was the first to be considered rooted in the logical ideal of proportions and city planning, but in terms of the Innocenti, his influence is seen mostly in the loggia.²⁶ The loggia itself hangs as a sort of culmination of public and private space on the building. Loggias in the Italian tradition are meant

to provide a public space for citizens to meet and talk, and tended to house important decision-making and discussions beneath their arches.²⁷ The loggia of the Innocenti, however, works to harmonize the differences of the public and private spaces. It allowed for shelter for parents and children from the heat, as well as a place for discussion and visitation, as some parents returned to speak with the children they left there.²⁸ The loggia itself operates on a 2:3 width to height

ratio of each arch.²⁹ The façade covers the main entrance, service doors, and a dormitory entrance as well. The elevated height of the Innocenti—needing nine stairs to reach the entrances—gives the space a feeling of power, pride, and a strong sense of antiquity.

The bambini or child figures on the façade of the loggia were not Brunelleschi's doing, but that of Andrea Della Robbia in 1487, "four decades after Brunelleschi's death" (see figure 2). There are ten figures in total, seven of which are fully wrapped and swaddled.³⁰ This leaves three left unwaddled or partially wrapped, and freestanding in their embossments (see figure 3). One may assume that this free-stance pose is meant to represent the freedom that the bambini find through living at the Innocenti, liberated from whatever class status their families held outside the walls. They represented the importance of independence and legitimacy in Renaissance Florence, and the gift that living in the Innocenti gave these children. By 1445, the Innocenti was ready to open its doors.

Effects of Opening the Innocenti

After the doors of the Innocenti opened in 1445, there was a surge of baptisms registered for the city:

Between 1445 and 1485, for example, only for two years, 1479 and 1480, did the percentage of admissions to the Ospedale degli Innocenti to baptisms in Florence exceed 10 percent (for 1479 the figure is 13.9 percent for 1480, 11.0 percent). By contrast, the average for the years 1531-9 was 21.9 percent, and during the famine of 1539, the percentage of babies abandoned of those baptized reached 38.9 percent, proportions more consistent with the nineteenth century than with the early modern period.³¹

Not only did the Innocenti ensure that the children who came to them received a baptism and, through extension, Florentine citizenship, but they also became the child's free and legitimate parent-figure.³² Some may have questioned if the Innocenti did not increase the frequency of abandonment due to its existence.³³ Regardless, holding such responsibility for a number of the city's children, the institution had to consider how to handle raising these young citizens, as "the integration into society was perhaps the ultimate form of charity."

As the years wore on, more and more children came through the doors of the Innocenti. They were given a brief education in reading and writing, as well as moral

instruction, guided by the philosophy that "the students should learn to live frugally, but neatly and clean, and to be content with little. They should be protected from all forms of dissipation."³⁵ The goal was to prepare the boys for an apprenticeship and the girls for a spot in domestic services or in the crafts of weaving and cloth manufacturing so they could accumulate a small dowry outside of what the Innocenti was able to give them.³⁶ The children's education was institutionalized, meaning that the Innocenti would need to provide tutors or add the duties of education to the nurses' loads because there was no confraternity or boy's school to take the children.³⁷ Girls living in the Innocenti had a different type of education, typical to that of the women of the Renaissance, but different from the boys' grounding in arithmetic and business principles. Girls were encouraged to pursue domestic arts such as sewing, weaving, cooking, and cleaning.

Apprenticeships for children of both genders doubled as a foster system if a family could not be found in its own right.³⁸ A child would seek an apprenticeship around the ages of thirteen or fourteen. The "child's apprenticeship was much like fostering. Up to half the boys and perhaps a third of all girls left the parental home to spend a few years as an apprentice or domestic servant in the homes of others, and the percentages moved higher with the orphaned children of both sexes."³⁹ This was done as a way to care for the children, but also level the playing field in comparison to the boys still with their families. Those legitimate sons were typically inducted into a boys' schools during the later half of the fifteenth century to learn arithmetic, accounting, measures, and language, as well as participate in other activities such as music and theater.⁴⁰ The sons of the elite still living at home with families would also be encouraged to learn Greek and Latin with a private tutor, while the boys of the Innocenti probably only studied Italian.⁴¹ This put the boys of the Innocenti at a disadvantage in comparison to their elite peers, but also gave them a strong foundation of a typical Florentine education.

Outside of the classroom there was potential that the Innocenti's boys still participated and attended city festivals and played games such as calcio, a sport similar to football that was played more with the fists than hands. They also enjoyed several horse races, or palio, throughout the city, families becoming spectators of the race, the horses owned by the wealthy of Florentine society.⁴² These would be days where the orphans were given the chance to feel like full, normal citizens of Florence, and therefore increased their

loyalty to their homeland more than any textbook could, thus rounding out their education.

As the Innocenti grew, its administrators implemented a number of additional duties and privileges for its residences. Women were able to work in household services to earn money toward their wages.⁴³ In addition to the basics of grammar, arithmetic, and such practical skills as weaving, music was also taught.⁴⁴ The Florentines believed that “its rapid measures made the body alert and ‘trained it to adopt graceful attitudes.’ It exercised and nurtured the mind, corrected the voice and rendered pronunciation soft, accented, grave or sonorous.”⁴⁵ The girls who were given lessons and excelled were allowed to continue their practices as long as it helped to grow their character into one that was acceptable beyond the walls of the Innocenti.⁴⁶ The girls were also taught to weave, and “the exceptional women who achieved learning in the period were praised for it, as marvels of their sex. But . . . in each instance of praise ‘was invariably accompanied by words of admiration for her skill with a needle.’”⁴⁷

The emphasis on needlework and weaving was so important in the Renaissance education of women that the Innocenti discovered a way to profit from their efforts by opening a tapestry workshop. It was through selling tapestries that the Innocenti hoped to repay some of their debt to the city from its construction and maintenance. The “workshop at the Innocenti, even though directed by a former male foundling, also functioned to keep the hospital’s girls and women gainfully employed, as is clear from the petition that Fra Niccolò Mazzi and Ulivo Olivieri submitted to Grand Duke Francesco requesting his formal approval of the workshop.”⁴⁸ The girls of the Innocenti were also educated as nurses, having been surrounded by them their entire lives, and some “of the female physicians [of the Innocenti] were not hired from outside but rather were foundlings themselves.”⁴⁹ This indicates that the Innocenti was truly determined to provide for its members in whatever way it could, and that the spirit of giving back through one’s work was emphasized in the lives of their charges, giving the children something to hope for.

The Innocenti stood as a beacon of hope for parents who could not afford to keep their children, those children who were abandoned, and even those born to a mother of servitude to the elite families. It gave the slave community a means of hope for their children, for when an infant entered

the doors of the Innocenti, they became a free and legitimate child of the state. This became a prominent reason for abandonment. Florentine slaves were only permitted if they were “infidels” and not Christian; they came primarily from the Black Sea and Africa to Italy.⁵⁰ These slaves were owned by the wealthy of the city, taking the growth of illegitimate children to a new level. Given this, the Innocenti “can be seen as a social necessity: not only as a performance of Christian duty, but as a solution to an embarrassing problem experienced by many prominent Florentine citizens.”⁵¹ An infant boy born to a mother in slavery could be abandoned on the steps of the Innocenti and, after entering its doors, be viewed as a fully privileged male of Florentine society. He had opportunities to become a businessman or master of a craft if he so chose, leading many parents to leave their children in hopes of them finding better opportunities, which the Innocenti certainly provided.

Conclusion

It is clear from the evidence that the Innocenti was far more than just the first orphanage in western Europe. With its educational efforts, social implications, and economic impact, the Innocenti played a strong role in Florentine society. Too often scholars have been focused on the revival of antiquity that took place within the arts of Renaissance Florence, overlooking something truly innovative like the Innocenti. For example, Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich write that, between 1375 and 1550,

Florence was one among many contributors to the cultural life of Italy. If the Renaissance, however, is taken to mean not the sum total of Italian culture but the attempt to turn away from the recent medieval past and return to the ways of ancient Rome and Greece, then Florence’s particular contribution was little short of astounding. The most striking examples of this movement to revive antiquity in Renaissance Florence are still visible today [such as] Brunelleschi’s loggia for the Foundling Hospital.⁵²

Here, Porter and Teich overlook the entire history of the building attached to the loggia, and only appreciate the Innocenti for its exterior and not its interior—seeing beauty as skin deep, as the saying goes. The beauty of the building

was in fact in the Innocenti as a whole. Despite the debt the institution incurred, it worked to give back and improve Florentine society by caring for the abandoned children, participating in the large cloth industries, giving citizens a place for charity as well as employment, and ensuring that Florentine patriotism continued in the hearts of their educated, mild-mannered, moldable tenants. The Innocenti has continued its long history of fostering youths for nearly five and a half centuries; “from 1530–1540 [alone], the foundling home of the Innocenti took in 5,400 children, with 1,000 of those in 1539.”⁵³ That’s 5,500 children who could have wound up as prostitutes or criminals with little education, as well as potentially a strong disdain for their homeland due to lack of assistance without the help of the orphanage. All this being said, one must wonder why most scholars give this institution’s microhistory such little attention when discussing Florentine history and society.

Endnotes

- ¹ Eugenio Battisti, *Filippo Brunelleschi: The Complete Work* (New York: Rizzoli, 1981), 36.
- ² Sally A. Sullivan, *The Ospedale degli Innocenti and Early Renaissance Florence* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1984), 48.
- ³ *Ibid.*, 47.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, 49.
- ⁵ Luca Landucci, *A Florentine Diary from 1450 to 1516*, trans. Alice de Rosen Jervis (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1927).
- ⁶ Gene Brucker, *The Civic World of Renaissance Florence* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977), 319.
- ⁷ Philip Gavitt, *Gender, Honor, and Charity of Renaissance Florence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 192.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 192.
- ⁹ Thomas Kuehn, *Illegitimacy in Renaissance Florence* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 107.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 110.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, 112.
- ¹² Sullivan, *The Ospedale degli Innocenti*, 43–44.
- ¹³ Brucker, *The Civic World of Renaissance Florence*, 17.
- ¹⁴ Nicholas Tepstra, *Lost Girls: Sex and Death in Renaissance Florence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 38.
- ¹⁵ Richard C. Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1980), 369.
- ¹⁶ Marcel Tetel, Ronald G Witt, and Rona Goff, eds., *Life and Death in Fifteenth-Century Florence* (Durham, N.C.: Drake University Press, 1989), 29.
- ¹⁷ Battisti, *Filippo Brunelleschi*, 33.
- ¹⁸ John Henderson, *The Renaissance Hospital: Healing the Body and Healing the Soul*. (Newhaven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2006), 41.

- ¹⁹ Richard A. Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence: An Economic and Social History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 2.
- ²⁰ Poggio Braccionlini, “On Avarice,” in *The Earthly Republic: Italian Humanists on Government and Society*, ed. Benjamin G. Kohl, Ronald G. Witt, and Elizabeth B. Welles (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978), 241.
- ²¹ Lawrence Kahn, “The ‘Ospedale degli Innocenti’ and the ‘Bambino’ of the American Academy of Pediatrics,” *Pediatrics* 110, no. 1 (July 2002): 175–180.
- ²² *Ibid.*, 176.
- ²³ Battisti, *Filippo Brunelleschi*, 53–54.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, 51.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, 60.
- ²⁶ Marvin Trachtenberg, *Dominion of the Eye: Urbanism, Art, and Power in Early Modern Florence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 11.
- ²⁷ Michele Furnari, *Formal Design in Renaissance Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1995), 119.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*
- ²⁹ Christoph L. Frommel, trans., *The Architecture of the Italian Renaissance* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2007), 15.
- ³⁰ Kahn, “The ‘Ospedale degli Innocenti.’”
- ³¹ Philip Gavitt, *Charity and Children in Late Renaissance Florence* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990), 30.
- ³² Sullivan, *The Ospedale degli Innocenti*, 49.
- ³³ Pier Paolo Viazzo, Maria Bortolotto, and Andrea Zanotto, “Five Centuries of Foundling History in Florence: Changing Patterns of Abandonment, Care, and Mortality,” in *Abandoned Children*, ed. Catherine Panter-Brick and Malcolm T. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 75.
- ³⁴ David Michael D’Andrea, *Civic Christianity in Renaissance Italy: The Hospital of Treviso, 1400–1530* (Rochester, N.Y.: University of Rochester Press, 2007), 70.
- ³⁵ J. L. Vives, *On Assistance to the Poor*, ed. A. Tobriner (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 43.
- ³⁶ D’Andrea, *Civic Christianity in Renaissance Italy*, 71.
- ³⁷ Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*, 377.
- ³⁸ D’Andrea, *Civic Christianity in Renaissance Italy*, 72.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, 11–12.
- ⁴⁰ Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*, 377.
- ⁴¹ Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich, *The Renaissance in National Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 37.
- ⁴² Jean Lucas-Dubreton, *Daily Life in Florence in the Time of the Medici* (New York: Macmillan, 1961), 132.
- ⁴³ Gavitt, *Charity and Children in Late Renaissance Florence*, 164.
- ⁴⁴ Stephanie Lawrence-White, “Musical Education at the Ospedale degli Innocenti, Florence,” PhD diss., The Catholic University of America, 2004.
- ⁴⁵ Lucas-Dubreton, *Daily Life in Florence*, 129.
- ⁴⁶ Vives, *On Assistance to the Poor*, 43.
- ⁴⁷ Patricia Fumerton and Simon Hunt, eds., *Renaissance Culture and the Everyday* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 191.

⁴⁸ Gavitt, *Charity and Children in Late Renaissance Florence*, 166.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 168.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 44-45.

⁵¹ Sullivan, *The Ospedale degli Innocenti*, 47.

⁵² Porter and Teich, *The Renaissance in National Context*,

⁵³ Nicholas Terpstra, *Abandoned Children of the Italian Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005),

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Battisti, Eugenio. Filippo Brunelleschi: The Complete Work. New York: Rizzoli, 1981.

Braccionlini, Poggio. "On Avarice." In *The Earthly Republic: Italian Humanists on Government and Society*, ed. Benjamin G. Kohl, Ronald G. Witt, and Elizabeth B. Welles, 241-89. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978.

Landucci, Luca. *A Florentine Diary from 1450 to 1516*. Translated by Alice de Rosen Jervis. London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1927.

Vives, J. L. *On Assistance to the Poor*. Edited by A. Tobriner. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.

Secondary Sources

Brucker, Gene. *The Civic World of Renaissance Florence*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977.

D'Andrea, David Michael. *Civic Christianity in Renaissance Italy: The Hospital of Treviso, 1400-1530*. Rochester, N.Y.: University of Rochester Press, 2007.

Frommel, Christoph L., trans. *The Architecture of the Italian Renaissance*. London: Thames and Hudson, 2007.

Furnari, Michele. *Formal Design in Renaissance Architecture*. New York: Rizzoli, 1995.

Gavitt, Philip. *Charity and Children in Late Renaissance Florence*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990.

Gavitt, Philip. *Gender, Honor, and Charity of Renaissance Florence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Goldthwaite, Richard A. *The Building of Renaissance Florence: An Economic and Social History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982.

Henderson, John. *The Renaissance Hospital: Healing the Body and Healing the Soul*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2006.

Kahn, Lawrence. "The 'Ospedale degli Innocenti' and the 'Bambino' of the American Academy of Pediatrics." *Pediatrics* 110, no. 1 (July 2002): 175-180.

Kuehn, Thomas. *Illegitimacy in Renaissance Florence*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002.

Lawrence-White, Stephanie. "Musical Education at the Ospedale degli Innocenti, Florence." PhD diss., The Catholic University of America, 2004.

Lucas-Dubreton, Jean. *Daily Life in Florence in the Time of the Medici*. New York: Macmillan, 1961.

Porter, Roy and Mikuláš Teich. *The Renaissance in National Context*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Sullivan, Sally A. *The Ospedale degli Innocenti and Early Renaissance Florence*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1984.

Terpstra, Nicholas. *Abandoned Children of the Italian Renaissance*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.

Terpstra, Nicholas. *Lost Girls: Sex and Death in Renaissance Florence*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010.

Tetel, Marcel, Ronald G. Witt, and Rona Goff, eds. *Life and Death in Fifteenth-Century Florence*. Durham, N.C.: Drake University Press, 1989.

Trachtenberg, Marvin. *Dominion of the Eye: Urbanism, Art, and Power in Early Modern Florence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Trexler, Richard C. *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*. New York: Cornell University Press, 1980.

Viazzo, Pier Paulo, Maria Bortolotto, and Andrea Zanotto. "Five Centuries of Foundling History in Florence: Changing Patterns of Abandonment, Care, and Mortality." In *Abandoned Children*, ed. Catherine Panter-Brick and Malcolm T. Smith, 70-91. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Section II. Forgotten Stories: Cartoonists and Kings



Sea king Hardrada, from W. H. Davenport Adams, *Shore and Sea* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1883).

Kings at Sea: Examining a Forgotten Way of Life

Gil Rutledge

The Viking Age is one that conjures up a plethora of fantastic images for the modern observer. Vivid scenes of raiding brutality by Viking warriors are among the first of these imaginings, but they only tell part of the greater story. The Viking world was one of nuanced complexity, wherein these raids only reflected small segments of the greater tale, and where the raiders themselves more frequently self-identified as farmers or poets than warriors.¹ Scandinavia during this Age experienced a profusion of culture, as it witnessed the growth of numerous interconnected cultures and saw a proliferation of trade and other interactions with the continent. The Viking Age (dating from approximately 800–1100) was one with far-reaching implications and lasting effects for a multiplicity of peoples, and it deserves to be remembered as such, rather than any of the more simplistic views that have since emerged.²

The societies emerging during the Viking Age featured incredibly complex social hierarchies and systems of rule, which have often gone unnoticed by the masses. Further, these complexities have occasionally been overlooked even by the historians tasked with the study of these subjects, who have chosen instead to try to compartmentalize Viking age leaders into created constructs. These false constructs are detrimental to historic inquiry, and they defy the Scandinavian world as those leaders knew it. Rather, historians must endeavor to represent this period, as with all others, as the complicated, diverse setting it was.

Nowhere is historians' difficulty with accurately portraying the Viking Age more evident than in the case of Scandinavian kingship. Kingship in the Viking Age was far different than many other systems of monarchy with which one may have familiarity. For the people of this age, kingship was not necessarily a hereditary position; rather it was a title that could be acquired through warfare or something resembling an election at an Althing (or other similar gathering).³ Rather than following a fixed precedent,

the nature of kingship was known to change from one generation to the next, as circumstance dictated. While it is certainly true that Scandinavian countries progressively grew more reliant on hereditary rule, particularly coinciding with the consolidation of these countries, the Viking Age is rife with successions by unrelated leaders.⁴

Yet this dynamic nature of the kingship is only one limiting factor in terms of understanding and conceptualizing leadership of this age. Rather than there being only one king for each country or kingdom, the Viking Age was littered with an abundance of kings, each of whom fell somewhere into a hierarchical system of kings, with lower kings answering to higher kings and vice versa.⁵ This in itself is not unique, as it was systems such as these that constituted a need for terms such as "High King," but such constructs are often unfamiliar for modern audiences.

While this system is not altogether unlike other hierarchical systems that would later emerge throughout Europe, it is important to note that these respective leaders were each termed kings, or roughly so. The term *konungr* was used indiscriminately for each of these leaders, and is most closely translated into the English word king. Yet this terminology has proved maddening to many historians, who often instead change *konungr* to mean "prince," "chieftain," or even "sub-king" or "petty king" as they see fit.⁶ While these variants can help conceptualize Viking leadership, they do misrepresent the world as the Vikings saw it, particularly the changes to "prince" and "chieftain." While "petty kings" or "sub-kings" are classifications that would not be found in Viking Age, these terms do better encapsulate the hierarchical system as it was than do other terms. Even so, this is a diminished understanding of kingship from how the Vikings themselves would have viewed it.

Further muddying the waters is the fact that modern historians are not the only people to have given these leaders different appellations. Later translators have been prone to

change the titles of Viking kings to “chieftains” as well, as they, too, found fault with Viking terminology and made changes to better reflect their own views or culture. The quest for well-represented Viking kingship is also one that is troubling, as even (nearly) contemporary sources have a tendency to disparage these leaders, calling them “king[s] only in name” or other derogatory titles.⁷ To be certain, a good deal of the disdain in this and other contemporary accounts does come from the fact that the sources are Christian, and they recount raids upon their people. This fosters no small degree of hostility between the two sides, which tends to manifest itself within the pages of Chronicles or other Histories. Yet beyond this more immediate bias, there is also an underlying one, which is borne out of a fundamental misunderstanding of the Scandinavians and their people, which frequently led to a dismissal of their culture as overly simplistic and barbarous. It is these very same classifications that modern scholars must actively seek to avoid, as they serve as gross misrepresentations of the period.

Furthermore, the diverse nature of kingship in the Viking Age is further complicated by the existence of less conventional types of kingship also exhibited during this time, including (at times) joint kingship, a premise not foreign to medieval European rule, but one that baffles many modern audiences.⁸ Beyond being relatively fluid in terms of the ways into which people could come to power, Viking kingship also manifested itself in other ways completely foreign to moderns; such as those who held no land and those who operated and lived at sea. While the very thought of kings operating within these parameters is astounding to the modern mind, it was very much an accepted facet of Scandinavian life in this period, “though usually the two went together, it was not always necessary to have a kingdom to be recognized as a king.”⁹ Kings roved the land and sea, with large bands of men, their *comitatus*, in hand. While it is clear that the landless kings, sometimes known as host-kings, for the hosts they led, were not quite itinerant, there is no such clarity with the sea kings of the age.¹⁰ Who were these men and how did they come to their position? What did the position entail? These questions paint a portrait that is every bit as complex as the Age into which they fell.

Unlike many other appellations for kings or leaders of the Viking Age that have since been changed to suit the views of later cultures, the term sea king is not anachronistic. Rather, it comes from the term *saekonungr*, which is directly connected to the aforementioned *konungr*.¹¹ Thus, the literal resultant translation is “sea king.” The fact that “sea king” was a concept familiar to the Viking world is critical, and of

great import to any analysis of Scandinavian sources, as it eliminates the potential for anachronistic thought that has so plagued Viking Age research. Rather, the concept, and term, are shared by both the Scandinavian *scalds* (poets) and modern researchers. This largely allows Scandinavian sources, such as the sagas or histories written by fellow Scandinavians (such as the *Heimskringla*, which is a little of both), to be examined openly within this research, as the terminology is the same for both the author and researcher. While there are admittedly inherent difficulties working with such sources, it does nonetheless provide one with a degree of familiarity from which to begin.

Unfortunately, the same ease of analysis is not afforded by contemporary Christian chronicles or annals, as these Christian chroniclers did not share a terminology with their attackers. Instead, many of these scribes chose to refer to the Scandinavians simply as “heathens,” “Northmen,” or “Danes.”¹² While these descriptions are colorful, and very telling of a great deal else, they offer very little insight into the specific nature of who was raiding. While this is sufficient to show they were Viking attacks, there is nothing indicating whether the raiders were sea kings or mere raiders. It is all but certain that some (if not many) of these attacks were perpetrated by sea kings, yet it is impossible to gauge who fell into either category based on the extant chronicled information. To be fair, it certainly makes sense that the people being raided were in no rush to find out by whom exactly they were being pillaged, yet this is remains an inherent difficulty in this research which must be addressed.

So what was a sea king, exactly? The sources are at odds over their definition, so it is best to begin with an examination of the oldest, nearest to contemporary works to see what the later historians were working with. For this, there is no better source than Snorri Sturluson’s work, the *Heimskringla*, which is a history of the kings of Norway. Though Norway is the focus of Sturluson’s work, there is also a great deal of interconnectivity with the rest of Scandinavia within it, and it is thus of great merit to research beyond Norway, much as many of the Icelandic Sagas are equally telling of Norway.

Unfortunately, it must be mentioned that the *Heimskringla* is frequently dated to approximately 1230, and many of Sturluson’s contemporary saga writers are also dated to the thirteenth century, leaving a considerable gap between the time of their composition (and in most cases, subsequent recording in written form) and the subject of the work.¹³ Such a significant gap (at times spanning up to three hundred years) must be taken into consideration, and it is sometimes

difficult to tell whether the information being related is an accurate depiction of the Viking Age, as it is purported to be, or a closer indication of Scandinavia during the time of composition. This is something that must be taken into account and an issue that stands as likely the biggest difficulty with these earliest sources. Despite this, they may still prove useful in research so long as these considerations are taken into account.

Maddeningly, in Sturluson’s extensive work, there are only eight mentions of sea kings, which would seem to be a hindrance to research. Further, of the eight sea kings who are mentioned, six are only mentioned in passing, as part of kennings for something else (invariably for ships or waves). This leaves only two (somewhat) detailed accounts of the lives of sea kings, which is admittedly significantly less than ideal. With that being said, there is a great deal that can be gleaned from what has been mentioned, even the passing references to the kennings. That Sturluson can simply say, “And the steerer of storm-tossed/Steeds of Atli oft did,”¹⁴ with the expectation that his audience will implicitly understand that Atli was a sea king, and he is thus referencing waves, is remarkable. Very few people even today have garnered enough fame to be considered synonymous with their profession or title, making the fact these people were so well-known in an age of oral tradition all the more astonishing. As such, these passing mentions are actually telling of the wide-spread nature of sea kings, as well as the fact that some of them garnered considerable fame, even to the point of becoming synonymous with their title.

Perhaps even more surprising is the fact that these names of sea kings were fairly commonplace amongst their contemporaries, meaning they were recognized by their peers unanimously, despite the frequency with which their names appeared in this culture.¹⁵ Such acclaim and instant recognition are indicative of this being a widespread, or at the very least widely recognized, phenomena. They also indicate a wealth of knowledge on the subject that has seemingly since been lost, or perhaps never explicitly recorded at all. While such implicit messages should generally be avoided in historic inquiry, here they are necessary, if only to prove that there was a great amount of information or knowledge at one point extant on the topic, even if they have been since lost to time. Further, it should be noted that this noting of sea kings in kennings was not limited to Sturluson’s work, as the Younger Edda contains two *thula* (segments) that referenced sea kings in kennings, one twenty-four times and the other a staggering seventy-six times.¹⁶

With that being said, the two remaining accounts from the *Heimskringla* offer much more explicit information on sea kings and provide a remarkably vivid and nuanced look into the world of Viking sea kingship. The first of these accounts, that of Haki, describes his path from sea-kingship to a far greater office, that of king of Sweden. The account begins by describing Haki and his brother, Hagbarth, as being “of great fame. They were sea-kings and had a great fleet. Sometimes they joined forces, at others, they fought separately. Many men of valor followed each of them.”¹⁷ This fascinating excerpt seems to indicate not only sea kingship, but also a form of joint kingship (or captaincy, at any rate) as they were described as having only one fleet between them. This concept of shared rule was certainly not foreign to medieval politics, though it certainly was something of a rarity in terms of kingship. This noted, it is impossible to definitively tell whether this truly was shared kingship or not, as their each having a war band seems to indicate otherwise.

However, for Sturluson, the only item of note between the brothers is Haki’s eventual ascension to the Swedish throne, which also belies the reason for which the *Heimskringla* does not offer more of these protracted accounts of sea-kings, as he is only truly concerned with their land-based counterparts. That sea-kings could evolve through successful warfare into kings of large portions of land, as is the case with Haki (and also Solvi, the other sea king to be extensively mentioned, who also ascends the Swedish throne) is fascinating, but likely did not happen with frequency, as evidenced by the fact that only two such instances are recorded in the *Heimskringla*.

In true Viking fashion, Haki acquires this kingdom through bloodshed, facing off against the established king Hagleik on the Fyri Plains.¹⁸ Sturluson is careful to describe both kings and armies as valiant and worthy before reaching the critical moment wherein “King Haki entered the shield castle of King Hagleik and killed him and both his sons.”¹⁹ Immediately after this destruction of his royal opponent, the Swedes fled, and King Haki conquered the lands and made himself king over the Swedes. He remained three years in the land, but while he remained there in peace, his champions left him and went on viking expeditions and thus amassed spoils for themselves.²⁰

It is unclear what became of Haki after these three years, whether his peaceful reign was ended through death or skirmish, or whether, as the implication seems to be, he simply left the land, but at any rate Haki is not heard of again throughout the remainder of the *Heimskringla*. It is difficult to account for what may have caused this sudden

disappearance, whether Sturluson is expecting his audience to have previous knowledge of what became of what became of Haki, or whether he simply felt it to be irrelevant to his overall work (which was, after all, concerned primarily with the kings of Norway).

Regardless of the cause for this sudden departure from the scene, there is a great deal that may be learned from Haki's story. The foremost of these is that he was able to ascend to the throne of Sweden through violence and yet thereafter hold it quite peacefully. This is likely owed (at least in part) to the fact that he effectively eliminated all claimants to the throne by killing Hugliek's sons, but it is also indicative of the nature of Scandinavian kingship during the time, that there would be no retribution for an alien ruler who acquired their power by force. This instance also shows that there seemed to be no difficulty in adjusting from a sea king to a landholding one (or if there was, it was not deemed worth noting). The final piece of interesting information comes from the aforementioned implication that Haki may have simply left Sweden, as a departure of such magnitude would be entirely out of place with modern conceptualizations of kingship, while perhaps also illustrating an under-represented phenomena of Viking Age kingship. Such a departure would also lead to questions such as what may have catalyzed such a departure. Was it due to his desire to return to sea (for economic or other reasons) or some other motive (such as the pursuit of wealth or power elsewhere)? However, it is critical to remember that such speculations are based purely on conjecture rather than concrete information.

Also interesting to note is the fate of Haki's brother Hagbarth, who had disappeared from the scene by the time of his brother's Swedish conquest. Hagbarth provides another example of a sea king's interaction with the land dwellers, as it seems that by this time Hagbarth had become entrenched in a forbidden romance with Signy Sigarsdottir²¹ and subsequently hanged by Signy's father.²² This account was evidently widespread in the north at the time, as Sturluson is able to reference Hagbarth twice in kennings, each time referencing the gallows in some fashion.²³ The reasons this is noteworthy are twofold: the extended mentions of sea kings in the *Heimskringla* are so few that each demands consideration, and Hagbarth being a figure of romantic legend may indicate an issue with the source. The earlier portions of Scandinavian history remained largely shrouded in mystery and legend, leaving many earlier historians such as Sturluson to fill in the gaps, and it would make sense to do so with a romantic figure, regardless of accuracy. This may,

then, indicate that this account comes closer to the legendary "Age of Heroes," or "Fabulous Age" than the later periods, which were more grounded in fact.²⁴ Even if this is the case, there can still be information credibly gleaned from the tale, as Sturluson would have to fabricate a tale that would be considered within the realm of expectations for the age (or at least, what he believed to have been normative of the age).

In the second prolonged account of a sea king, that of Solvi, Sturluson presents an even more nuanced figure. Solvi is introduced as a "sea-king . . . who was at that time harrying in Sweden. He ruled over [a part of] Jutland."²⁵ It is perplexing that Solvi is identified as a sea king who also owns (a significant portion of) land, as this seems not to have been typical of sea kings. It is difficult to gauge whether he would have been identified as a sea king had he remained in Jutland, or whether he is only characterized as thus due to his subsequent attack on Sweden. At any rate, "he led his fleet to Sweden. King Eystein was then being entertained in the district of Lofund. King Solvi came upon him in his hall when he was least expecting it, and burned him inside his hall with all his following."²⁶ Unlike Haki, however, this did not mark the end of Solvi's conquest:

Then Solvi proceeded to Sigtuna and demanded to be proclaimed king and be received as such; but the Swedes collected an army to defend their land, and there ensued a battle so great that it was said to have lasted more than eleven days. King Solvi was victorious and ruled over Sweden for a long time, until the Swedes betrayed and slew him.²⁷

This harrowing account shows a great deal more conflict with the stranger king, likely coinciding with the strengthening and (marginal) consolidation of Sweden, as the Swedes were able to assemble an army even without their king. The ultimate deposition of the king likely is borne out of Solvi's failure to eliminate all claimants to the throne, as it is Eystein's son who succeeds the throne following Solvi's evidently treasonous death.²⁸

The cases of Solvi and Haki show that greed and ambition were strong motivating factors for sea kings, just as with most Vikings, as is evidenced both in these rare conquests and the more typical raiding. Solvi is also noteworthy for showing the interconnectivity of Scandinavia during the Viking Age, as he hails from Norway, has holdings in Denmark, and ultimately gains sovereignty in Sweden. Solvi and Haki are noteworthy for another reason as well, as they both are living examples of the problems that arise when historians attempt to neatly compartmentalize Viking rulers. Neither Haki nor Solvi neatly fits even the unorthodox mold of sea kingship, as Haki may well have

been a joint king with his brother for a time and Solvi is described as having held land during his tenure as a sea king. While these discrepancies will no doubt give many historians fits, they were clearly not problematic for the people of the Viking Age, who accepted the concepts of kingship and rule as highly fluid entities which were liable to change with the circumstances of the day.

While these accounts provide tremendous insight into some of the lives of the more notable sea kings, and the acclaim that several of them were able to achieve, they do not answer the most fundamental question about these people, namely what defined a sea king. It appears Sturluson, as with many of his saga writing contemporaries, is frustratingly relying on his audience's presupposed knowledge of the subject rather than explicitly stating what made a sea king a sea king. While this is certainly understandable from a practical standpoint, as nobody wants to be lectured on something they already know, it creates a real issue for historians, who do not possess the requisite knowledge to implicitly understand such nuances.

It is for this very reason that a vivid excerpt from the *Ynglinga Saga* is so telling, as it records, "There were many sea-kings who ruled over many men, and had no land. He only was only thought to fully deserve the name of sea-king, who never slept under sooty rafter and never drank at the hearth corner."²⁹ This is an telling passage, and one that seemingly speaks to a widespread practice, which corroborates Sturluson's work. This passage also clearly sets the guidelines for one to be considered a true sea king, guidelines that have noticeably been ignored by several historians, who prefer to characterize these kings in their terms rather than accept the characterization that has been attributed to them. Another interesting tenet of kingship is revealed in *St. Olaf's Saga* when it relates, "As soon as Olaf got men and ships, his warriors gave him the name of king, for it was the custom that host-kings, who went on Viking expeditions, if they were king-born, should be given the name of king, although they ruled over no lands."³⁰ It was this very cavalier attitude toward whom was given the title "king," not always on clear grounds, that has led many historians to hold a similarly dismissive view of kingship in this era, regardless of the information they have received from the age itself (or close to it, in the case of the sagas).

Such reticence to accept these guidelines has caused a great deal of dissension amongst historians concerning sea kingship, for whom the debate still rages as to what precisely quantified it. These debates are largely pointless, and have done little to nothing to advance our understanding of the

premise, at times even leading the discussion backwards. The furtherance of these debates have distracted historians from further delving into the premise of sea kingship, as is evidenced by the dearth of information on the subject.

For the few historians who have delved into the topic of sea kings, the title has all too often been relegated to simply mean "the chieftains of the raiding expeditions of the Scandinavian vikings" during the Viking Age.³¹ Even Paul Du Chaillu, whose book includes the revelatory passage from the *Ynglinga Saga*, disappointingly precedes this passage by saying simply, "the commander of a ship was called a sea-king," a partial classification that would seem to incorporate several of these captains who were not truly sea kings.³² To be fair, Du Chaillu does go on to stipulate that:

as soon as a king's son or some other prominent man had acquired a number of war-ships, he was at once called king by his companions. These men roamed wherever they pleased, plundering every man's land; their estate was upon 'Ran's Land'-the sea; their ships were their houses.³³

While this more extensive definition does rectify the leniency allowed by the earlier explanation, half definitions like the former are a key contributing factor to the continuation of this debate. Such definitions have been embraced by Paul Sinding, who misleadingly uses the term sea-king in the subtitle for one of his books. It soon becomes evident, however, that for Sinding the term is nothing more than a kenning, and not merely for captains, but for Viking raiders in general, an error regardless of how one chooses to quantify sea kingship.³⁴

These two examples represent a few of the issues with this debate and its roots, but also the stunning lack of attention the subject has been given by scholars, particularly of late. This is truly a topic that has been largely forgotten by history, a far cry from the days of old, wherein sea kings were synonymous with their watery domain. Here is an issue that has largely eluded or gone unnoticed by historians, and thus ought to be a tantalizing prospect for future study, as there promise to be breakthroughs in the field, so long as one can navigate the nuanced terminology and embrace the entirety of the sources available, although further discoveries (particularly textual) could also prove to be illuminating. These scholars must also be skillful and wary enough to avoid being dragged into the age-old debate that has so plagued the field.

Yet this debate is by no means arbitrary, as, depending on one's definition, the term sea king either represents a

fairly large percent of the Viking Age population (particularly those whose names are known to us, such as Egil, Ragnar Lodbrok, etc) or it could be reserved for a much smaller group, those who made permanent (or at the very least, significant) residence at sea, rather than seasonal raiding. This latter definition is certainly more closely aligned with the Ynglinga Saga’s description, and seems also to correlate with the Heimskringla’s description, which has an air of importance associated with the title that seems to outweigh that of a mere captain. Even so, there are several potential points of contradiction, such as whether Haki and Solvi would have retained the title sea king after ascending to the Swedish throne, or whether they “shed their sea king skin” and became more conventional kings after that, much like Robert Ferguson’s argument concerning Harald Hardrada and the kingship.³⁵ Regardless of these several issues, the evaluation given by the Ynglinga Saga seems to be by far the most compelling and complete description available and most in line with how the people of the Viking Age would have identified the concept.

As such, it ought to be stated that the sea kings of the Viking Age were far more than merely ship captains or casual raiders. Saekonungr, actual saekonungr, were a different breed entirely, one who made their residence and earned their livelihoods aboard their ships. These men earned the title of king through their mastery of men and their prowess and comfort atop the waves. Yet these sea kings, bold and infamous as they once were, have largely been forgotten by time, rendered a historic afterthought. While there is a great deal that has been similarly lost to history, it would be a calamity if the sea kings were to suffer such an ignominious fate. Yet there is a great deal that may be learned on the topic—all one has to do is look.

Endnotes

- ¹ Snorri Sturluson, “Egil’s Saga,” in *Sagas of Icelanders*, ed. Ornlöf Thorsson, trans. Bernard Scudder (New York: Penguin, 2000), 126.
- ² John Haywood, *The Penguin Historical Atlas of the Vikings* (New York: Penguin, 1995), foreword.
- ³ Paul C. Sinding, *The Northmen: The Sea-Kings and the Vikings* (New York: Edward O. Jenkins, 1883), 38.
- ⁴ Sverre Bagge, *Society and Politics in Snorri Sturluson’s Heimskringla* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 130.
- ⁵ Haywood, *Penguin Historical Atlas*, 31.
- ⁶ Sinding, *The Northmen*, 52, 56.
- ⁷ Martin Bouquet, *Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de las France* (Paris: Paris V. Palme, 1840), 4.
- ⁸ Haywood, *Penguin Historical Atlas*, 30.
- ⁹ Ibid.

- ¹⁰ Paul B. Du Chaillu, *The Viking Age, vol. 1* (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1840), 499.
- ¹¹ Bjorn Sigfusson, “Names of the Sea-Kings,” *Modern Philology* 36, no. 2 (Nov. 1934): 125.
- ¹² Rev. James Ingram, trans., *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (St. Petersburg, Fla.: Red and Black Publishers, 2009), 48, 49, 78.
- ¹³ Bagge, *Society and Politics*, 14.
- ¹⁴ Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla: History of the Kings of Norway*, trans. Lee M. Hollander (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1964), 136.
- ¹⁵ Sigfusson, “Names of the Sea-Kings,” 139.
- ¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁷ Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, 25.
- ¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ Sigfusson, “Names of the Sea-Kings,” 131.
- ²² Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, 23n.
- ²³ Ibid., 23n, 27.
- ²⁴ Sinding, *The Northmen*, 44.
- ²⁵ Sturluson, *Heimskringla*, 34.
- ²⁶ Ibid.
- ²⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁸ Ibid., 35.
- ²⁹ Du Chaillu, *Viking Age*, 499.
- ³⁰ Ibid.
- ³¹ Sigfusson, “Names of the Sea-Kings,” 125.
- ³² Du Chaillu, *Viking Age*, 499.
- ³³ Ibid.
- ³⁴ Sinding, *The Norsemen*, 84.
- ³⁵ Robert Ferguson, *The Vikings: A History* (New York: Penguin, 2009), 364.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A History of England from Roman Times to the Norman Conquest. Translated by Reverend James Ingram. St Petersburg, Fla.: Red and Black Publishers, 2009.

Bouquet, Martin. *Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France.* Paris: Paris V. Palme, 1840.

Sturluson, Snorri. *Heimskringla: History of the Kings of Norway.* Translated by Lee M. Hollander. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1964.

Sturluson, Snorri. “Egil’s Saga.” In *The Sagas of Icelanders*, ed. Ornlöf Thorsson, trans. Bernard Scudder. New York: Penguin, 2000.

Secondary Sources

Bagge, Sverre. *Society and Politics in Snorri Sturluson’s Heimskringla.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991.

Du Chaillu, Paul B. *The Viking Age. Vol. 1.* New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1890.

Ferguson, Robert. *The Vikings: A History.* New York: Penguin, 2009.

Haywood, John. *The Penguin Historical Atlas of the Vikings.* New York: Penguin, 1995.

Sigfusson, Bjorn. “Names of the Sea-Kings.” *Modern Philology* 32, no. 2 (November 1934): 125–142.

Sinding, Paul C. *The Northmen: The Sea-Kings and Vikings.* New York: Edward O. Jenkins, 1883.

The Pictorial Stylings of Louis Raemaekers and David Low: A Comparison of Anti-German Cartoons from World War I to World War II

Melissa Newman

It is early in World War I, and the verdict has come back. Louis Raemaekers has been acquitted for treason. However, that was not the outcome the Germans wanted. This led to them placing a bounty equivalent to \$3000 on Raemaekers’ head. Similarly, just after World War II ended, a list came to light detailing the people who would be the first to die at the hands of the Nazis if they had succeeded in invading England. David Low’s name was towards the top. What type of people are Raemaekers and Low that would warrant such hostility from the German government? Politicians? Generals? In these two instances, they were cartoonists. Louis Raemaekers and David Low were wanted dead by Germany in World War I and World War II respectively because of the cartoons they published in their countries and abroad, which damaged the public opinion of Germans.

Surely this fact alone speaks to the influence each cartoonist had. As arguably the most influential cartoonists of their respective world wars, Raemaekers and Low created images that were widely disseminated throughout the world, making political cartoons even more effective and capable of shaping historical change than what was previously considered possible. It is the artist’s job to take a situation and manipulate the audience’s perception towards a specific outcome. If an artist can do this well, he or she receives a certain degree of recognition if not in name, then at least in style. Raemaekers and Low shaped public perception of the Germans, initially in the countries they drew for, then eventually expanding abroad to other Allied nations. Raemaekers’s approach appealed to the Allied public’s emotional responses through his depictions of German atrocities. Low focused on political events unfolding at the time, often ridiculing Hitler, while still portraying Germany as a legitimate threat. The heated reactions each cartoonist received from Germany’s political leaders during their

respective wars show how ways of thinking about Germans could be significantly shaped by the stroke of a pen.

Theoretical Background

Political cartoons have been a useful medium for disseminating information to the public since the seventeenth century. Their characterizations of people and events call for a critical analysis. The Political Cartoon by Charles Press lists the three main types of cartoons: comic art, social cartoons, and political cartoons. Comic art, Press explains, is designed to amuse or entertain. This can be most readily seen through the Sunday Funnies in newspapers. Social cartoons are similar in that they seek to amuse, yet they are different in that they draw on a particularly frustrating or upsetting social issue and attempt to make it more tolerable by “bring[ing] a wry smile of recognition” to the viewer. Finally, the political cartoons champion a specific political faction or point of view.¹ Their purpose then is to influence the viewer with “regards to specific political events of the day” or “predispose them to a particular action.”²

Samuel A. Towers alludes to the phrase “a picture is worth a thousand words” by reasoning that because a person’s primary contact with the universe is visual, “the impact of one image is a thousand times more immediate than the impact of a thousand words.”³ This sense of immediacy was especially vital when less of the populace was literate. Even now, however, political cartoons still find relevance in that they make their audience confront the current debates facing their community (whether it be local or international). Thomas Milton Kemnitz argues that it is also because of this immediacy that cartoons are “an ideal media for suggesting what cannot be said by the printed word.”⁴ What might be difficult to put into words might work better as an image. For example, writing about a leader’s weight might be

offensive, but drawing them in a way that exaggerates their weight still makes the point, but now in a humorous way and without having to explicitly put it into words.

Caricatures can be used in this humorous context to help the audience identify the particular person the cartoonist is drawing. Kemnitz describes caricatures as a cartooning technique involving the “exaggeration or distortion of features,” which Victor S. Navasky adds is rooted in stereotypes. Kemnitz goes further to state that “political cartoons are specific: they depend on the viewer’s recognition of the characters, subjects, and events depicted.” In such instances, caricatures can act as an aid in recognition.⁵ According to cartoon historian W.A. Coupe, “a theoretical understanding of political caricature involves an understanding of caricature itself.”⁶ Looking at the way a person’s features have been distorted can tell you not only how they were perceived, but also what the artist is hoping to convey by choosing to exaggerate specific features. Applying that to political cartoons, such as those included throughout this article, certain elements in the scene or the positioning of the figures can tell the viewer what the artist is choosing to highlight in addition to uncovering his overall message.

Charles Press also argues that a repeated theme in cartoons is the way in which the artist highlights the contrast between what is the reality and what could be considered as the ideal.⁷ However, Tower suggests, “political cartoonists work best ‘against’ rather than ‘for’ a subject.”⁸ This idea is particularly relevant when thinking about the political cartoons that appeared during wartime. Rallying the population against an enemy is much easier than rallying them for a particular wartime policy. You can dispute the need or effectiveness of victory gardens, but you cannot dispute the (potentially gruesome) deaths of hundreds of your country’s soldiers at the hands of the enemy. German historian Eberhard Demm claims that political cartoons actually take on a new function during wartime: “its task is to mobilize the population both morally and intellectually for war, explain setbacks, confirm beliefs in the superiority of the fatherland and proclaim the hope of final victory.” This change in function is in contrast to their previous antagonism of society and the government during peacetime.⁹ The cartoonists’ focus shifts from issues within their country to issues outside of their country.

Something that is utilized in cartoons—during both peace- and wartime—is the continued focus on a particular subject matter, such as a country’s leader. Thomas Rowlandson was the first to introduce a regular cartoon character in his pieces in 1812. Also around that time, James

Gillray invented many of the stock characters for different countries (ex. Germany, France, England, and Russia) that are still being used today.¹⁰ Portraying a recurring character combined with using the stock characteristics to easily define a particular country has been highly influential in the way people view and understand cartoons, because it shapes their view of that country or figure—a view that was possibly nonexistent before—into whatever the cartoonist or government producing the image wants. Some might argue that shaping the public’s views in such a way would not be possible or effective. However, David Turley explains that famous World War II cartoonist David Low was shocked that “ordinary Americans were ‘ill informed and irresponsible about politics outside their own local affairs.’”¹¹ If the people you are delivering this information to do not have any prior knowledge about the leader or country, they have no reason to suspect that what they are being fed was exaggerated or untrue. This makes the cartoonists’ jobs easier, because they only have to help the public form an opinion instead of change it. However, that is not to say that all cartoonists can easily produce an effective cartoon.

Defining what makes a “good” political cartoon is difficult; instead, Press argues that it is easier to identify a “bad cartoon.”¹² To put it simply, it all comes down to the strength of the message that is presented. For example, if a cartoon has a message that the audience can recognize as disingenuous, then it is a “bad” cartoon. The cartoonist can have highly developed artistic skill, but if their message lacks genuine sentiment or has a contrived enthusiasm, it cannot be considered a “good” cartoon. Press says “artistry is supplementary and contributory rather than central” to a cartoon and that it should not contain “unnecessary complications in its imagery or its title.”¹³ In other words, the message needs to be concise, powerful, and straightforward.

Up until the end of the nineteenth century, magazines were the preferred medium in which artists would publish their cartoons. However, around the turn of the century, there was a switch to newspapers as the source for cartoons. Tower claims this was for two reasons: the first being that the cartoonists “were so powerful that they made enemies;” the second that the cartoonists were lured away from the magazines because the newspapers hired them to illustrate cartoons every day instead of only once a week. This then led to new techniques in cartoons, such as a heavier use of symbols to quickly sum up a political situation (e.g. the Republican elephant or the Democrat donkey).¹⁴

With this switch to newspapers and an increased use of symbols, political leaders were also depicted more in

comics. Eberhard Demm revealed the advantage of using those who represented “the destiny or the politics of the enemy countries” (i.e. kings, politicians, generals) to pitch the public against the desired enemy. Personifying these leaders allowed “hatred [to be] directed against a concrete person, depicted as ridiculous or horrid, and then by transfer of emotion, against the country as such.”¹⁵

Dutch artist Louis Raemaekers directed considerable hatred towards Germany and Kaiser Wilhelm II, and Raemaekers is considered the most influential cartoonist in World War I by many, including historian Isabel Simeral Johnson and former President Theodore Roosevelt.¹⁶ According to Demm, Raemaekers’ cartoons were so powerful that “the English distributed millions of copies of [them] all over the world” and were considered “one of the most dangerous weapons against Germany.”¹⁷ In one of the collections of Raemaekers’ cartoons that was published in 1916, H. H. Asquith—the Prime Minister of England at the time—celebrated Raemaekers because he was able to “show us our enemies as they appear to the unbiased eyes of a neutral” country such as the Netherlands.¹⁸ According to Isabel Simeral Johnson, the country’s neutrality in addition to Raemaekers’ “eye-witness of the invasion of Belgium” gave Raemaekers an “authority” to unbiasedly report the actions of the Germans.¹⁹ The ferocity with which he wanted to convince the rest of the world of Germany’s maliciousness in such instances gave him even more credibility in his cartoons. In Franklynn Peterson’s article “The Powerful Pen of Louis Raemaekers,” he describes how the Germans were quite aware of Raemaekers’ influence; Kaiser Wilhelm II had “the blatantly anti-German cartoonist” arrested and accused of treason in 1914. When he was acquitted, they put a bounty out on his head. He sought refuge in England, but was later sent to the United States “where it was hoped he might help influence Allied participation in the war.” His cartoons began being published regularly by William Randolph Hearst and the Herald Tribune Syndicate, where they reached the eyes of millions of Americans. People everywhere were now being exposed to the impassioned cartoons of Louis Raemaekers.²⁰

Raemaekers’ World War II equivalent was David Low. Low was originally from New Zealand, but produced his famous cartoons of Hitler for the Evening Standard in London.²¹ Timothy Benson asserts that Low, “the most celebrated political cartoonist of the last century,” was someone who “contributed more than any other single figure and as a result changed the atmosphere in the way people saw Hitler.” It was his “humanitarian instincts and Liberal leaning [that] gave him a strong determination to

oppose Hitler and everything he stood for” in his cartoons.²² Benson also describes how Low’s work was seen as prophetic because he “noticed how Hitler made plain his ambitions for a greater Germany and domination of Europe” and included those seemingly unfathomable ambitions into his cartoons. Low took Hitler seriously in the 1930s when others did not, giving him “remarkable insight as events unfolded” and ultimately earning him a reputation for predicting the events of the war.²³

Like Raemaekers, Low faced outside pressures because of the effectiveness of his cartoons. Before World War II officially started, German and British leaders met multiple times on the basis of maintaining a good relationship. Benson explains that it was because such meetings that British foreign policy personnel pressured Low’s editors and consequently Low himself to tone down his cartoons.²⁴ Lord Halifax, who met with Joseph Goebbels, told the Evening Standard’s manager that “as soon as a copy of the Evening Standard arrives, it is pounced on for Low’s cartoon, and if it is of Hitler, as it generally is, telephones buzz, tempers rise, fevers mount, and the whole governmental system of Germany is in uproar.”²⁵ Unable to subdue Low’s cartoons of Hitler, it later became public knowledge that “Low’s name had been highly placed on the Nazi death list” had Germany succeeded in invading Britain.²⁶ While these cartoonists share many similarities in terms of their beginnings and overall importance during the wars they were drawing in, the contexts for which they each drew were vastly different, which therefore affected the styles in which they drew their cartoons.

Louis Raemaekers

World War I began in the summer of 1914 after Serbian nationalist Gavrilo Princip assassinated the Austro-Hungarian Archduke Franz Ferdinand. Austria-Hungary then declared war on Serbia, and each country’s chains of allies entered the war as well, creating what was deemed “the Great War.” Throughout the war, Germany was the main aggressor. They made the first real military move of the war by attacking France in launching their Schlieffen Plan that involved an assault through neutral Belgium. This was met by outrage from the Allies, eventually pushing Britain into joining the World War I by declaring war on Germany.

Germany’s push through Belgium also sparked the indignation of cartoonist Louis Raemaekers. Raemaekers was born in the Netherlands to a Flemish father and German mother in 1869. He was fluent in German, Flemish, French, and English, which would later prove useful with the widespread popularity of his cartoons. In 1909, the

Amsterdam Telegraf began publishing his cartoons, but according to an article by Franklynn Peterson, Raemaekers began publishing cartoons attacking Germany in 1907. It was not until almost a decade later—during World War I—that people began to take notice.²⁷

Raemaekers' cartoons depicting the atrocities committed by the German army on their trek through Belgium was one of the first instances where his cartoons received widespread attention. So strong were Raemaekers' opinions about the German atrocities in Belgium that he illustrated a booklet written by Emile Cammaerts that described the acts committed by the Germans.²⁸ Depicting atrocities became a major focus in Raemaekers' cartoons. According to Baker, Raemaekers' cartoons were meant to "[draw] particular attention to the physical characteristics of the depicted Germans in order to emphasize their ridiculousness or their loathsomeness."²⁹ One of the common themes Raemaekers would draw on in his cartoons was that Germans were subhuman and animalistic; for example, depicting Germans as savage apes. Another common depiction used by Raemaekers and other war propagandists was the threat Germans were to the innocent—normally depicted as white women. Finally, Raemaekers used Kaiser Wilhelm II in his cartoons to act as the figurehead or source of blame for all of the death that the war caused.

In "See the Conquering Hero Come," Raemaekers draws the Germans as primitive and ape-like (figure 1).³⁰ This cartoon actually distinguishes Germany's primitive and ape-like features from each other: leading the pitiful pack is a man wearing nothing but a cape and warrior skirt; two gorillas are holding up the end of the man's cape and trudge along in his wake; and a vulture dripping with blood flies above and slightly behind the man. The man encapsulates the visage of a barbarian well with his scraggly beard, his bare feet and chest, the heads of his victims hanging from his belt, his "scepter" (which is really a child's hand stuck on the end of a stick), and his look of "ineffable self-satisfaction and arrogant disdain." According to Arthur Shadwell—who wrote the corresponding commentary on the cartoon published alongside it in the collection—the apes behind the primitive man are meant to represent the German army and navy as "dull and brutish. They are incapable of moral judgment; they follow their instincts and know no better." They unthinkingly follow their master who is of superior mind in submission. There are also skeletons in the background, as if the disembodied heads hanging from the man's belt are not enough indication of the scene's barbarity.



Figure 1: Louis Raemaekers, "See the Conquering Hero Come," in *Kultur in Cartoons* (New York: The Century Co., 1917), 161.

This entire portrayal conveys to the audience that Germans are an unintelligent, brutish people who crudely kill their enemies.

Several of Raemaekers' popular images throughout the war show an apelike German brutally attacking a weaker, feminized country—a common portrayal utilized by Allied propagandists during World War I. One specific example comes from *Kultur in Cartoons*, a collection of Louis Raemaekers' works. Entitled "Germany and the Neutrals" (figure 2), the focus of the cartoon is on the large ape in the center; we know the ape represents Germany because he wears a belt that reads, "Gott mit Uns" ("God with us" in German). His large hands are on the dead bodies of naked women—"the Neutrals"—who are meant to represent neutral countries, like Belgium, that the Germans swept through. He still has one gigantic hand smashed down over one of the women's heads, which is surrounded by a pool of blood. The neutrals are depicted as women to convey their innocence and weakness in the matter. Their naked bodies also show that they were defenseless against their

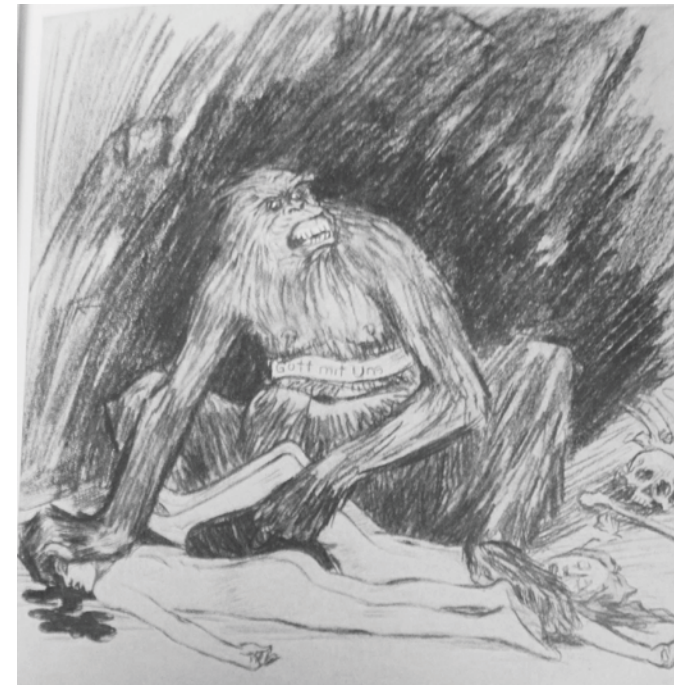


Figure 2: Louis Raemaekers, "Germany and the Neutrals," in *Kultur in Cartoons* (New York: The Century Co., 1917), 37.

Figure 3: Louis Raemaekers, "We Must So Destroy France That She Can Never Again Resist Us," in *America in the War* (New York: The Century Co., 1918), 145.

attacker. It is meant to create sympathy in the audience to see women fall victim to such a horrible beast. The implied sexual threat to the naked women in the cartoon is meant to arouse indignation in the viewers and fear for the safety of their own wives, sisters, and daughters. There is a skeleton in the background as well. The ape is bearing his teeth and looking to his left, as if there is someone approaching out of the shot. The primitive violence rampant in this image is meant to convey to the audience that the Germans will beat down anyone who gets in their way, even the innocent and defenseless neutrals.³¹ This violent and gruesome portrayal was meant to "inspire hatred of the enemy [in addition to] enflaming public opinion against Germany."³²

Raemaekers often portrayed countries weaker than Germany as innocent women to trigger an incensed response to the horrible events happening during World War I. In figure 3, nothing is left to the imagination: the Germans' cruelty is obvious and grotesque in their dismemberment of a female France's limbs. France is tied to a wooden post. One of her legs and both of her arms have been cut off and are now lying on the floor in front of her. Her clothes are torn to shreds and one of her breasts is exposed. While this is a color image, the only color that really sticks out is the red of France's hat and her blood. The blood is smeared over the coat of the man performing the amputations—perhaps a crazy German doctor—and scattered across the floor. In this image, the feminine character is meant to represent not only innocence, but also pride. This is seen in the defiance of her expression, despite the fact that her neck is tied to the post as well, further constricting her movement. Raemaekers exploits the woman's innocence and vulnerability by showing the Germans sadistically cutting off her limbs. The Germans' male power—manifested through the restrained and scantily dressed France—dominates their female counterpart and shows that she cannot resist Germany, who clearly has the upper hand.³³

Similarly, Raemaekers published a cartoon in 1914 with the caption, "How I Deal with the Small Fry" (figure 4).³⁴ It depicts Kaiser Wilhelm II crouched over the incapacitated bodies and of female "Belgia" and "Luxemburg." The way his body takes up almost the entire frame further communicates the domineering and powerful position he holds. The Kaiser's right knee is in Belgia's back and his right hand is restraining the back of her neck as he clutches his sword high in his left hand. His left foot is stomped down on the back of Luxemburg. With a murderous gleam in his eye, it is apparent that the Kaiser is about to bring down his sword and kill Belgia, followed

by Luxemburg. Again, Raemaekers' rampant use of female subjects falling victim to the brutalities of Germans such as the Kaiser aims to stir up an emotional response in the viewer, making them want to channel all of their energies to crushing Germany, in turn saving these women. In this instance, Kaiser Wilhelm II has become the personification of the German army that committed horrible atrocities in their invasion and occupation of Belgium and Luxemburg. He is the one to blame for the atrocities committed, therefore it was him that Raemaekers chose to draw committing them.

One of the most famous and deadliest battles of World War One was the Battle of Verdun. This eleven-month struggle in 1916 had over half a million casualties on both sides.³⁵ The ongoing stalemate was caused by the futile method of trench warfare. Each side dug a network of trenches stretching hundreds of miles from which they would fire back and forth at each other. The stretch of land in between each side's trenches was referred to as "no man's land," and it was in those tens of yards that hundreds



Figure 4: Louis Raemaekers, "How I Deal with the Small Fry," in *Raemaekers' Cartoons, with Accompanying Notes by Well-Known English Writers* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1916), 297.

of thousands of soldiers lost their lives. Upon receiving the order from their officers, soldiers would climb out of their trench and rush at the opposing one in a fruitless attempt to overtake it. However, being an above-ground target with only a helmet and a rifle, it was easy for the opposing side to mow down the soldiers charging at them while they stayed protected in their trench. Lines would move back and forth constantly and infinitesimally so as to give neither side a clear lead. Constantly replacing the ever-growing casualty list of soldiers by throwing more out into no man's land resulted in the high death toll and stalemate seen at Verdun.

It is in this context that Louis Raemaekers drew a cartoon entitled "A Higher Pile" with the caption, "Crown Prince: 'We Must Have a Higher Pile to See Verdun, Father'" (figure 5).³⁶ In this cartoon, Kaiser Wilhelm II is looking through a set of binoculars and his son is behind him, peering over him on tiptoes into the unseen distance. They stand atop a huge pile of dead bodies; the bodies look all to be German soldiers, indicated by the spiked German



Figure 5: Louis Raemaekers, "A Higher Pile," in *Kultur in Cartoons* (New York: The Century Co., 1917), 19.

helmet most of them seem to be still wearing. The pile of bodies continues in a wide, rough line extending into the background of the scene. The only other landscape is the remains of a barbed wire fence, which was a common defense in no man's land to make the rush to the opposing trench even more difficult for the soldiers. With the caption and overall scene of this cartoon, Raemaekers is implying the triviality with which the German leaders regard human life and that they are disconnected from the destruction they have created. After all, the Kaiser and his son stand on a pile of their fallen men with only a regard for their next move. The next move that will surely and needlessly cost more men their lives. This imagery and pathos convey that the Kaiser does not even care about the lives of his own men, begging the question, why would he show any more humanity to his enemy's men? The Battle of Verdun was a futilely continued battle, which according to this particular cartoon was only good for accumulating massive piles of human bodies for the heartless Kaiser have a good vantage point for the next fight. Raemaekers used his impassioned feelings about what was happening in World War I to stir up similar feelings in his viewers by portraying Germans as apelike beasts that would prey on innocent women and portraying the Kaiser as being manifestation of the death and destruction caused by German armies.

Even though Raemaekers' cartoons were originally published in the *Amsterdam Telegraf*, "they were reproduced in every country on the globe."³⁷ The propagandistic cartoons that he produced were meant to catch the eyes of millions and convince them of Germany's treachery, in turn compelling them to support the war effort against the Germans. David Low's cartoons were similarly circulated. He was drawing for a newspaper four days a week, where his cartoons were "syndicated to a hundred and seventy journals worldwide."³⁸ This contributed to each cartoonist's vast popularity by expanding their audiences outside of their localities, thereby implanting their ideas and messages in the minds of people all over the world.

David Low

Eventually knighted in 1962, David Low was born and raised in New Zealand. He was inspired early in life by British comics that had been imported to New Zealand, and he imitated their styles. In 1902, he published his first cartoon at the young age of eleven in the *Christchurch Spectator*, his school's paper. By the time Low was twenty, he was a cartoonist in Australia for the *Sydney Bulletin*. Soon after the end of World War I, Low emigrated to London, landing a job

with the *Star* in 1919. It was not until 1927 that Low moved over to the *Evening Standard*, which was where he published all of his famous cartoons throughout World War II.³⁹

World War II began on September 1, 1939, when Germany invaded Poland. However, in the years leading up to the formal declarations of war, Germany was making many changes politically, militaristically, and economically. In 1933, Adolf Hitler was elected German Chancellor under President Paul von Hindenburg. After Hindenburg died in 1934 at the age of 87, Hitler dismissed the democratic government that elected him by declaring Germany to be in a state of emergency. This allowed Hitler to suspend citizens' civil rights, which was done with the purpose of restoring Germany to its former glory before World War I and the Treaty of Versailles. When Germany surrendered and World War I ended, they had been forced to take responsibility for the war and pay the Allied nations billions of dollars in reparations, thereby destroying their economy. Hitler played on the emotions of a struggling nation by telling the German people he could give them jobs and food if they put their trust in him. Now in this totalitarian state, Hitler remilitarized the Rhineland in direct violation of the Treaty of Versailles, eliminated political opposition, and began annexing bordering nations that he felt needed to be united with Germany.⁴⁰

Meanwhile, the rest of Europe watched. Britain and France made attempts to discourage Hitler from invading other nations, but fearing another world war, they adopted the policy of appeasement.⁴¹ Through it all, David Low was publishing cartoons. However, his unrelenting mockery of Hitler—unsurprisingly displeasing to Hitler himself—also caused problems with the British in their policy of appeasement. The Nazis banned the *Evening Standard* in Germany as well as any other paper publishing Low's cartoons. When Lord Beaverbrook travelled to Germany in an attempt to lift the ban in 1933, "the Nazis told him that the *Evening Standard* would remain banned as long as Low was its cartoonist."⁴² Then in 1936, the British government pressured Low to "tone down" his cartoons so as to not "affect [Lord Beaverbrook's] personal relations with the Nazis while on his visit to the [Berlin Olympic] Games." Stanley Tiquet, the Assistant Editor at the *Evening Standard*, said they did not want anything published in the newspapers that would "prejudice international peace and, particularly, the good relations between all the countries now represented in Berlin." The situation escalated into actual censorship; the *Evening Standard's* editor Percy Cudlipp refused to publish one of Low's cartoons because "we do not want ... to run

what will seem to be a cartoonist's campaign against the dictators. . . . I suggest, therefore, that for the present you avoid the dictators altogether."⁴³ Low was told by his editors to not draw Hitler and Mussolini and even had his work including the dictators refused for publication so that the British government would not offend Germany, thereby maintaining peace with them. Knowing now that none of these attempts to diminish Hitler's militaristic actions would be even remotely successful, it seems ridiculous that the British government would go to such lengths to subdue a cartoonist. However, it also shows just how powerful those images were and the influence they had over those who saw them.

One month before the Olympic games began, Low produced a cartoon entitled, "Stepping Stones to Glory" (figure 6).⁴⁴ In the cartoon, the "Spineless Leaders of Democracy" are piled on top of each other, making a staircase, which Hitler climbs. There is a carpet laid out for Hitler to walk on, each step labeled differently: "Rearmament," "Rhineland Fortification," and "Danzig," culminating in "Boss of the Universe." This cartoon is

communicates the frustration Low felt towards the Allies in their appeasement policy. Depicting Hitler goose-stepping—a German army march—conveys his increasing threat of military force. He is also thumbing his nose, a sign of derision and contempt, which is most likely directed towards the democratic world leaders who he is stepping on to get to his end goal of "Boss of the Universe." He is also sticking out his tongue as he is thumbing his nose, another way in which Hitler is mocking the Allies and showing his complete disregard for them. Low draws Hitler in this cartoon as almost juvenile. Hitler has a ridiculous expression on his face because his tongue is sticking out; his fingers are pointed in different directions to draw our attention to the action of thumbing his nose, a childish action, and even though the goose-step can communicate military threats, it would be quite difficult to do going up the stairs without looking awkward and ridiculous.

Hitler has already passed the first couple of steps, and the question marks and exclamation points on subsequent steps are meant to indicate further unknown actions that

Hitler will be making to get to the top. The first three figures have their faces viewable to the audience to place blame directly on them for Hitler's first few unimpeded steps. The rest of the democratic leaders making up the staircase have their faces and bodies sloped down and out of view, in either resignation or death. This could indicate their impending deaths as Hitler continues to take militaristic action or the seeming futility in attempting to stop him, leading to their resignation. Combining the passivity of the democratic leaders in the cartoon with Hitler's silly-looking actions, Low is portraying the "Spineless Leaders of Democracy" simply giving into a spoiled child—Hitler.

This entire scene is meant to criticize the passivity of the Allies and how their current handling of the situation will only perpetuate Hitler's impression that he can walk all over the Allies. Low asserts that this will eventually result in Hitler ruling the world. Of course, that is a bit dramatic, but it shows the path these small steps are leading towards and what the outcome could be if Hitler continues unobstructed. Low is attempting to warn the public that this type of continued inaction will not end well for anyone. While he is commenting on Hitler's actions, this cartoon is more so meant to highlight and criticize the Allies that are allowing it to happen. It is almost as if their compliance and passivity is what is causing Hitler to take such actions. If the Allies were not compliantly lying down en masse, forming this easy staircase for Hitler, he would not be able to fulfill his end goal.

While Hitler was often the subject of Low's cartoons throughout World War II, the focus of his cartoons is not as easily categorized into a common theme as Raemaekers' were, seeing as Low's cartoons were focused more on specific topics rather than broad circumstances. Low used his cartoons to comment heavily on the political matters of the time—such as his displeasure with appeasement—always inserting some hint of sarcasm or satire to amuse the audience and keep them interested. In this sense, Low's drawings more fully follow Press's definition of a social cartoon in that they seek to amuse by making a frustrating social or political issue more tolerable.⁴⁵ Raemaekers's cartoons very clearly fell under the categories of political cartoon and propaganda, because they had a firm position on a subject and sought to lead their audience into a specific action or opinion based on that position.

This difference in technique in depicting the enemy is on full display when comparing the cartoons of Raemaekers and Low. Kemnitz asserted that "techniques vary with subject matter," which is exactly what is seen with Raemaekers

and Low.⁴⁶ Raemaekers takes the approach of vilifying the enemy by depicting them as atrocity-committing monsters, while Low played on Hitler's "impassioned" personality by often depicting him making wild gestures, though Low also frequently showed Hitler as a purveyor of death like Kaiser Wilhelm II. While their purposes were the same—to turn public opinion against Germany—their focuses were fundamentally different, shaping the techniques each cartoonist employed. This created differently negative perspectives of the Germans in the eyes of the viewers.

Despite the many facets of Low's cartoons, I will be focusing on his depiction of Hitler because that was what gave him the most trouble as well as increased his fame. Low himself conceded that Hitler's severe displeasure at his cartoons only fueled him to continue. It was especially the way in which Low portrayed Hitler—as a "harmless fool"—that seemed to irk the dictator so much. Low acknowledged, "No dictator is inconvenienced or even displeased by cartoons showing his terrible person stalking through blood and mud. . . . [It] feeds his vanity. . . . What he does not want to get around is the idea that he is an ass, which is really damaging."⁴⁷ There has been debate among scholars as to which is a more effective way of portraying the enemy: drawing them as dangerous monsters or as ridiculous fools. Both aim to turn the public against the enemy, but the opinions they have of said enemy will be vastly different. When portraying the enemy as an atrocious beast (like Raemaekers did in World War I), the viewers will see him as a serious threat and respond with animosity. Conversely, if one tries to discredit the enemy by depicting him as an blundering fool (like Low does in World War II), those being discredited will respond with animosity. It also runs the risk of the primary viewers not necessarily understanding the enemy for the threat they actually pose: he will be seen as an easily crushed opponent, and perhaps not with the seriousness the situation calls for.⁴⁸

This contrast in technique is particularly noticeable when examining Raemaekers's and Low's cartoons. Out of the Raemaekers cartoons discussed above, only figure 1 ("See the Conquering Hero Come") shares a similarity to Low's style. Raemaekers is attempting to discredit the Germans by drawing them as ridiculous oafs, with their primitive dress and the leading figure's unintelligent, smug expression. However, at the same time, Raemaekers employs the characteristic of portraying them as subhuman by drawing the latter two as apes. With that characterization comes the idea of barbarity, and from that, a fearfulness for their animalistic brutality. In this particular cartoon from



Figure 6: David Low, "Stepping Stones to Glory," in *Years of Wrath: A Cartoon History: 1931-1945*, ed. Quincy Howe (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1946).



YOU MAY HAVE BEGUN MAN - BUT I, ADOLF HITLER, WILL FINISH HIM (Copyright in All Countries)

Raemaekers, the scary violence is not as immediate—even though there are detached heads and skeletons in the scene—because of the blank expressions of the primitive German apes. But when looking at the next image (figure 2, “Germany and the Neutrals”), that fear of animalistic barbarity is present. The same type of barbarity and carelessness for humanity is present in the following cartoons of Raemaekers as well as most of the cartoons he published throughout World War I. Raemaekers tended to rely on the barbarity of the Germans as the fuel to portray his subjects instead of drawing them as fools as Low tended to do. Perhaps Raemaekers agreed with those scholars who hold that drawing the enemy as foolish tends to not elicit the correct reaction from the audience.

Low was quite the opposite; he preferred a hint of subtle humor in his cartoons instead of emphasizing the overwhelming despair and barbarity that war caused. Early in the war—1939—Low published a cartoon of Hitler captioned, “You May have Begun Man—but I, Adolf Hitler Will Finish Him” (figure 7).⁴⁹ Hitler is standing on the mighty hand of God, which has descended from the

heavens. With one fist raised and the other pointing back at God, Hitler shouts his proclamation printed in the caption. Hitler’s tiny frame fits entirely on God’s pinky finger and his screaming with his arms above his head could be a way to make himself seem large and threatening, even though God clearly has the upper hand. The intent here is to exaggerate the scene and Hitler’s overall exuberance to diminish his reputation. It is difficult to believe someone’s seemingly far-fetched proclamations; however, Low himself stated that he took Hitler’s claims seriously and drew about them. While insulting Hitler by depicting him as an overly exaggerative, tiny man who is no threat for God, Low is also bringing more awareness to Hitler’s claims and the seriousness of them. The difficulty here is that one cannot judge if it was cartoons like this one that confused the public into thinking Hitler was a silly and outrageous man instead of a fanatical man capable of atrocious acts.

A few years later, in July 1942, Low came out with another cartoon entitled, “In Occupied Territory” (figure 8).⁵⁰ Hitler and Heinrich Himmler—head of the SS—are in the foreground on the right, and behind them are five people who have been hanged. Below them lies a pile of bodies—their predecessors. Those who are hanged have their hands tied behind their backs, and their heads and necks are just above the top of the picture, so the viewer cannot see them. Is this perhaps to spare the public from the grotesque image of a broken neck hanging from a rope? Raemaekers would have drawn something like that to stir up an emotional response to the treachery, perhaps focusing on a woman and showing her naked or with her clothes in tatters like in figures 2–4. Raemaekers would highlight the domineering German and the savageness with which he is treating the innocent, defenseless woman. The justified indignation of such horrible acts fueled the public’s hatred of the Germans in World War I; it was these “hate cartoons” that were “brought forth in such abundance in the shape of allegorical ogres and atrocity jokes . . . [i.e.,] pictures of babies on bayonets.”⁵¹ However, Low does not touch on that at all. Low wants the emphasis to be on Hitler and his caption instead of the depressing and atrocious behavior that is exhibited. Why?

This fundamental difference in focus demonstrates the difference thirty years has made. What worked for pictorial propaganda in World War I is different than what worked in World War II. With the collective memory of World War I and its tragic images still in the public’s head, cartoonists such as Low sought to shape people’s perceptions in a different way. Emotions are not always rational, so instead of trying to

solely create blind hatred, the public was informed through witty political cartoons in addition to propaganda to shape their opinions against their enemies. That is not to say that people were not shown horrible images, but perhaps there was a realization that showing only those types of images can deflate morale. In addition, if there was more humor inserted into the situation, it might lighten the depressing mood and make the news of all of the terrible events slightly more bearable.

“In Occupied Territory” combats that potential deflation of morale by inserting a caption meant to invoke a wry sense of humor during a depressing situation, keeping with how social cartoons operate. In the cartoon, Hitler looks at Himmler and says, “Why don’t they like us, Heinrich?” This cartoon was published in July 1942 and, therefore, reflects the despairs of the time with a little cheek. This was when it was clear that Hitler was having the Einsatzgruppen and the SS round up Jews to be killed or deported to concentration camps to be killed later. What Hitler says in the caption is perhaps a legitimate question for him, due to the neutral expression on his face, but is turned into a ridiculous comment by drawing the people he has had killed directly behind him. This dry sense of deadpan humor was a way to cope with the terrors that one was seeing or hearing about on a daily basis. While it does not make the viewer lightheartedly laugh, it still allows them to grin at the grim situation. Low’s recognition of this and his ability to capture both despair and frustration in one witty sentence was what made him and his cartoons so popular. He was able to synthesize such horrible acts with the satire of political figures’ actions to inform and subtly influence the public and its perception of Hitler and Germany.

Later that year in December 1942, Low published a more somber cartoon commenting on what was happening to the Jewish population under Hitler’s command (figure 9).⁵² In “I’ve Settled the Fate of Jews”—“and of Germans,” Hitler is depicted as a monstrous beast, skulking in front of the cloaked Nemesis—the Greek goddess of divine retribution—with an open-topped train car packed full of people in the background. The train car is labeled “Jews to the slaughter house,” an obvious reference to the Holocaust. There is debate among scholars as to what extent the Allied governments and public knew that the Holocaust was happening in 1942, but based on this cartoon, it is clear that people like David Low took notice of what was happening or suspected to be happening to the Jews that the Nazis were deporting.



Figure 7: David Low, “You May Have Begun Man—but I, Adolf Hitler, Will Finish Him,” in *Years of Wrath: A Cartoon History: 1931-1945*, ed. Quincy Howe (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1946).

Figure 8: David Low, “In Occupied Territory,” in *Years of Wrath: A Cartoon History: 1931-1945*, ed. Quincy Howe (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1946).

In the cartoon, there is a boxcar filled with Jews in minimal to no clothing—it is difficult to tell because the cartoon only shows the tops of their heads. They are packed into the car so that there is little to no room for them to move, as if they were shepherded into the train car like cattle.⁵³ They all have distressed expressions on their faces, and some of their arms are stretched up in worry and prayer due to the hopeless situation. Hitler stands crouched in the foreground and is caricatured as a beast. The man is definitely Hitler based on the haircut and facial structure, but he is growling and has devilish pointed ears that contort his face. He is hunched over in a wide stance with his arms spread

out like an ape. His hands are rough-looking and claw-like with his fingertips coming to points. He looks as if he is transforming into a ferocious ape before the sinister-looking Nemesis.

The goddess Nemesis is facing away from the audience; the only part of her that is not covered by her cloak is her hands, which look bony and harsh. Based on the way the cloak hangs off of Nemesis, she appears to be quite thin, or perhaps the cloak is much too large for her. The goddess of divine retribution exacted punishment for those who showed arrogance towards the gods. She is writing a list labeled, “The horrors to be repaid.” Professor Binita Mehta

describes the scene as Nemesis standing “watch, keeping record of Hitler’s hubris and cruelty” that he must pay for later. Mehta says that Low “implicates the whole of Germany, embodied in Hitler, in the destruction of the Jews. . . . The cartoonist draws the dictator in an animal-like position, representing the lack of humanity in the perpetrators of the Holocaust.”⁵⁴ This cartoon is meant to signify that while Hitler has determined the fate of the Jews (i.e., slaughter), Nemesis is taking account of it all and therefore determining the fate of the Germans as well.

It was in early 1942 at the Wannsee Conference that German officials came up with the “Final Solution to the Jewish Problem,” which was to exterminate all the Jews of Europe. By the end of 1942, when Low published this cartoon, the Germans had begun implementing their plans by deporting Jews to death camps, such as Auschwitz-Birkenau, Treblinka, and Sobibór, on a large enough scale that the rest of the world took notice. With Low’s cartoon, he is commenting on these horrors and the inhumanity of Hitler who is sending thousands of Jews “to the slaughter house.” Surely no human being could commit such a heinous act against his fellow man; therefore, Hitler has been transformed into an apelike beast. This change in tone of Low’s cartoons from witty and cheeky to horrible and grave demonstrates just how seriously he viewed the situation and wanted others to view it. While “Stepping Stones to Glory” served as a warning as to what not defying Hitler might lead to, there was a goofy and humorous element to it. However, three years later Hitler’s true colors and aggression have become apparent, and the situation Low depicts in the “Fate of Jews” cartoon is deathly serious. There is no place for humor; millions are being carted to their deaths.

Low’s depiction of Hitler here is more in line with something one would see from Raemaekers. The German leader looks very animalistic and savage, skulking in front of a Death-like figure. His features are distorted, making him appear more threatening and terrifying. This man is a monster to be feared. Similar to “How I dealt with the small fry” (figure 4), it is clear that Germany’s leader is directly responsible for the fate of these innocent people. While in figure 4, Kaiser Wilhelm II is drawn overwhelmingly large to indicate his role and the image’s overall focus, figure 9 recognizes that same sense of blame and responsibility even though Hitler is not the only focus, indicated by his smaller size (comparatively to the Kaiser in figure 4).

Even when first viewing the image, Hitler is not the first sight that catches one’s eye: it is the boxcar of Jews being led “to the slaughterhouse.” Low meant it to be this

way because while he wants people to know that Hitler is responsible, this is an unthinkable act that is happening to thousands of people. He wants us to identify with those carted off to their deaths and the immorality of it all. Our focus should be on saving them—surely Hitler will be made to pay for his atrocities if not by the Allies than by a higher power—because it is happening now and it must be stopped. Low goes much farther with his imagery and message in his cartoons than Raemaekers. This again brings up the debate as to whether a simplistic and direct message is more effective than a witty or detailed one. The difference thirty years can make in terms of experiences that have shaped a person’s worldview has clearly affected the cartoons of Raemaekers and Low.

Conclusion

David Low’s relentless mockery of Hitler is plainly seen in his cartoons, earning him not only wide respect and recognition, but also a top spot on the Nazi death list. Louis Raemaekers was in a similar position in World War I with his portrayal of German atrocities, as there was a large cash reward for anyone that could deliver him to the Germans. Had the Allies failed in beating the Germans in the world wars, the lives and histories of these outspoken cartoonists might have been forgotten. While their names still might not be instantly recognizable today, the fame they acquired during their times for the works they created will be deservedly remembered by scholars and those who lived through it.

Endnotes

- 1 Charles Press, *The Political Cartoon* (Madison: Associated University Presses, 1981), 12-13.
- 2 Ibid., 13.
- 3 Samuel A. Tower, *Cartoons and Lampoons* (New York: Julian Messner, 1982), 8.
- 4 Thomas Milton Kemnitz, “The Cartoon as a Historical Source,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 4, no. 1 (Summer 1973): 84.
- 5 Kemnitz, “The Cartoon as a Historical Source,” 82-83; Victor S. Navasky, *The Art of Controversy* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), xiii.
- 6 W.A. Coupe, “Observations on a Theory of Political Caricature,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 11, no. 1 (January 1969): 79.
- 7 Press, *The Political Cartoon*, 11.
- 8 Tower, *Cartoons and Lampoons*, 14.
- 9 Eberhard Demm, “Propaganda and Caricature in the First World War,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 28, no. 1 (Jan. 1993): 167.
- 10 Tower, *Cartoons and Lampoons*, 20, 22.

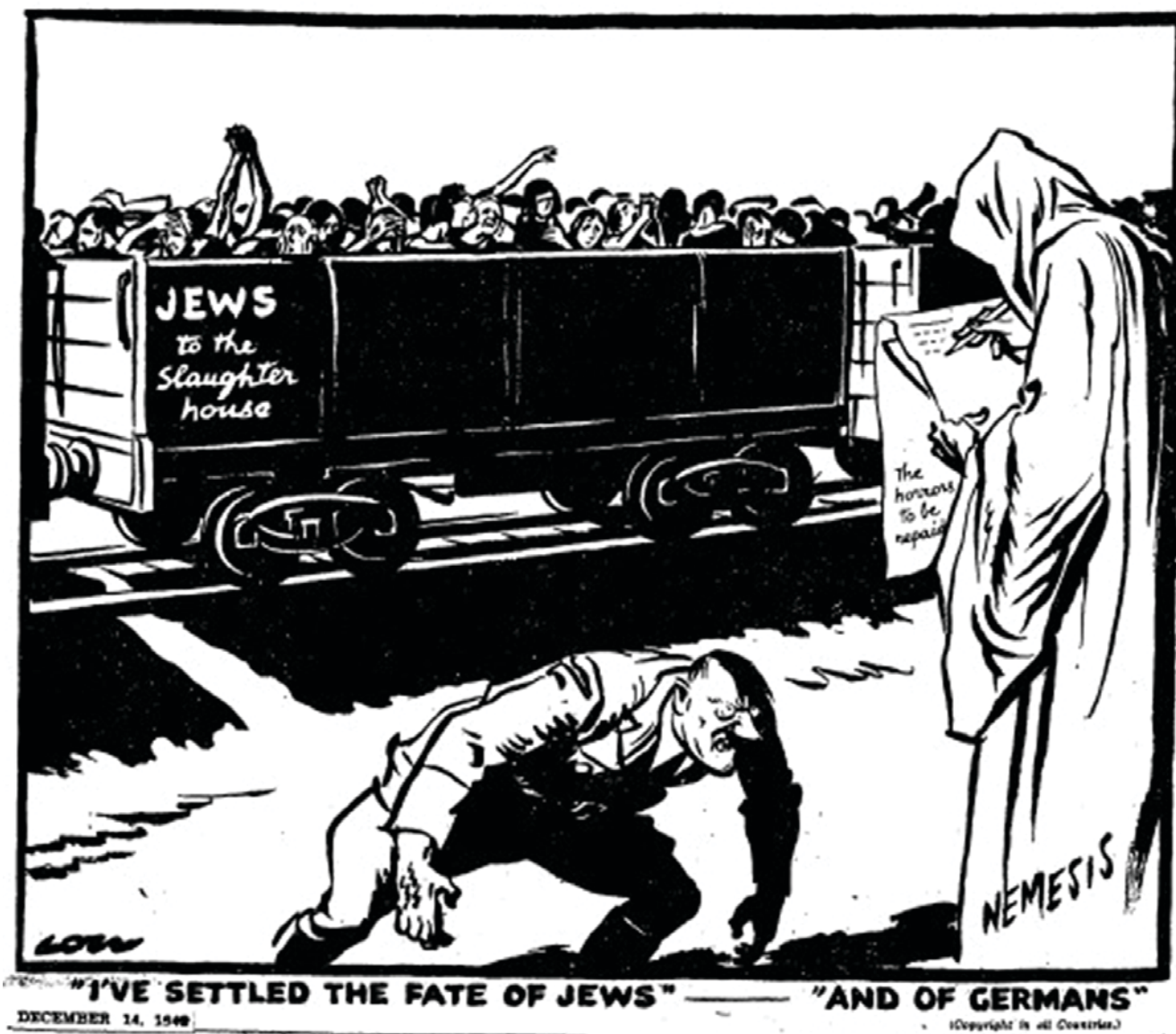


Figure 9: David Low, “I’ve Settled the Fate of Jews”—“and of Germans;” in *Years of Wrath: A Cartoon History: 1931-1945*, ed. Quincy Howe (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1946).

- ¹¹ David Turley, “David Low and America, 1936–1950,” *Journal of American Studies* 21, no. 2 (1987): 188.
- ¹² Press, *The Political Cartoon*, 17.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, 19, 22.
- ¹⁴ Tower, *Cartoons and Lampoons*, 146–47.
- ¹⁵ Demm, “Propaganda and Caricature,” 178.
- ¹⁶ Isabel Simeral Johnson, “Cartoons,” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1, no. 3 (July 1937): 32; Franklynn Peterson, “The Powerful Pen of Louis Raemaekers,” *Mankind: The Magazine of Popular History* 1, no. 6 (1968): 68.
- ¹⁷ Demm, “Propaganda and Caricature,” 181.
- ¹⁸ Louis Raemaekers, *Raemaekers’ Cartoons, with Accompanying Notes by Well-Known English Writers* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1916), 7.
- ¹⁹ Johnson, “Cartoons,” 32.
- ²⁰ Peterson, “The Powerful Pen of Louis Raemaekers,” 64–8.
- ²¹ Turley, “David Low and America,” 184.
- ²² Timothy Benson, “Low and the Dictators,” *History Today* 51, no. 3 (March 2001): 35.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, 36.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, 37.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, 38.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, 41.
- ²⁷ Peterson, “The Powerful Pen of Louis Raemaekers,” 67.
- ²⁸ Emile Cammaerts, *Through the Iron Bars: Two Years of German Occupation in Belgium* (New York: John Lane Co., 1917).
- ²⁹ Steve Baker, “Describing Images of the National Self: Popular Accounts of the Construction of Pictorial Identity in the First World War Poster,” *Oxford Art Journal* 13, no. 2 (1990): 24.
- ³⁰ Louis Raemaekers, “See the Conquering Hero Come,” in *Kultur in Cartoons* (New York: The Century Co., 1917), 161.
- ³¹ Louis Raemaekers, “Germany and the Neutrals,” in *Kultur in Cartoons*, 37.
- ³² Demm, “Propaganda and Caricature,” 181.
- ³³ Louis Raemaekers, “We Must So Destroy France That She Can Never Again Resist Us,” in *America in the War* (New York: The Century Co., 1918), 145.
- ³⁴ Louis Raemaekers, “How I Deal with the Small Fry,” in *Raemaekers’ Cartoons*, 297.
- ³⁵ Elisabeth Gaynor Ellis and Anthony Esler, *World History: Connections to Today, The Modern Era* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2001), 385.
- ³⁶ Louis Raemaekers, “A Higher Pile,” in *Kultur in Cartoons*, 19.
- ³⁷ Johnson, “Cartoons,” 32.
- ³⁸ “David Low,” British Cartoon Archive, University of Kent, accessed December 2, 2015, <https://www.cartoons.ac.uk/artists/davidlow/biography>.
- ³⁹ Maurice Horn, “Low, Sir David (1891–1963),” in *The World Encyclopedia of Cartoons*, vol. 1 (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1980), 364.
- ⁴⁰ The Rhineland is a region of land between Germany and France, centered around the Rhine river. It was meant to act as a buffer zone between the two countries, which was why the Treaty of Versailles stipulated for it to be demilitarized: “All fortified works, fortresses and field works situated in German territory to the west of a line drawn fifty kilometres to the east of the Rhine shall be disarmed and dismantled.”

- ⁴¹ Appeasement was adopted with the desire to avoid another war like World War I. With an estimated 38 million casualties, World War I’s devastation was still quite poignant in everyone’s collective memory. The British and French tried to “appease” Hitler by initially attempting to negotiate, but eventually giving in to his demands. Neville Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister, ensured “peace in our time” after putting the appeasement policy into action in 1938. He met with Hitler and agreed to Hitler’s demand to annex the Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia. Chamberlain did this without consulting the Czechoslovakians or the French.
- ⁴² Benson, “Low and the Dictators,” 36.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, 37–8.
- ⁴⁴ David Low, “Stepping Stones to Glory,” in *Years of Wrath: A Cartoon History: 1931–1945*, ed. Quincy Howe (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1946). The cartoon was published July 8, 1936, and the Olympics began August 1, 1936.
- ⁴⁵ Press, *The Political Cartoon*, 12.
- ⁴⁶ Kemnitz, “The Cartoon as a Historical Source,” 83.
- ⁴⁷ Benson, “Low and the Dictators,” 36.
- ⁴⁸ Cartoon historian W.A. Coupe comments on this matter in his article “Observations on a Theory of Political Caricature.” He argues that within the past two centuries, there has been a tendency to “represent enemies and opponents as puny, insignificant creatures who are to be laughed at rather than hated or feared.” Humor is then used as “a defense mechanism, its function being to release tension and neutralize fear” (91). He also comments on David Low’s depiction of Hitler in this context, saying that because Low “showed Hitler as ludicrous . . . [it] did not strike despondency into his readers. . . . [Low] probably contributed to the conviction that it ‘couldn’t happen here.’ Such absurd little men surely could not constitute a serious political threat!” (92). This same quote appears in Benson’s “Low and the Dictators,” but according to Coupe originates from L. H. Streicher’s, “David Low and the Sociology of Caricature.”
- ⁴⁹ Low, “You May Have Begun Man—But I, Adolf Hitler, Will Finish Him,” in *Years of Wrath*.
- ⁵⁰ Low, “In Occupied Territory,” in *Years of Wrath*.
- ⁵¹ W.A. Coupe, “Observations on a Theory of a Political Caricature,” 91.
- ⁵² Low, “‘I’ve Settled the Fate of Jews’—‘and of Germans,’” in *Years of Wrath*.
- ⁵³ Many Holocaust survivors attest to the horrid conditions they were forced to endure on these train rides to the concentration camps. They were packed in shoulder-to-shoulder so that no one could sit or lay down, and they were not given any food, water, or bathroom breaks on their multiple-day-long journeys. They were truly treated like animals and without humanity.
- ⁵⁴ Binita Mehta and Pia Mukherji, eds., *Postcolonial Comics: Texts Events, Identities* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 175.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

- Howe, Quincy, ed. *Years of Wrath: A Cartoon History: 1931–1945*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1946.
- Raemaekers, Louis. *America in the War*. New York: The Century Co., 1918.
- Raemaekers, Louis. *Kultur in Cartoons*. New York: The Century Co., 1917.
- Raemaekers, Louis. *Raemaekers’ Cartoons, with Accompanying Notes by Well-Known English Writers*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1916.

Secondary Sources

- Baker, Steve. “Describing Images of the Nation Self: Popular Accounts of the Construction of Pictorial Identity in the First World War Poster.” *Oxford Art Journal* 13, no. 2 (1990): 24–30.
- Benson, Timothy. “Low and the Dictators.” *History Today* 51, no.3 (March 2001): 35–41.
- Coupe, W .A. “Observations on a Theory of Political Caricature.” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 11, no. 1 (January 1969): 79–95.
- “David Low.” British Cartoon Archive. University of Kent. Accessed December 2, 2015. <https://www.cartoons.ac.uk/artists/davidlow/biography>.

- Demm, Eberhard. “Propaganda and Caricature in the First World War.” *Journal of Contemporary History* 28, no. 1 (January 1993): 163–92.
- Ellis, Elisabeth Gaynor and Anthony Esler. *World History: Connections to Today, the Modern Era*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2001.
- Horn, Maurice. “Low, Sir David (1891–1963).” In *The World Encyclopedia of Cartoons*, 364–5. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1980.
- Johnson, Isabel Simeral. “Cartoons.” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1, no. 3 (July 1937): 21–44.
- Kemnitz, Thomas Milton. “The Cartoon as a Historical Source.” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 4, no. 1 (Summer 1973): 81–93.
- Mehta, Binita and Pia Mukherji, eds. *Postcolonial Comics: Texts Events, Identities*. New York: Routledge, 2015.
- Navasky, Victor S. *The Art of Controversy*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013.
- Peterson, Franklynn. “The Powerful Pen of Louis Raemaekers.” *Mankind: The Magazine of Popular History* 1, no. 6 (1968): 64–8.
- Press, Charles. *The Political Cartoon*. Madison: Associated University Presses, 1981.
- Tower, Samuel A. *Cartoons and Lampoons*. New York: Julian Messner, 1982.
- Turley, David. “David Low and America, 1936–1950.” *Journal of American Studies* 21, no.2 (August 1987): 183–205.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Kristen Brady is a junior History major at Wittenberg University, minoring in Pre-Modern and Ancient World Studies and Creative Writing. She is a member of Phi Alpha Theta. Her article was originally written for Prof. Amy Livingstone's class on Renaissance Florence. Kristen is currently researching the lives of Late Medieval women through their wills.

Keri Heath is a senior at Wittenberg University, double majoring in History and English. She is a member of Phi Alpha Theta. Her article was originally written for Prof. Amy Livingstone's Renaissance Florence class.

Hannah Hunt is a senior English and Art double major at Wittenberg University who enjoys books, graphic design, and anything to do with Italy. Her article was originally written for a class on Renaissance Florence taught by Prof. Amy Livingstone.

Melissa Newman is a senior History major at Wittenberg University, with a German minor. She is a member of Phi Alpha Theta. Her article was first written for Prof. Joshua Paddison's class Race and Comics, 1865-1945, and expanded for her senior thesis.

Gil Rutledge is a junior History major at Wittenberg University. He is from Cincinnati. He originally wrote his article for Prof. Chris Raffensperger's course on The Viking World.

wittenberg
UNIVERSITY