Introduction

Midsummers Eve 1687 on the French Mediterranean coast: a man in a cassock makes a daring escape from his prison in the tower of the bishop's palace at Agde. In an episode worthy of Dumas, he ties together his bedsheets and makes his descent from a window.[1] But this story does not end well. The prisoner, Léonard Delsol, is a 57-year-old priest not used to feats of derring-do. He tumbles to his death. There are questions as to whether he fell or was pushed, for Delsol had many enemies in the small town of Montagnac, where he was the *curé*. His was a pious life that unfolded in permanent combat against various foes. Some were religious. There were the Protestants, who were locally strong until their expulsion in 1685, but he was also in conflict with the local Benedictine order and those he accused of being Jansenists, a puritanical Catholic sect whose beliefs posed a challenge to authority. But Delsol also had enemies among the civic elite in Montagnac. He was embroiled in many lawsuits and accused of refusing the sacraments to witnesses who testified against him.[2] The cause of his imprisonment was his refusal, in the face of this hostility, to resign his benefice. We know all this because he kept a *registre*, a scrapbook of recollections, miscellaneous events and notes typical of the time. Except that Delsol's scrapbook is finished in a different hand. It tells us, not entirely convincingly, that he 'died giving all the signs of a good death, pardoning his enemies, declaring that it was he himself and his evil counsel that had got him into this state and that he only had himself to blame and had no complaint to make of his enemies'.[3]

   This is a book is about real people, like Léonard Delsol, and their enemies. Enmity (*inimicitia*, *Feindschaft*, *inimitié*) is a state or feeling of mutual opposition or hostility. It is distinguished from anger (*ira*, *colère*, *Zorn*) and hatred (*odio*, *haine*, *Haß*), which primarily describe emotions. 'Enmity implies a matrix of three closely related concepts: emotion, action and relationship.'[4]

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[1] L. Delsol, *Livre ou registre de l'Œuvre et fabrique de l'église paroissiale de Notre-Dame de Montagnac: 1661–1687*, ed. A. Nos (n.p.: Les Amis de Montagnac, 1996).
[2] See below p. 420.
[3] Delsol, *Livre ou registre*, p. 244.
[4] A. Alwine, *Enmity and Feuding in Classical Athens* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2015), p. 28.

Psychologists have demonstrated the importance of enmity to the develop-
ment of group cohesion and identity. But enmity has a kinetic quality: groups
can learn to cooperate and trust each other.[5] Rooted in a sense of just
grievance, it is intimately bound up with justice and the law. Classicists have
long recognised that it, and its counterpart, friendship, were the 'electricity'
that powered the social machine of the ancient world.[6] The control of enmity
and the suppression of the interpersonal violence it generates are essential to
the very notion of modernity. Enmity was of central concern in early modern
culture and thinkers proposed novel solutions to its caustic effects. But enmity
does not yet have its modern history.[7] Modern historians are principally
concerned with public enmity (*hostis*), the construction of the 'other' and
war. It is commonly believed that the civil wars that plagued sixteenth- and
seventeenth-century Europe were the product of religious fanaticism. But the
very high levels of violence that resulted often had little to do with faith. As
Judith Pollmann has observed, 'It takes more than the existence of religious
division for people to start lynching each other.'[8] There is plenty of evidence
for confessional coexistence following the Reformation. Religious and social
divisions, it appears, require instrumentalising before they turn violent.
Modernity, it is generally assumed, rendered private enmities (*inimicus*) insig-
nificant. This assumption ignores the fact that even today seeking redress when
we feel wronged is perceived as a natural impulse. In the past, personal enemies
were not merely a nuisance but posed a direct and real threat to one's liveli-
hood, status in the community and even life.

   In the Middle Ages enmity was a legally recognised state of hostility, an
objective and public relationship, which legitimised forms of vindicatory
violence, such as revenge, feud and vendetta.[9] The boundaries of hostility
were set by customary law codes, which established rules of the game. The
Church played a major role in regulating the peace in the feud, especially
through the institution of the sacrament of penance instituted at the Fourth
Lateran Council in 1215. It required the sinner to offer a combination of
prayers, alms and deeds to compensate for the pain they had caused. The

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[5] O. Zur, 'The Love of Hating: The Psychology of Enmity', *History of European Ideas*, 13
(1991), 345–69.

[6] Alwine, *Enmity and Feuding*, p. 27.

[7] O. Brunner, W. Conze and R. Koselleck (eds.), *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches
Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, 9 vols. (Stuttgart: Klett Cotta, 1972–
97) contains no entry.

[8] J. Pollmann, 'Countering the Reformation in France and the Netherlands: Clerical
Leadership and Catholic Violence 1560–1585', *Past and Present*, 190 (2006), 83–120.

[9] R. Bartlett, '"Mortal Enmities": The Legal Aspect of Hostility in the Middle Ages', The
T. Jones Pierce lecture (Aberystwyth, 1998); O. Brunner, *Land and Lordship: Structures of
Governance in Medieval Austria* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992);
D. Smail, *The Consumption of Justice: Emotions, Publicity, and Legal Culture in Marseille,
1264–1423* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003).

medieval Mass was a social rite in which the kiss of peace ensured reconciliation between feuding neighbours.[10] It is still commonly believed that the medieval system was replaced in the sixteenth century by state repression aided by the efforts made by the Reformations, both Catholic and Protestant, towards social discipline. The notion that early modernity was predicated on the repression of brute instinct is so pervasive that today it goes largely unquestioned. It has become historical orthodoxy. 'Once Leviathan was in charge, the rules of the game changed', a recent bestselling book tells us.[11]

The term 'early modern' was coined because the period is distinguished from the Middle Ages by the manner in which states increasingly monopolised violence. The early modern period, it is claimed, is characterised by declining levels of violence, which are indicative of a 'civilizing process'.[12] The external social controls exercised by the state were gradually internalised by individuals into self-restraint. People learned to control their emotions and manners became increasingly differentiated, refined and civilised. The key change in the West occurred in the early modern period when new codes of etiquette controlled impulses and outbursts of emotions.[13] This book poses a challenge to these claims on three fronts.

First, it refutes the commonly held belief that interpersonal violence fell uniformly and consistently in the post-medieval period. Indeed, across Europe, interpersonal violence actually increased from the middle of the sixteenth century, peaking in the first half of the seventeenth century. This was followed by a very steep decline in the eighteenth century. Partly this was due to civil war, but the homicide rate was increasing *before* the outbreak of civil wars. Even in England, the most pacific state in Europe, the homicide rate doubled or tripled between the late 1570s and early 1620s and did not return to mid-sixteenth-century levels until the last decade of the seventeenth. Most existing homicide data comes from north-western Europe where in 1600 only about 20 per cent of Europeans lived. Italy, which had much higher rates of violence than elsewhere in Europe, is largely ignored, which raises the most serious objections to theories based on claims of a linear decline of violence, particularly as early modern Italian states were not characterised by a lesser

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[10] J. Bossy, 'The Mass as a Social Institution, 1200–1700', *Past and Present*, 100 (1983), 29–61.

[11] S. Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: A History of Violence and Humanity* (Penguin: New York, 2011), p. 75.

[12] N. Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992).

[13] For critiques of this model: G. Schwerhoff, 'Zivilisationsprozeß und Geschichtswissenschaft: Norbert Elias' Forschungsparadigma in historischer Sicht', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 266 (1998), 561–605; M. Dinges, 'Formenwandel der Gewalt in der Neuzeit: zur Kritik der Zivilationstheorie von Norbert Elias', in R. Sieferle and H. Breuninger (eds.), *Kulturen der Gewalt: Ritualisierung und Symbolisierung von Gewalt in der Geschichte* (Frankfurt: Campus, 1998), pp. 171–94.

overall level of state bureaucracy or judicial control. On the contrary, the inhabitants of Italian Renaissance cities were exposed to levels of social and economic interdependency far in advance of anything comparable in the north.[14]

Second, it challenges the widespread assumption that during the early modern period violence was replaced by the law. In fact, punitive justice was largely ineffective in curbing the rise of interpersonal violence and was not responsible for its fall. The experiment with harsh punishments in the sixteenth century was, with the exception of England, largely abandoned across Europe and rates of execution tumbled after 1600.[15] Courts were on the whole remarkably reticent about applying punitive sanctions, since the prime goal of Ancien Régime legal systems was to ensure the reproduction of existing social and political relations. The law was a flexible instrument and disputants were consumers of justice, who pursued their enemies using whatever means were available. In the early modern period litigation and violence can be seen as complementary rather than alternative forms of self-help. Litigating did not imply that disputants were giving up on violence, only that they were trying to maximise their chances of success. Litigation rose in sixteenth-century Europe in line with the rise in the homicide rate and fell in the eighteenth century as the homicide rate fell.[16] This pattern is confirmed by the United States, which historically has both higher rates of interpersonal violence than western Europe *and* is a more litigious society.

Third, it challenges the claim that the Reformation resulted in more effective forms of social control than those exercised by the medieval Catholic Church. Rising rates of homicide and litigation suggest that the effectiveness of social disciplining has been overstated. The traditional peacemaking role of the Church was disrupted by the Reformation, confessional conflict and finally civil war. Both Catholic and Protestant reformers viewed the kiss of peace, the traditional rite of reconciliation, as lascivious and removed it from the liturgy.[17] Christians had always found it difficult to love their neighbours –

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[14] S. Carroll, *Blood and Violence in Early Modern France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); R. Roth, *American Homicide* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), chapter 1; S. Carroll, 'Revenge and Reconciliation in Early Modern Italy', *Past and Present*, 230 (2016), 101–42; S. Carroll, 'Violence, Civil Society and European Civilization, 1500-1800', in R. Antony, S. Carroll and C. Dodds Pennock (eds.), *The Cambridge World History of Violence: vol. 3, 1500–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), pp. 660–78; C. Rose, *A Renaissance of Violence: Homicide in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

[15] S. Beam, 'Violence and Justice in Europe: Punishment, Torture and Execution', in Antony, Carroll and Dodds Pennock (eds.), *The Cambridge World History of Violence: vol. 3, 1500–1800*, pp. 398–407.

[16] See Chapters 1, 5, 9 and 10.

[17] C. Koslofsky, 'The Kiss of Peace in the German Reformation', in K. Harvey (ed.), *The Kiss in History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), pp. 12–32.

a task made harder in societies where feuds were common and the moral code of honour competed with Christian teaching. Religion now became another divisive factor. Attempts to impose discipline by restricting Communion to the worthy proved to be a miserable failure. One of the main reasons for absence from church was the existence of feuds that remained unreconciled.[18]

But this book is more than a riposte to the revival of Whig history and the resurrection of teleological assumptions about human progress.[19] Although it concerns people who lived in Europe several hundred years ago, I argue that their experiences are relevant today. Enmity is a characteristic of all human societies. The ideas that early modern thinkers developed as an antidote to it continue to underpin contemporary society. Enmity is not a relic of the past. It remains one of the greatest challenges to liberal democracy. For these reasons, the concept of enmity is still of central importance today. The identification of a friend or enemy is fundamental to the consciousness of the self. We realise 'who we are' in a conflict with the other and establish our identity through conflict.[20]

Rodney Barker identifies four principal schools of thinking: 1) that enmity is desirable for the stability and vitality of societies; 2) that it is inherent in political life; 3) that it is peripheral and transcendable; 4) that it is a contingent and complex phenomenon best understood through historical observation rather than ontological deduction.[21] Inspired by the latter approach, this book is about how and why enemies were made and how ordinary people characterised and dealt with them. Thus far historians have described the ways in enemies are created and cultivated mainly in terms of religious identity, war and interstate rivalry. The role played by 'othering' in the formation of 'national character' has been the subject of much research.[22] In this respect, research has been influenced by Carl Schmitt's *Concept of the Political* (1932). Schmitt makes a clear distinction between private enmity (*inimicus*) and public enmity (*hostis*). His purpose in doing so was to relegate

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[18] J. Goodale, 'Intimidation, Intolerance, and Injury: Religious Conflict and Saxony, 1587-92', in K von Greyerz and K. Siebenhühner (eds.), *Religion und Gewalt. Konflikte, Rituale, Deutungen (1500–1800)* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), pp. 195–219; D. Sabean, *Power in the Blood: Popular Culture and Village Discourse in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge, University Press, 1987), chapter 1; P. Broggio and M. Paoli (eds.), *Stringere la pace: Teorie e pratiche della conciliazione nell'Europa moderna (secoli XV-XVIII)* (Rome: Viella, 2011).

[19] S. Carroll, 'Thinking with Violence', *History and Theory*, 56 (2017), 23–43.

[20] B. Willms, 'Politics as Politics: Carl Schmitt's "Concept of the Political" and the Tradition of European Political Thought', *History of European Ideas*, 13 (1991), 371–83; G. Slomp, *Carl Schmitt and the Politics of Hostility, Violence and Terror* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009).

[21] R. Barker, *Making Enemies* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007), chapter 2.

[22] In a British context: L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992).

private sentiments to the lesser sphere in order to ennoble his higher concept of the public enemy: 'an enemy exists only when, at least potentially, one fighting collectivity of people confronts a similar collectivity. The enemy is solely the public enemy.'[23]

This book goes beyond the binary distinction between *hostis* and *inimicus*. After 1500 Europe was plagued by major civil wars and rising rates of interpersonal violence. Private enmities were frequently entangled with public ones. Civil wars, unlike other wars, are never binary conflicts. During periods of civil conflict the actions on the ground often turn out to be related to local and private conflicts rather than the war's driving or master cleavage. The widely observed ambiguity of civil wars is fundamental rather than incidental to their character: 'It is the convergence of local motives and supra-local imperatives that endows civil war with its particular character and leads to joint violence that straddles the divide between the political and the private, the collective and the individual.'[24]

Contemporaries were well aware of enmity's complexity. In *De Inimicitia* (1656) the Italian jurist, Francesco Baronio, listed 163 separate forms of enmity and added 16 more in a companion volume published two years later.[25] The great Jesuit missionary, Paolo Segneri, told his audiences that anger (*ira*) was at the root of enmity between individuals. It waxed and waned quickly and healed with time. Hatred (*odio*), on the other hand, was directed against a whole nation or race and did not fade with time.[26] And he distinguished between different levels of psychological torment: 'the vindictive man is a troubled man who cannot sleep, mistrusts his friends and avoids company . . . to feel resentment is to be restless unable to enjoy life . . . but the desire for vendetta is the most grievous of all, it weighs like a boulder, heavier than a mountain'.[27] Hobbes argued that enmity was rooted in human nature. The three principle causes of quarrels were: competition, that is the war of all against all; diffidence, the lack of trust between people; and glory, the joy arising from the recognition of one's own power and abilities and a concomitant hostility to any apparent signs of being undervalued. Worse than these, however, was vainglory, the foolish overestimation of our own worth and honour, which causes us to be vengeful, reluctant to offer pardon and prone to 'glorying in the hurt of another'.[28]

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[23] C. Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007), p. 28.

[24] S. Kalyvas, 'The Ontology of "Political Violence": Action and Identity in Civil Wars', *Perspectives on Politics*, 3 (2003), 476.

[25] S. Cummins, 'Enmity and Peace-Making in the Kingdom of Naples, c.1600-1700', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 2015, p. 7.

[26] *Il Cristiano instruito nella legge*, 3 vols. (Florence, 1686), I, pp. 330–1.

[27] Ibid., p. 326.

[28] *Leviathan*, ed. R. Tuck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 88.

In his 1708 introduction to the art of peacemaking, Antonio Muratori distinguished a personal enemy as:

> one who has killed a relative of mine, who has accused me of a great misdeed, who gossips about me, who against my will holds either my wife or my relatives in his power, who has said injurious words to me, or threatened me, or in any other way mistreated me, or if he socializes often, and familiarly with my enemies, or he is bound to them, or he is enemy of my brother, or of my kin, or he claims that he regards me with hatred, or he talks badly of my behaviour, or he takes away from me without cause something that is duly mine, or does any other similar thing that denotes ill-will towards me.[29]

Enmity was not always conceived negatively. Charles de Bourdonné thought it better to have enemies than vices, since navigating our relations with the former was the surest route to salvation.[30]

The everyday words used to describe such relationships were rich and varied. Italians talked of '*odio vecchio*', '*inimicizia di sangue*' and '*mortali inimicizie*'; the French of '*inimitié particulier*', '*haine mortelle*' and '*ennemi capitale*', and the Germans of '*Erzfeinde*' and '*abgesagter Feindschaft*'. Another German synonym for enmity (*Feindschaft*) is *Fehde*, which made its way into English as feud. Feud, vengeance and vendetta are all conditions of enmity, but had contrasting local fortunes. Vendetta was a widely accepted and legitimate practice in early modern Italy. Outside of the Italian context I use it to describe a bloody feud. Vengeance and its cognates were ubiquitous. It was not necessarily a negative feeling. Montaigne considered it 'a sweet passion', because unlike anger or hatred it was rooted in a sense of justice; susceptible to the application of reason, it could be delayed or diverted. The feud has generated an extensive literature.[31] In English, both the word and the institution were long obsolete by the end of the Middle Ages. The revival of the word in twentieth-century English was the work of anthropologists, who exposed the division between the law, feuding and peacemaking as artificial.[32] The legal institution of the Germanic *Fehde* is different. It had no equivalent elsewhere in Europe during the Middle Ages. Until its prohibition in the Imperial Perpetual Peace of 1495, it was a legally recognised instrument for the enforcement of rights through the use of violence within certain limits, usually the seizure or destruction of property, or attacks on and the ransoming of an enemy's subjects. Germany is exceptional in that it has a distinct set of practices, law codes and archives that are labelled feuds. In this

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[29] *Introduzione alle pace private* (Modena, 1708), pp. 82–3.
[30] *Le Courtisan desabusé ou les pensées d'un gentilhomme* (Paris, 1658), chapter 50, 'Des Ennemis'.
[31] J. Netterstrøm and B. Poulsen (eds.), *Feud in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2007), p. 22.
[32] M. Gluckman, *Custom and Conflict in Africa* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1963).

book feud is used in its colloquial sense of a state of extended hostility. Across most of Europe the feud survived in the early modern period, not as an institution but as a social practice which followed a pattern of just grievance – injured honour – violence – mediation – truce – peace. Disputants had a rich lexicon at their disposal to describe this state of affairs. French feuds were called *querelles*, originally meaning a legal complaint or suit, and their disputants would emphasise their seriousness by claiming that they were in a '*querelle publique*' or a '*querelle ancienne*', or to '*vivre en querelle*'. The English quarrel is derived from this. Today quarrels are trivial arguments between people who are usually on good terms. The fact that 'quarrel' has lost its sense of justice and of being a public state of affairs demonstrates the distance we have travelled from our ancestors.

Enmity was also expressed in a multitude of gestures, social interactions and signs. Sir John Stepney complained in 1637 that William Williams, a clerk, had given him the lie, saying that he was the better man; and 'phlipping his fingers', he said 'a turd in your teeth'.[33] The sixteenth century saw an intense effort to control social intercourse through civility. A great deal has been written about the rise of civilised manners in this period and it is axiomatic to this literature that civility tamed and controlled violence.[34] But this is not what happened. Civility does not of itself limit violence: a distinction needs to be made between the laws of civility, namely etiquette, and the spirit of being civil. Etiquette is open to abuse or misinterpretation. Breaches of civility were taken as a sign of contempt: 'we assume enmity between two people, when they do not greet each other, when they stare at each other with malice, when they flee from conversation, discussion, and eating together'.[35] Insults by omission included the failure 'to respect the rights of others, especially when the refusal is followed by a noticeable affectation; a vassal who passes in front of his lord without giving him an honest greeting; an individual who when meeting a magistrate effects an air of scorn . . . an inferior who lacks the same civility to whom he owes subordination and respect'.[36] Rights of way, for example, were contentious because they involved prickly questions of precedence. By Samuel Johnson's time it was the rule in London to keep to the right. But in his mother's time, around 1700, the rights of the wall were disputed by the peaceable and the quarrelsome, the former giving way.[37] For Paolo Segneri the lack of civility was

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[33] 'Stepney v Williams', in *The Court of Chivalry 1634–1640*, ed. Richard Cust and Andrew Hopper, British History Online, www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/court-of-chivalry /625-stepney-williams (accessed 14 December 2020).

[34] For the most recent restatement: K. Thomas, *In Pursuit of Civility: Manners and Civilization in Early Modern England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018).

[35] Muratori, *Introduzione*, p. 83.

[36] F. Dareau, *Traité des injures dans l'ordre judiciaire*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1775), pp. 92–3.

[37] R. C. Latham and W. Matthews (eds.), *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, 11 vols. (London: Harper Collins, 1995), I, p. 46.

a sign of disgust: 'you cannot exclude your adversary from giving signs of friendship which you give to others without exercising a form of vendetta, which is already sufficient to make it known to him your bad faith towards him and draw attention to the scandal to others.' 'Turning one's back', he went on, 'was not only an incivility, but an insult, a declaration that the outrage should be retained vividly in the memory.'[38]

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The study of enmity enables us to look afresh at the emergence of modern society. It is a category that sheds fresh light on the transformations wrought by Renaissance politics; the relationship between violence and social change; the role of civil society in mediating conflict; and the emotional field inhabited by ordinary people.

Enmity is a dynamic category shaped by the political environment. The kiss of peace and justice (inspired by Psalm 85) was a common theme of Renaissance and Baroque art. Figure I.1, which portrays peace burning the

Figure I.1 Laurent de La Hyre, *The Kiss of Peace and Justice* (1654). Cleveland Museum of Art

[38] *Il Cristiano instruito nella legge,* I, p. 328.

weapons of war and justice holding a sword and scales, was painted in France during the civil wars of the Frondes, when the tension between the defence of rights and liberties and the desire for order was at its most acute.

Justice, the principle of giving each what they deserve, was a cardinal virtue and essential to politics since Aristotle. Ideally, justice created the conditions for peace but in reality they were often in conflict. Injustice occurs when we do not get what we believe is due, or the 'betrayal we experience when others disappoint expectations that they have created in us'.[39] The sense of injustice is both eminently political and generates powerful emotions, making us boil with indignation and moving us to get even. Revenge is not unreasonable as *Hamlet*, the quintessential exploration of the tension between peace and justice, demonstrates. And while Hamlet's inability to choose between them ended in carnage, Machiavelli had no doubts about which should predominate:

> The pagan religion deified only men who achieved great glory, whilst ours glorifies more the humble and contemplative rather than the men of action. Our religion, moreover, places the supreme happiness in humility, lowliness, and a contempt for worldly objects, whilst the other, on the contrary, places the supreme good in the grandeur of the soul, strength of body, and all such other qualities as render men formidable; and if our religion claims fortitude of soul, it is more to enable us to suffer than to achieve great deeds. These principles seem to me to have made men feeble . . . more disposed to endure injuries than to avenge them. And although it appears that the world has become effeminate and Heaven disarmed, yet this arises without doubt more from the baseness of men who have interpreted our religion according to the promptings of indolence rather than those of *virtù*.[40]

Machiavelli's man of action takes justice into his own hands. Whereas chivalry had emphasised the hierarchical relationship of service to God and to one's prince, Machiavelli sneered at the ideal of Christian perfection through suffering, meekness and contemplation and emphasised heroic autonomy. *Virtù*, a keyword of the Renaissance, was more than the pursuit of power and glory; it embodied a form of manliness that viewed the failure to pursue right as effeminate and weak.

Renaissance thinking transformed the conduct of war. It did not invent massacres, assassination or religious and ethnic cleansing, but it did justify and encourage their proliferation.[41] Vendetta and feud were not cultural relics, a medieval hangover, but rather a product of new political relationships, where

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[39] J. Shklar, *The Faces of Injustice* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), p. 83.
[40] N. Machiavelli, 'The Discourses', in *The Historical, Political, and Diplomatic Writings of Niccolo Machiavelli*, ed. Christian E. Detmold, 4 vols. (Boston, 1882), II, p. 233.
[41] S. Bowd, *Renaissance Mass Murder: Civilians and Soldiers during the Italian Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018); N. Murphy, *The Tudor Occupation of Boulogne: Conquest, Colonisation and Imperial Monarchy, 1544–1550* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

private and public motives in civil conflicts had become dangerously entangled. The high levels of violence that characterised early modern civil conflicts were not simply a product of military campaigns but were propelled by resistance to tyranny and the liquidation of traitors. The revolutionary implications of the French reinterpretation of Cicero, for example, has recently been underlined by John O'Brien. Cicero's formula for the conduct of Roman consuls, *ollis salus populi suprema lex esto* ('let the welfare of the people be their highest law'), was transformed in the sixteenth century by dropping the pronoun, which referred to the Roman Senate, replacing it with a definite article. This tiny change was significant because it turned a reference to a historical institution into a universal law – it had an enormous impact on contemporary political thinking and action.[42] The Calvinist Reformation was an ideological revolution because it legitimised the politics of revenge in defence of the constitution and the commonwealth. Assassination was not new, but the claim to be doing it in the cause of political justice was new. It required the pursuit of enemies in the name of the public good, whatever their social position. It even became possible to imagine the king's death.[43] In France assassination and judicial murder became a common currency of political action, which became impossible to remove from circulation even when the military campaigns ended in 1598. Politics also shaped social relations at the bottom of the social hierarchy. Popular movements in this period are generally characterised as struggles against landlords or the state. But the greater demands that the state began to make on its subjects during the sixteenth century also upset the fragile equilibrium within communities themselves. The imposition of new taxes made village feuds worse and exacerbated pre-existing enmities. The resulting factionalism had the capacity to disrupt established mechanisms of social control.[44]

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Violence is a useful tool for measuring enmity in the past, because it leaves traces in the historical record. The medieval state made determined efforts to punish murder and from the fourteenth century the sophisticated bureaucracies that developed leave plentiful records, making it possible to compute homicide rates and (by expressing them as a ratio of the overall population) make comparisons with modern societies.[45] Homicide is also important for

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[42] J. O'Brien, 'Cicero the Revolutionary: Some Seditious Motifs in the Literature of the French Wars of Religion', in J. O'Brien and M. Schachter (eds.), *Sedition: The Spread of Controversial Literature and Ideas in France and Scotland, c. 1550–1610* (Brussels: BREPOLS, 2021), pp. 127–52.

[43] S. Carroll, 'Political Justice and the Outbreak of the Wars of Religion', *French History*, 33 (2019), 177–98.

[44] See Chapter 8.

[45] M. Eisner, 'Long-Term Historical Trends in Violent Crime', *Crime and Justice*, 30 (2003), 83–142.

a study of enmity for two other reasons. First, interpersonal violence is the product of social relations. Societies with high rates of homicide tend also to be societies with high rates of non-lethal violence and the frequency and distribution of murder in any community will tell us a great deal about social relations more generally because it is 'emblematic of the less deadly but more frequent battles of will that occur in tens of thousands of comparable relations everyday'.[46] The trajectory of these everyday micro-conflicts, whether or not they become lethal, are dependent on social and political relations. Second, violence is always shaped by the expectations and norms imposed by class and gender. Today killers are overwhelmingly drawn from the most disadvantaged sections of society and the much higher rates of homicide that existed in the past reflect the propensity of social elites to use violence in pursuit of right, the latitude they were accorded by the law in practice and the higher stakes involved in regards to elite honour and status. This phenomenon was well known to contemporaries. In 1720, for example, the Scottish divine John Cockburn noted:

> When the meaner sort fall out, the Pot which intoxicated them is thrown at one another's head, and they come to Box and Cuffing immediately, and very often by the Intercession of a sober neighbour and New Pot, the Quarrel is ended and they part friends. But slinging about Bottles and Glasses does not content Gentlemen.[47]

Rising rates of interpersonal violence in the sixteenth century were not signifiers of 'backwardness' or an absence of emotional control but rather of social change. Violence requires social sanction and operates within a moral ambience and for these reasons the state is not the sole regulator of its boundaries. The transformation of the social elite, from an elite group of knights into a much more amorphous class of gentlemen, resulted in violence as old hierarchies collapsed and new social relations led to numerous squabbles over precedence and the signifiers of social ascendancy. Conflict often occurs in relatively symmetrical relations in which there is ambiguity between actors concerning relative social rank, and the meaningfulness of insinuations, accusations and gestures of disrespect result from the social setting in which they are made: 'when people come into conflict, the kind of relationship they have makes a difference for the outcome'.[48] The expansion of education and the economy during the Renaissance hugely broadened the social elite. But inequalities also grew. The expansion of the state created winners and losers in the struggle for public office. One's good standing and public reputation were essential for getting on, for making friends, securing patrons and accessing

[46] R. Gould, *Collision of Wills: How Ambiguity about Social Rank Breeds Conflict* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2003), p. 5.
[47] J. Cockburn, *The History and Examination of Duels* (London, 1720), pp. 131–2.
[48] Gould, *Collision*, p. 97.

capital. But social mobility was widely perceived as a menace. This remained a pre-capitalist world of limited good. For Montaigne 'no profit is made except at somebody else's loss'.[49]

One of the most important studies of homicide is by the evolutionary psychologists Martin Daly and Margo Wilson. They sought to understand three problems posed by the historical homicide rate: why, given the mythology that surrounds homicide as fratricidal, the killing of blood kin is in fact rare; why most victims and killers are men; and why, contrary to folk belief, most homicides occur between acquaintances: in the USA, four out of five homicides occur between people who have a prior relationship. What they concluded was that most homicides are caused by trivial incidents. But for Daly and Wilson, the triviality of the cause is subjective. They argued that context was all-important: reputation, face-saving, fears about social status and enduring relationships are for many men a matter of life and death. A large proportion of homicides traditionally dismissed as 'trivial altercations' have to be understood as the consequences of a ubiquitous competitive struggle by men for status and respect.[50]

One consequence of rising social conflict was the invention of the duel.[51] Duelling quickly developed its own rituals, with the employment of seconds whose quasi-juridical role ensured fair play, and the rules governing the challenge and the combat were largely codified in Italy by 1550. From there it spread first to France and then to England and the Holy Roman Empire by the end of the century. Duels were fought over points of honour, which to our eyes are a trivial amalgam of slights and petty transgressions, for which satisfaction was required. But honour is more than just a moral code. Like magic or Christianity, it is a world view. Honour permeated every level of consciousness: how you thought about yourself and others, how you held your body, the expectations you could reasonably have and the demands you could make on others. In an honour-based culture there is no self-respect independent of the respect of others. Honour was thus public property and the shortest route to honour was thus to take someone else's, and this meant that honourable people had to be ever vigilant against affronts or challenges to their honour.[52]

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[49] M. de Montaigne, *Essays*, trans. M. A. Screech (London: Penguin, 1991), p. 22.

[50] M. Daly and M. Wilson, *Homicide: Foundations of Human Behavior* (London: Routledge, 1988).

[51] F. Billacois, *La duel dans la société des XVIe-XVIIe siècles: essai de psychosociologie historique* (Paris: EHESS, 1986); P. Brioist, H. Drévillon and P. Serna, *Croiser le fer: violence et culture de l'épée dans la France moderne, XVIe-XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Champ Vallon, 2002); M. Peltonnen, *The Duel in Early Modern England: Civility, Politeness and Honour* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[52] J. Pitt-Rivers, 'Honour and Social Status', in J. Peristiany (ed.), *Honour and Shame: the Values of a Mediterranean Society* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965), pp. 18–77;

The duel marked a break with medieval forms of dispute settlement. It was a quintessentially Renaissance phenomenon because it combined two high ideals: the triumph of virtue and the essential equality of all men of honour. Fighting without armour evened up the playing field, and the defence of one's reputation no longer required hugely expensive equipment and a train of support staff. In this sense duelling was democratic: the field of honour was open to all who had the leisure time to learn how to fence, not just a narrow class of knights. And this leisured class was expanding from the fifteenth century in the wake of economic expansion and social mobility. Not only did rapiers become fashionable accoutrements, they were relatively cheap and widely available in relation to the other trappings of nobility, such as a sumptuous residence. They were an immediately recognisable claim to status. Anyone who challenged that status was likely to be immediately disabused at the point of a sword. Duelling was closely associated with sexual prowess: the swashbuckling gallant was not only prepared for but encouraged challenges from rivals and husbands. Since duelling was officially condemned, supporters of the duel turned to the Ancients for justification: the concept of satisfaction was derived from Roman Law. The cult of honour was sanctified by the Renaissance reification of glory and the quest for eternal recognition. A beautiful death conferred reputation; it was a terrestrial and worldly rather than a spiritual view of death, and the gentleman's insouciance towards death marked him out from the commoner. But duelling did not supersede traditional forms of dispute settlement. One of the reasons for the sixteenth-century explosion of violence was the manner in which the duelling frenzy exacerbated the traditional feud, which had always been tempered by the Christian obligation to make peace.

The greater propensity of women for enmity is stereotypical. It is no coincidence that in both Romance and Germanic languages 'vengeance' and its cognates are gendered feminine. The important role played by female witches in village feuds has been the subject of extensive research. Witchcraft beliefs were ubiquitous: spells, charms and curses coexisted with prayers invoking divine vengeance as part of an armoury of protection against an enemy. Accusations of maleficent harm were often the culmination of a long history of dispute, and it was the trial process that exposed the envy, hatred and bitterness that were a mark of village life.[53] Enmity has also been studied in the context of the family. Domestic violence was not a private affair in the early modern period. Within the family 'capital enmity' was a ground for separation in canon law.[54] It is not my intention to add to this literature but, otherwise

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W. Miller, *Humiliation: And Other Essays on Honor, Social Discomfort, and Violence* (Cornell, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993).

[53] See Chapter 6.

[54] J. Ferraro, *Marriage Wars in Late Renaissance Venice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

excluded from public life, women played a considerable role in private disputes. The moral force of a woman's voice carried precious weight in family decision-making. The language of feminine vengeance is much more than a convention of literature. Time and again it is the mother, wife or sister who demands revenge, even requiring her husband, son or brother to swear an oath. Women pursued their own enemies independent of men. They were gossips, adjudicating male reputations, and they were peacemakers.[55] Where the sources permit, I attempt to highlight the role they played.

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A major obstacle to understanding social relations in the past is that the late twentieth-century state has removed Europeans from the law. The delegation of power to administrative bodies has replaced a system where justice was determined by private plaintiffs fighting it out in the courts.[56] This book is the result of the recent 'Copernican Revolution' in our understanding of the law and how ordinary people made use of it.[57] The law was not simply an arm of the state. Since there was little in the way of public prosecution, the way in which people used the law tells us a great deal about how they related to each other. The sixteenth-century litigation boom was largely a matter of debt recovery and property rights. But there was a close correlation between honour and reputation and notions of credit and debt.[58] Although the overwhelming number of cases were civil suits, these reveal often bitter enmities. Going to law was widely perceived as an act of enmity; it was unneighbourly and lacking Christian charity. Melanchthon's fear that 'one often hides revenge behind an appearance of right' was echoed by Calvin:

> many who boil with such a rage for litigation, that they never can be quiet with themselves unless they are fighting with others. Law-suits they prosecute with the bitterness of deadly hatred, and with an insane eagerness to hurt and revenge, and they persist in them with implacable

[55] B. Capp, *When Gossips Meet: Women, Family, and Neighbourhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[56] C. Brooks, *Law, Politics and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 3.

[57] J. Bossy (ed.), *Disputes and Settlements* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); M. Dinges, 'Justiznutzungen als soziale Kontrolle', in A. Blauert and G. Schwerhoff (eds)., *Kriminalitätsgeschichte. Beiträge zur sozial- und Kulturgeschichte der Vormoderne* (Constance: Universitätsverlag Konstanz, 2000), pp. 503–44; H. Piant, *Une justice ordinaire: justice civile et criminelle dans la prévôté royale de Vaucouleurs sous l'Ancien Régime* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2010); S. Cummins and L. Kounine (eds.), *Cultures of Conflict Resolution in Early Modern Europe* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015).

[58] C. Muldrew, 'The Culture of Reconciliation: Community and the Settlement of Economic Disputes in Early Modern England', *Historical Journal*, 39 (1996), 915–42; C. Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (London: Macmillan Press, 1998).

obstancy, even to the ruin of their adversary. Meanwhile, that they may be thought to do nothing but what is legal, they use this pretext of judicial proceedings as a defence of their perverse conduct.[59]

In a 1656 the Anglican minister William Thomas preached that 'Brittish feuds, and quarrels of persons and families have in former Ages been prosecuted with swords, but in these times with suits and perjuries: the tumults being lesse, but the crimes greater.'[60]

Lawsuits need to be placed in the context of the wider disputing process. Plaintiffs were usually seeking not punishment but restitution for injured honour or damaged property. Most complaints never got to a definitive judgment. The law promoted arbitration and reconciliation at every stage of the process. The public advertisement of one's grievance followed by a handshake was usually sufficient to repair honour. Out of court settlements were positively encouraged.[61] Perpetrators of violence were rarely subject to corporal punishment if they could compensate the victim's family. The rise of Roman Law in the Middle Ages did not end the customary practice of blood money payment, which traditionally tempered vengeance and prevented feuds from getting out of hand. Josse de Damhouder's *Praxis rerum criminalium*, which became the standard work of criminal law across Europe following its publication in 1554, stated: 'In every case of a public crime for which the delinquent should face corporal punishment, where the laws permit, the parties ... can compromise and come to an agreement, without prejudice, damages or punishment.'[62] The situation was very different in England. The English common law, the most punitive legal code in Europe, provided a legal outlet for revenge. The jury system incorporated the popular desire for vengeance and underpinned the strong legitimacy of the English state.[63]

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Enmity is more than an emotion, but it can generate intense and contradictory feelings. The internal battle between reason and emotion is one of the great narratives of Western civilisation and the debate between essentialists and constructivists one of the most protracted and vituperative in academia. But the recent revolution in neuroscience has collapsed the simplistic binary distinction between emotions as artefacts of evolution and constructions of experience. Emotions are a result of evolution, but not as essences passed down

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[59] *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. Anthony Uyl (Woodbridge, Ontario: Devoted Publishing, 2016), p. 686.

[60] *The regulating of law-suits, evidences, and pleadings an assize-sermon preach't at Carmathen, March 16th 1656* (1657), p. 20.

[61] See Chapters 7 and 14.

[62] Chapter 'De faire paix'.

[63] See Chapter 10.

from our ancestors. Rather emotions are very real creations of social reality, which in turn wires the brain.[64] The application of advances in neuroscience in the emerging field of emotions history are yet to be fully realised.[65] One potentially fruitful way forward for historians has been proposed by Monique Scheer. She advances the idea of 'emotional practices', which she defines as 'manipulations of body and mind to evoke emotions where there are none, to focus diffuse arousals and give them intelligible shape, or to change or remove emotions already there'.[66] The manner in which emotional affects are shaped by art and literature is well understood.[67] *Romeo and Juliet* remains the most popular and influential exploration of the emotional landscape created by a feud. Ariosto's claim in *Orlando Furioso* that 'honour is worth more than life itself' resonated for more than 150 years. And this book is replete with the men of *virtù* who, like Corneille's *Cid* (1637), thought that 'for righteous vengeance there's no punishment'. Popular feelings have been explored through the large number of ex-votos which call for divine assistance in vanquishing enemies.[68] Prayers, too, often had a less than spiritual purpose, requesting deliverance from earthly enemies.[69]

The invention of the classical idea of the passions in seventeenth-century Europe and the necessity of mastering them was a consequence of the problem of enmity. The oft-told story is principally derived from works of literature and philosophy. I venture beyond these traditional subjects to explore the everyday experience of feeling. People are not blank slates but architects of their own emotions, limited only by the tools presented by their social roles, experiences and beliefs. I make particular use of first-person reflections to navigate the varied emotional landscapes inhabited by early modern men and women. What distinguishes the early modern period from the medieval is the plethora of ego-documents – diaries, journals, chronicles, *libri di famiglia*, *ricordanze*, *livres de raisons* and *Tagebücher* – that recorded people's feelings and reflections. The early modern did not invent interiority per se, but it did see more widespread attempts to represent the self (a process that was not confined to Europe). Some diarists are frank about their feelings. The journal of a French magistrate, from 1601, records his public declaration in court: 'I take him for an enemy; I declare

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[64] L. Feldman Barrett, *How Emotions Are Made* (London: Macmillan, 2017), p. 281.

[65] J. Plamper, *The History of Emotions: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 264.

[66] 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (and Is That What Makes Them Have a History)? A Bourdieuan Approach to Understanding Emotion', *History and Theory*, 51 (2012), 193–220.

[67] R. Verdier and J.-P. Poly (eds.), *La vengeance: Etudes d'ethnologie, d'histoire et de philosophie*, 4 vols. (Paris: Cujas, 1980).

[68] F. Jacobs, *Votive Panels and Popular Piety in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[69] J. Bossy, 'Christian Life in the Later Middle Ages: Prayers', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, sixth series, 1 (1991), 137–50.

to him my enmity. He should beware of me, either in exercising his public office, or in his private actions. Frankness and honesty, which always motivate my actions, obliged me to declare it openly.'[70] The diarist's ego is revealed by reading against the grain, which exposes the manner in which he contrasts his gentlemanly virtue to the underhand machinations of his foes. The identification of the enemy therefore has an epistemological role; in revealing our enemy we reveal something of our own identity. This was a commonplace to contemporaries: 'those who extend their anger and hatred beyond their concerns (as most men do) betray that their emotion arises from something else, from some private cause'.[71] Writing was also a spiritual exercise, a means of navigating feelings that were sinful. A humanist education provided a new set of coordinates. One Italian diarist learned from Cicero 'that one should treat all friends as possible future enemies'; and from Aristotle 'that all beasts who eat the same food have a secret hatred for each other'.[72] For Montaigne, writing was a technique for working on oneself, which permitted him to maintain his cool during the civil war that raged around him: 'A good book does not lose its beauty because it argues against my cause. Apart from the kernel of the controversy, I have remained balanced and utterly indifferent.'[73] The fashion for stoicism fuelled the popularity for life-writing. The memoir written by a Norman gentleman, Charles Castel, in the 1670s warned that 'to aspire to a better life than at present, we must beware of the pitfalls, traps and enemies which fill it, but in particular it is ourselves, our passions, inclinations and bad habits . . . which are our most dangerous enemies'.[74] But emotions are also performative. According to Saint-Simon, when the duchess of Nemours saw her enemy in the courtyard of Versailles: 'she spat straight away five or six times. She apologized to the king, but she could not see a Matignon without wanting to spit . . . the lawsuits had so embittered her spirit that she could not pardon him. She did not finish there, but sometimes when she was asked to recite the Lord's Prayer, she skipped the sentence about pardoning enemies.'[75] Her phlegm-specked disgust was designed to attract the attention of Louis XIV, a gesture entreating the king to mediate.

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[70] A. Ledieu, 'Le livre de raison d'un magistrat picard (1601–1602)', *Bulletin de la Société d'émulation d'Abbeville*, 1 (1889), p. 20.

[71] Montaigne, *Essays*, p. 10.

[72] I. Gasparetto (ed.), *Origine della famiglia nostra Farolfa* (Vicenza: Associazione Veneta per la Storia Locale, 1999), p. 78.

[73] *Essays*, p. 1144.

[74] J. Drouet, 'A propos d'une famille de gentilshommes Bas-Normands aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles: les Castel de Saint-Pierre-Eglise', *Mémoires de la société national académique de Cherbourg*, 19 (1912), 18.

[75] *Mémoires complets et authentiques du Duc de Saint-Simon*, ed. P. Chéruel, 20 vols. (Paris, 1856–9), V, p. 281.

This book compares Italy, the German-speaking lands, France and England. It both synthesises a great deal of recent secondary literature, much of it unknown in English, and attempts to get beyond the prescriptive literature, using soundings in the judicial archives as well as ego-documents. The vastness of Europe's judicial records presents a formidable obstacle. The *Torrone* court in Bologna alone has left 11,000 volumes of cases covering the period 1532–1796. France had as many as 70–80,000 law courts in the eighteenth century, mostly serving only a few villages.[76] England has the opposite problem: there is a relative lack of ego-documents and the common law system was comparatively summary and unbureaucratic. The depositions that survive from England's prerogative courts are therefore a valuable source. I have made great use of local antiquarian studies and periodicals, which are a goldmine for historians of France and Germany especially. Finally, I have used data-mining searches in genealogical compendia to support my claims with statistics on elite homicides.

Although all four regions were afflicted by great civil conflicts in this period, this is also a book about contrasts. It demonstrates not only differences in cultures of enmity between states but also the huge local variations that existed within them. The evidence for Italy is particularly rich. It experienced exceptionally high rates of interpersonal violence. This was not due to climate or a 'Mediterranean culture', as the contrast with Spain demonstrates.[77] Since it is the only one of our examples that did not experience confessional conflict, Italy also challenges the commonly repeated claim that religion is the prime cause of violence. The evidence for enmity in Germany is also rich. It permits us to explore both the impact of the Reformation and the transformation of the medieval *Fehde* after 1495. France was the subject of a previous book and I broaden the analysis here by looking at village micropolitics and taking the story up to 1789. Two chapters are dedicated to exposing myths of English exceptionalism. Comparative history, as Marc Bloch showed, is the best means for the historian to expose the fallacies of nationalism. The final section compares the experiences of enmity, explores the staging of enmity in sacred space and sketches how and why, despite their differences, people got along. I recognise that the book is unlikely to satisfy local specialists. It exists to challenge others to broaden the geographic scope and nuance my findings.

[76] F. Brizay, A. Follain and V. Sarrazin (eds.), *Les justices de village: administration et justice locales de la fin du Moyen Âge à la Révolution* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2003).

[77] P. Broggio, *Governare l'odio: pace e giustizia criminale nell'Italia moderna* (Rome: Viella, 2021), pp. 242–67.