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Quel Horreur!: Violence in Reformation France

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By

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History 4995: Independent Study on Violence in the French Wars of Religion, 1562-1629

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> Oh happy victory! It is to you alone Lord, not to us, the distinguished trophy of honor. In one stroke you tore up the trunk, and the root, and the strewn earth of the heretical vermin. Vermin, who were caught in snares that they had dared to set for your faithful subjects. Oh favorable night! Hour most desirable in which we placed our hope.[1]

> Michel de Roigny, On the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, 1572

The level of sectarian violence that erupted in Reformation France was extraordinary. Otherwise ordinary Catholics tortured their Huguenot neighbors to death and then afterwards mutilated their corpses, sometimes feeding the disfigured remains to farm animals. Catholic children elicited applause from their coreligionists as they killed adult Huguenots by tearing them to pieces. Huguenots assaulted Catholic priests during the Mass, pillaged Catholic churches, and desecrated the Host. Indeed, as the sectarian duel increased in frequency and intensity, a man could be killed for calling someone a Huguenot; both sides used religion to rationalize the assassinations of dukes and kings.

Our understanding of this violence depends on the suspension of our twenty-first century attitudes toward violent behavior. Norbert Elias reminds us in his influential work on the development of Western mores that our modern view of violence has evolved over an extended period of time. Specifically, Elias notes that the "courtization of warriors" and the monopolization of force by the state facilitated a "civilizing process" that originated within the European nobility in the seventeenth century and gradually penetrated the lower classes of European society.[2] Over time, this process transformed Western society so much so that what

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[1] Michel de Roigny, "Discours sur les occurrences des guerres intestines," (Paris, 1572), 4. "O heureuse victoire! À toy seul est Seigneur, non a nous, le trophee insigne de l'honneur. D'un coup as araché le tronc, & la racine, et la terre ionché, d'heretique vermine. Vermine, qui se prit la buit dans les filets, quelle avoit osé tendre aux fidelles subiects. O favorable nuict! Heure plus desiree, qu'elle n'avoit esté des nostres esperée."

[2] Norbert Elais, *The Civilizing Process: Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 387-397; *Power and Civility: The Civilizing Process: Volume II*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), 255-258.

was once considered acceptable behavior in early modern France—a duel in response to a verbal insult—now seems excessive.[3] Thus, I would like to ask the reader to suspend judgment when considering early modern violence in order to appreciate its normative aspect.[4]

Roman Catholicism, albeit with local variations, dominated Western European religious life until the advent of the Reformation.[5] The Catholic Church maintained this hegemony because it violently prevented the spread of heterodox beliefs.[6] A prominent example of this is the Albigensian Crusade in which tens of thousands of French Cathars were killed from 1209-1229.[7] The vast majority of adherents to Catharism lived in southern France, the same geographic area that was most receptive to Protestantism after 1572.[8] Protestants acknowledged this affinity as a crucial part of their identity, although recent scholarship has questioned the extent to which Catharism was an established church with a coherent system of beliefs.[9] Indeed even during the conflict some crusaders were not sure whom to attack; one soldier supposedly asked the Cistercian abbot Arnaud Amalaric how to distinguish a heretic from a true believer.

[3] Stuart Carroll, *Blood and Violence in Early Modern France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 10.

[4] William Beik recognizes that the French crowd "had a tolerance of physical violence which we do not share," in "The Violence of the French Crowd from Charivari to Revolution," *Past and Present* 197 (2007): 86; and Denis Crouzet acknowledges the "immense distance" that separates us from our subject matter: "Face à cette fin du XVIe siècle, la distance est immense, car il faut reconnaître que les protagonistes de cette histoire sanglante étaient portés à penser et à agir en fonction de systèmes immédiats de l'imaginaire qui étaient spécifiques de leur époque." *La nuit de la Saint-Bathélemy: Un rêve perdu de la Renaissance* (Paris: Fayard, 1994), 12-13.

[5] Diarmaid MacCulloch, "The Second Pillar: Papal Primacy," in *The Reformation: A History* (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), 26-34.

[6] Contrary to what some historians have argued, heresy executions did not suddenly appear *ex nihilo* in the Reformation. William Monter, "Heresy Executions in Reformation Europe, 1520-1565," in *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 61-62.

[7] The estimated number of casualties widely varies among the sources.

[8] Penny Roberts, "Calvinists in Troyes 1562-1572: The Legacy of Vassy and the Background to Saint Bartholomew," in *Calvinism in Europe, 1540-1620* ed. Andrew Pettegree, Alastair Duke, and Gillian Lewis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 100.

[9] Luc Racaut, "Religious Polemic and Huguenot Self-Perception and Identity, 1554-1619," in *Society and Culture in the Huguenot World, 1559-1685* ed. Raymond A. Mentzer and Andrew Spicer (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 41; Mark Gregory Pegg, *A Most Holy War: The Albigensian Crusade and the Battle for Christendom*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). Other scholars question the very existence of medieval heresy as a thing in itself: R.I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Authority and Deviance in Western Europe 950-1250*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 64.

The abbot allegedly responded, "Kill them all! God will recognize his own."[10] The impulse to

kill the adherents of heterodoxy was an integral part of medieval religiosity.

The existence of a widespread alternative faith in open conflict with the established

church was a momentous innovation.[11] Many sixteenth century Frenchmen responded to this

situation with the same impulse to commit violence as their medieval forbearers.[12] Thus, in the

St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, Catholics painted white crosses on their hats to identify

themselves, and they killed anyone who did not follow suit. Some Catholics were killed by

mistake, and yet the rioters generally believed that God would not hold them accountable for the

errors.[13] The Reformation inherited more from the medieval period than a general tendency to

commit violence against adherents of alternative belief systems. An analysis of the patterns of

violence that accompanied the Protestant and Catholic Reformations in France reveals that the

Wars of Religion forced Frenchmen to adapt older forms of violence from the medieval period to

a new reality.

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[10] John C. Moore, *Pope Innocent III (1160/61-1216): To Root up and to Plant* (Boston: Brill, 2003), 180.

[11] Philip Benedict, "*Un roi, une loi, deux fois*: Parameters for the History of Catholic-Reformed Co-existence in France, 1555-1685," in *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation*, ed. Ole Peter Grell and Bob Scribner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 68.

[12] Historians have noted several cases of peaceful coexistence between French Catholics and Protestants throughout the early modern period: Gregory Hanlon, *Confessions and Community in Seventeenth-Century France: Catholic and Protestant Coexistence in Aquitaine* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993); Robert Sauzet, *Contre-réforme et le réforme catholique en Bas-Languedoc: le diocèse de Nîmes au XVIIᵉ siècle* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1979).

[13] Frederic J. Baumgartner, *Radical Reactionaries: The Political Thought of the French Catholic League* (Genève: Droz, 1975), 26-27.

I. Popular Violence: The Crowd during the Wars of Religion

> When [Coligny] promised himself
> An assured victory
> On the other foot he walked and danced
> Because he was an infidel.
> He wanted so much to massacre
> The little lambs of the Great Shepherd
> On account of his presumptuous pride,
> He who was so vicious. [14]
>
> Benoist Rigaud, On Coligny's role in the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre

One historian defines popular violence as the "social interaction involving threatened or real physical damage to persons or property, carried out by a group of individuals on the spot or through prior planning."[15] Popular violence can be divided into three categories: isolated actions committed by a group of people against one person; local rioting by a crowd against one or more targets; and open rebellion across multiple regions.[16] Religious motivations for violence are most clearly evident in the second of these categories. The majority of these religious riots took place during the decade from the Massacre at Vassy in 1562 to St. Bartholomew's Day in 1572, which historians have termed the "golden age of the religious riot."[17]

The terms "popular" and "collective" simply mean non-battlefield violence that was acceptable to, or practiced by, a crowd of the same religious identity.[18] The terms do not mean that every member of a particular religious denomination participated in the violence, or that

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[14] Benoist Rigaud, "Discours contre les Huguenotz," (Lyon, 1573), 7. "Quand [Admiral Coligny] se promettoit/ Une victoire en asseurance/ D'un autre pied il marche en danse/ Parce qu'infidelle il estoit./ Aussi qu'il vouloit massacrer/ Par son orgueil presomptueux,/ Luy qui estoit tant vitieux,/ Les aigneletz du grand berger." http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/FrenchPolPa&CISOPTR=5491&REC=1

[15] William Beik adapts this definition in "The Violence of the French Crowd" (p. 78) from Charles Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 3-4.

[16] Julius Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe, 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 184.

[17] Phillip Benedict, *Rouen During the Wars of Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 238.

[18] Natalie Z. Davis defines popular violence as that which was committed "by people who were not acting *officially and formally* as agents of political and ecclesiastical authority." "Rites of Violence," in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France: Eight Essays by Natalie Zemon Davis* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 153.

most even approved of it. Thus the definition of popular religious violence includes the

Huguenots who vandalized Catholic churches as well as the Catholics who mutilated Huguenot

corpses, even if most Huguenots and Catholics did not actually partake in this violence.

The typical religious riot was not an uncontrolled mob of religious fanatics roaming

around town and committing random acts of violence. Rioters usually came from the *menu*

peuple, those who "derived their livings from skilled or semiskilled crafts, shops, or small

agricultural holdings."[19] The crowd was bound together by a social network: family members,

friends, coworkers, and fellow parishioners typically rioted together.[20] Many riots occurred for

local reasons and had specific targets. For example, in Dijon in October 1561, Protestant

businessmen started rioting because the authorities were unfairly favoring Catholic interests at

the marketplace. Local wine growers, whose businesses bound them to the Roman Church,

responded by starting their own riot, which forced the Protestants to leave Dijon.[21]

Men were not the only ones who rioted in Reformation France—women also played a

prominent role. Since the Old Regime limited the criminal liability of women, they were easily

tempted to act out public feelings of resentment with impunity.[22] Some of the most violent

rioters were the youngest, usually less than fifteen years old. On July 23, 1562 in Paris, as soon

as a Huguenot was executed for sedition, children seized the corpse, dragged it through the mud,

ripped it apart, and threw it into the river.[23] Children displayed a propensity to participate in

violence for two reasons: first, peer pressure served as a motivation for excessively violent

actions; second, several studies have shown that young people are especially susceptible to

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[19] Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, 205.
[20] Ibid., 186-188.
[21] Robert J. Knecht, *The French Civil Wars, 1562-1598* (New York: Longman, 2000), 76-77.
[22] Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, 206.
[23] David Potter, ed. and trans., *The French Wars of Religion: Selected Documents* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 62.

propaganda. The content of sermons and political pamphlets during the Wars of Religion was extremely divisive. In other words, partisan leaders directed their vitriol against members of the opposing faith, and young people, more than any other demographic, took the rhetoric seriously.

The notion of legitimacy was a central characteristic of the religious riot. The presence of leaders within the crowd was very important; they sanctioned the rioters' actions and allowed them to act freely.[24] Crowd leadership also carried the added benefit of minimizing bloodshed. Massacres occurred because either the crowd's violence spiraled out of control or because the crowd lacked clear leadership. In both cases, rioters sought to legitimize their actions by appealing to authority. Riots frequently started with the ringing of the tocsin, the official sign for a civic emergency.[25] Even in the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, the ultimate example of unrestricted bloodletting, Catholics believed that the king had sanctioned their actions—Henry Duke of Guise allegedly uttered, "It is the king's command."[26] Since these words suggested that the violence represented the royal will, this utterance can be understood as the explanation for why the massacre became so bloody.

A large and growing body of literature also suggests that early modern crowd violence was not blind violence. Religious riots occurred for five main reasons. First, crowds wanted to carry out official justice by popular demand in reaction to a specific offense against the community. This motivation can be seen under the framework of a "moral economy," wherein the crowd acted defensively to restore a violated norm.[27] Crowds held a "legitimizing notion" of their actions: "…the men and women in the crowd were informed by the belief that they were

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[24] Davis, "Rites of Violence," 165-166.

[25] Ibid., 162.

[26] Barbara Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross: Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth-Century Paris* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 99

[27] Neil Smelser classifies this type of violence as a "value-oriented movement." *Theory of Collective Behavior* (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), 315.

defending traditional rights or customs; and, in general, that they were supported by the wider consensus of the community."[28] This violence was limited in scope and directed against defined targets. Although the term "moral economy" was originally intended to elicit meaning from English bread riots, one historian applies this framework to the French religious riot, stating, "When the magistrate had not used his sword to defend the faith and the true church and to punish the idolaters, then the crowd would do it for him."[29] Consider the Parisian parish of Saint-Médard in the fall of 1561. Protestants, suspecting an attack, orchestrated an assault on their Catholic counterparts and led them off to the Châtelet.[30] According to the "moral economy" paradigm, the crowd's actions should be understood as a response to a perceived injustice that the rioters sought to correct.

Second, crowds actively carried out justice when they believed the authorities were dysfunctional or deficient. For example, in 1551 a group of masked Protestants kidnapped a goldsmith's journeyman who had been found guilty of heresy in Lyon. The group eventually released him to the local magistrate when they were convinced that justice would be done.[31] Other riots explicitly usurped the function of the magistrates, either in mimicking their official roles or doing their jobs for them. Thus in October 1572 in Provins, after a Huguenot was hanged for theft and murder, a dispute broke out among a group of Catholic boys about which way the corpse was to be dragged. They elected lawyers and a judge from among the group to argue the case in front of a hundred spectators. Once the direction was determined, they dragged the corpse through the streets and set it on fire.[32] Rioters also regularly took convicted criminals

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[28] Edward P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," *Past and Present* 50 (1971): 78.
[29] Davis, "Rites of Violence," 161.
[30] Ibid., 162.
[31] Ibid., 163.
[32] Ibid., 163.

from the prison and carried out their sentences. This happened to a man named Bosroger who, since he was accused of being a Huguenot, was beaten and then shot to death by a Catholic mob in Rouen in 1562. The mob left his corpse on the pavement, where it lay for twenty-eight hours.[33]

Third, religious rioters attacked the authorities with whom they disagreed. If the object of their angst was the king, then they attacked symbols of his power. This was especially true during the reign of King Henry III, who promulgated the Edict of Beaulieu in 1576 that gave Huguenots the right of public worship. In December 1588, King Henry also ordered the assassination of Henry I Duke of Guise, an influential member of the Catholic League. The next year a man named Duranti, the president of the Parlement of Toulouse, died at the hands of a mob because they believed he supported Henry's assassination of the Duke of Guise. The crowd dragged him through the streets, hanged him alongside a picture of the king, and then pillaged his home. It was even rumored that a portrait of the king was buried with Duranti, an obvious indication of the king's unpopularity.[34]

Fourth, the crowd sought to provide for "the defense of true doctrine and the refutation of false doctrine through dramatic challenges and tests."[35] In other words, the crowd's religious violence can be understood by appealing to an underlying belief system.[36] Recall Saint-Médard's parish, which began tolling its bells to interrupt a nearby Huguenot service in December 1561. When a Protestant delegation failed to convince the Catholics to silence their bells, a fight broke out between the two sides. In the ensuing struggle, the Huguenots stole

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[33] Potter, ed. and trans., *The French Wars of Religion*, 61-62.
[34] Beik, "The Violence of the French Crowd," 85.
[35] Davis, "Rites of Violence," 156.
[36] Benedict, *Rouen during the Wars of Religion*, 60.

Saint-Médard's chalices and destroyed its statues and crosses.[37] In this case, the belief systems

of both polemics provided the motivation to disrupt the other's service. Consider another

example. After the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, Catholic crowds from Normandy and

Provence stuffed pages of the Protestant Bible into the mouths and wounds of Huguenot corpses,

saying, "They preached the truth of their God. Let them call him to their aid."[38] According to

the Catholics in the crowd, this effectively demonstrated the inefficacy of Protestantism.

It was common for these "dramatic challenges" to occur during important religious

festivals, a characteristic of ritualized violence from the medieval period. In his seminal work,

Communities of Violence, David Nirenberg argues that popular violence expressed communal

identity.[39] In order to make his case, Nirenberg explores the interactions between Christian,

Jewish, and Islamic communities in southern France and the territories of the Crown of Aragon

during the Middle Ages. Nirenberg discovers that all three groups frequently participated in a

dialogue of violence that defined social boundaries. He further argues that communal violence

was common and ritualized, especially during Holy Week, and that coexistence for these groups

"was in part predicated on such violence."[40] He finds that popular violence always targeted

specific individuals for particular reasons, and that the violence was usually non-lethal.

Nirenberg's analysis suggests that popular religious violence in the medieval period

enforced a status quo. The same theoretical structure applies to Catholic riots in the Wars of

Religion. For example, on Palm Sunday in 1561, Toulousain Huguenots decided to express their

faith by orchestrating a procession of palms through the streets, the city's first major

manifestation of Protestantism. A few days later, the authorities burned at the stake an

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[37] Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross*, 61-62.
[38] Davis, "Rites of Violence," 157.
[39] *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 9.
[40] Ibid., 200-202; 9.

apothecary and a bookseller from Geneva who were accused of participating in the procession.[41]

Violence with startlingly similar roots recurred five years later during Pentecost at Pamiers.

Catholics usually celebrated the holy day by singing and dancing around a statue of St. Anthony,

which they carried around town in a procession. In previous years, local Protestants disrupted

the festivities by throwing stones at the Catholics. But in 1566, when the Catholic procession

reached a Protestant neighborhood they began shouting, "Kill! Kill!" and three days of fighting

resulted.[42] In both of these examples, the perpetrators of the violence sought to discredit the

belief system of their targets, and the specific context of a religious festival allowed them to do

so. The same theme appeared again and again in religious riots.

Violence frequently revolved around the Eucharist, one of the major sources of division

in the Reformation.[43] This was especially true whenever a priest carried the Host outside of the

confines of a Catholic church. While Catholics paused to kneel in front of the priest—men also

removed their hats—Protestants who wished to deny the validity of the sacrament would remain

standing, a sign of disrespect in the eyes of Catholic partisans. On a Sunday in March 1571 in

Rouen, a group of Huguenots were walking to their own service as they passed by a priest

carrying the Host to a sick person. Catholics yelled at the Huguenots because they would not

acknowledge the sacrament, and the Huguenots replied by throwing stones at the Catholics. A

fight broke out between the two sides, and forty Huguenots were killed.[44] It was especially

common for violence to accompany Corpus Christi, a holy day on which priests prominently

carried the Host, displayed in a monstrance, in a procession throughout town. In August 1562, a

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[41] Pierre-Jean Souriac, "Du corps à corps au combat fictif. Quand les catholiques toulousains affrontaient leurs homologues protestants," in *Les affrontements: Usages, discours et rituels*, ed. Frédérique Pitou and Jacqueline Sainclivier (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2008), 26.
[42] Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, 200.
[43] Jason Sager, "Devotion and the Political: Sermon and Devotional Literature in the Reigns of Henri IV and Louis XIII, 1598-1643" (PhD diss., Wilfred Laurier University, 2007), 133-150.
[44] Knecht, *The French Civil Wars*, 160-161.

Huguenot bookseller refused to kneel in front of the procession, and Parisian children seized

him, killed him by "tearing him to pieces," and then set his corpse on fire at a garbage dump.[45]

Popular violence did not always occur as a direct response to a specific provocation. The

fifth motivation for popular violence started with the shift from attacking "the other" because of

his beliefs, to attacking "the other" because he was "the other." This shift can be seen in the

association of "the other" with garbage and pollution. In 1560, Huguenots from Rouen threw

garbage at a Corpus Christi procession, and during the spring of 1572, Catholics hurled mud and

garbage at houses belonging to Protestants near the Pont Notre-Dame.[46] This analogy can also

be found in the pamphlets that circulated around French cities. Federicus Morellus, a cleric who

witnessed the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, wrote a treatise in which he blames the civil

wars on Admiral Gaspard de Coligny and "a few others" (*paucis aliis*).[47] He repeatedly refers to

these Huguenots throughout his tract as "a stain" (*macula*), "filth" (*limus*), and "pollution"

(*pollutio*).[48]

The association of "the other" with pollution was deeply rooted in the medieval period.

In *The Formation of a Persecuting Society*, the eminent historian R. I. Moore argues that from

the tenth to the thirteenth centuries, clerics and courtiers invented a new "rhetoric and a set of

assumptions and procedures" that made persecution "more likely to happen" and "more severe

and sustained for longer."[49] Moore understands persecution as any violent action or verbal insult

that separated a targeted individual from the community, either through death or by exile. In

other words, Moore's thesis proposes that the authorities created an environment in which

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[45] Potter, ed. and trans., *The French Wars of Religion*, 62-63.
[46] Benedict, *Rouen during the Wars of Religion*, 61; Mack P. Holt, *The French Wars of Religion, 1562-1629* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 80.
[47] Federicus Morellus, "Ornatissimi cuisdam Viri, De Rebus Gallicis, Ad Stanislaum Eluidium, Epistola," (n.p., 1573), 43.
[48] Ibid., 40, 43.
[49] *The Formation of a Persecuting Society*, 145.

persecution could be committed against heretics and Jews, and that this environment continued

to exist long after the thirteenth century. This persecution took the form of communal

purification, in which the authorities eradicated specific targets lest they pollute the

community.[50] Although Moore admits that this type of persecution was not "popular violence,"

the same motivation clearly manifested itself in early modern religious riots.[51]

Catholics associated Protestantism with sexual deviance and libertinism, a perception that

was reinforced by the secrecy of their services.[52] Huguenots were also suspicious of the secrecy

of the Catholic Mass, which was performed in Latin with the priest facing away from the

congregation. In addition, Catholics thought that the Protestants were planning a coup against

the French government. A former Huguenot who converted to Catholicism, Pierre Charpentier,

vouched for this conspiracy in a letter to his friend and former colleague François Portus, stating,

"For what does the "Cause" [of the Huguenots] have in common? I have learned that it does not

pertain to the true worship of God, but has rebellion as its object."[53] The pollution analogy and

the mutual suspicions of secrecy, combined with rumors of a grand Protestant conspiracy, all

provided a key shift towards the dehumanization of the enemy, which supplied a rationalization

for exceedingly bloody violence.[54]

Both Catholics and Protestants believed that the only way a community could rid itself of

"the polluting other" was by violently eliminating it.[55] However, the violence in Catholic

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[50] Ibid., 94-95.

[51] Ibid., 106-111.

[52] Brandon Hartley, "War and Tolerance: Catholic Polemic in Lyon During the French Religious Wars" (PhD diss., The University of Arizona, 2007), 155-158.

[53] Pierre Charpentier, "Epistola ad Franciscum Portum Cretensem," (n.p., 1572), 3. "Quid enim comune habuit Caussa? Comperi eam ad verum Dei cultum non pertinere, sed ad rebellionem spectare." For Charpentier's background: Donald R. Kelley, *The Beginning of Ideology: Consciousness and Society in the French Reformation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 288.

[54] Davis, "Rites of Violence," 181.

[55] Denis Crouzet, *Guerriers de Dieu: La violence au temps des troubles de religion, (vers 1525- vers 1610)*. vol. 1 (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1990), 692-699.

communal purification differed from that in Protestant communal purification. Whereas

Catholics typically committed acts of violence against the bodies of their enemies, Protestants

usually focused their energy on vandalizing Catholic property. The common way of eliminating

waste products was by dumping them into a river, which is how Catholic crowds discarded

enemy corpses throughout the Wars of Religion. This happened to a Huguenot military leader at

Sens who was dragged through the streets by children. At each street corner they stopped to

burn his body with oven spits, and then they threw his body along with those of several other

dead Huguenots into the river Yonne.[56] Similarly, Protestants sought to eradicate Catholic

idolatry by desecrating symbols of Catholicism, especially the Host. Huguenot expressions of

iconoclasm happened across France throughout the Wars of Religion.[57]

      The identification of patterns in religious violence, however, needs to be qualified in

order to remain valid—not every example of popular religious violence follows this division.

Huguenots usually focused their energy on assailing Catholic priests when they attacked the

bodies of their enemies. For example, an audacious Huguenot wrestled the pastor of Saint-

Séverin's parish to the floor during Mass on December 22, 1563.[58] Huguenots occasionally

committed acts of mass murder, which is what happened at Reims in 1567 when the Protestants

killed eighty Catholics.[59] Protestant armies also contributed to massacres, such as those at

Beaugency and Mornas in 1563.[60] French Catholics typically sought personal financial gain

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[56] Potter, ed. and trans., *The French Wars of Religion*, 51-53.
[57] Benedict, *Rouen during the Wars of Religion*, 61.
[58] Carroll, *Blood and Violence*, 273.
[59] David El Kenz, "Massacres during the Wars of Religion," *Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence*, ed. Jacques Semelin, (2007), http://www.massviolence.org/Article?id_article=6.
[60] Stuart Carroll, *Martyrs and Murderers: The Guise Family and the Making of Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 163.

whenever they attacked Huguenot property. This was especially true for Catholic militias; they pillaged Huguenot houses at Troyes in April 1568.[61]

The different forms of communal purification undertaken by Catholics and Protestants occurred for two main reasons. Catholic violence in large measure reflected behavioral patterns of early modern French and European societies. A growing volume of scholarship has revealed rates of reported homicide and assault far above late twentieth and early twenty-first century levels. Moreover, close studies of early modern societies reveal that physical violence was not confined to the poor and marginalized. Elites possessed as ready a recourse to violence as their social inferiors, and riots for a variety of reasons were as common in early modern society as are strikes in modern society.[62] The real question, thus, is not so much why Catholics frequently resorted to physical violence as why Protestants eschewed it much of the time. The answer seems to lie in the fact that Huguenots were always in the minority throughout France even if they constituted a majority in specific urban areas in the southern part of the country.[63] In other words, Protestants had insufficient numerical strength to commit widespread and prolonged massacres, so they usually destroyed Catholic property and attacked Catholic priests instead.

Catholic crowds, however, often did not simply "purify" their communities by killing Protestants—they frequently continued to mutilate their corpses long after death in paradoxical desecration. Examples abound in the primary sources, and one historian states that, "Most of the real cruelty, when it occurred, was inflicted on corpses, not on living persons."[64] For instance, in

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[61] Penny Roberts, *A City in Conflict: Troyes during the French Wars of Religion* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1996), 132.

[62] Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, 117-140; Malcolm Greenshields, *An Economy of Violence in Early Modern France: Crime and Justice in the Haute Auvergne, 1587-1664* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 67-69.

[63] Bernd Moeller, *Imperial Cities and the Reformation: Three Essays*, ed. and trans. H.C. Erik Midelfort and Mark U. Edwards, Jr. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), 41-49; Janin Garrisson-Estèbe, *Protestants du midi, 1559-1598* (Toulouse: Privat, 1980), 14.

[64] Beik, "The Violence of the French Crowd," 88.

Rouen in February 1563, a crowd assembled to witness the execution of two criminals, one

Catholic and one Protestant. While the Catholic criminal recanted his sins and died in

communion with the Roman Church, the Protestant refused to renounce his beliefs. Instead of

allowing the Protestant to die by hanging, as the order of his execution stated, the crowd cut the

rope and lit a bonfire underneath his heels. But before he died, the crowd hacked his body into

pieces, dragged it through the streets, and dumped it into the river Seine.[65] In another case, after

the Battle of Cognat in 1569, the body of a Protestant captain was exhumed by his Catholic

enemies and stabbed several times. They dragged the rotting corpse through the streets and then

fed it to farm animals.[66]

Catholic crowds mutilated corpses for three main reasons. First, the crowd wished to

deny their target the dignity of a Christian burial. If the Huguenots were not worthy of life, then

they did not even deserve the solace of a proper resting place. Second, the crowd's anger was

not satiated with the death of their target. This explains why the crowd continued to inflict

violence on corpses long after the body could be recognized. Third, the mutilation of corpses

was not an impulse—it was a pan-European form of violence that predated the Reformation.[67]

The practice was not exclusive to mobs; the authorities also ordered the corpses of criminals to

be dragged and mutilated in order to make an example for the community. For instance, the

Parlement of Paris issued an edict in 1573 stating:

> To repair these crimes, [the Parlement] has ordered and orders that the body of
> Coligny if found may, if it is intact, be taken by the executor of high justice, led,
> taken & dragged on the dirt… to be hanged in the gallows which for this purpose

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[65] Benedict, *Rouen during the Wars of Religion*, 111.
[66] Carroll, *Blood and Violence*, 178.
[67] For examples of corpse mutilations between Italian Catholics, see Edward Muir, *Mad Blood Stirring: Vendetta and Factions in Friuli during the Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 168-169; 198-200.

will be built & erected in front of the city hall… hanging there in the most high & eminent place.[68]

Thus the mutilation of corpses was an ordinary form of violence inherited from the medieval period.

II. Private Violence: The Duel and Tyrannicide

Cruel man of blood, barbarous hand, and infamous
Animal without reason, what made you pollute?
If Satan could prevail, to such an extent on your soul,
Why treacherously kill your true Prince?[69]

Soldat François, On the assassination of King Henry IV, 1610

Collective violence constitutes only a part of religious violence in the Reformation, for the rise of French Protestantism also influenced the individual level of private violence. Private and collective violence can be difficult to distinguish. Although both categories could involve several accomplices, the difference lies in the nature of the violence: private violence always occurred between individuals. However, the term "private" is not meant to imply secrecy, for it often occurred in full view of the community.[70] Similar to popular violence during the Wars of Religion, an analysis of the French duel and tyrannicide reveals deep connections between medieval and early modern private violence.

One type of private violence that played a prominent role in Reformation France was the duel, a form of dispute resolution rooted in the medieval period. In his influential work, *Land*

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[68] Michel Iouer, "Les arrests de derniere execution," (Lyon, 1573), 3-4. "Et pour reparation desdits crimes, a ordonné & ordonne que le corps dudit de Coligny, si trouver se peut, sinon en figure, sera prins par l'executeur de la haute iustice, mené, conduict & trainé sur une claye… illec pendu en une potence qui pour ce faire sera dressee & erigee devant l'hostel de ville… pendu en iceluy au plus haut & eminent lieu."

[69] Soldat François, "La deploration de la mort lamentable de Henry," (n.p., 1610), 4. "Cruel homme de sang, main barbare, & infame/ Animal sans raison qui t'a faict polluer?/ Mais si Satan a peu, tant giagner sur ton ame,/ Que de traistreusement ton vray Prince tuer?"

[70] Markku Peltonen, *The Duel in Early Modern England: Civility, Politeness, and Honor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 2.

and Lordship, Otto Brunner develops an understanding of the medieval Austrian feud that can provide the background for a discussion of the French duel. Brunner rejects the notion that the feud was an archaic phenomenon flourishing prior to the establishment of a law-abiding society.[71] He argues that the feud actually represented a deep commitment to a "moral or legal duty" to exact retribution for an evil done, and thus was an integral part of the medieval Austrian judicial system.[72] In Brunner's analysis, private violence was intimately connected to the conception of justice, which was itself predicated upon a man's honor.[73] After the Wars of Religion, Frenchmen also believed that the right to bear arms and defend one's honor was an essential aspect of justice. Since a similar honor system existed in Reformation France, the same framework that Brunner posited for medieval Austrian violence can be applied to the French duel.

Before the sixteenth century, it was common for French nobles to resolve conflicts by resorting to judicial combat, where the victor won the judicial case.[74] The last time a judicial duel occurred in France was in 1547, when François de Vivonne, seigneur de la Châtaigneraye, battled Guy Chabot, comte de Jarnac, in front of the king.[75] It was also commonplace for young nobles to prove themselves by participating in a tournament of arms.[76] Both of these practices declined as adult males entered the military service during the Wars of Religion. When battle-hardened men returned from the field around the turn of the century, however, dueling quickly

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[71] *Land and Lordship: Structures of Governance in Medieval Austria*, trans. Howard Kaminsky and James Van Horn Melton (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), 23-24.
[72] Ibid., 19-21.
[73] Ibid., 42-43.
[74] Ibid., 15
[75] Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, 77.
[76] Walton, *Policing Public Opinion*, 16.

became the most popular mode of conflict resolution for the simple reason that the weakened

French state was left with much less control over private warfare.[77]

The duel reached its zenith of popularity during its "golden age" of the 1620s.[78] One

historian defines the duel as "a fight between two or several individuals (but always with equal

numbers on each side), equally armed, for the purpose of either proving the truth of a disputed

question or the valor, courage and honor of each combatant."[79] A man's honor depended on

objective criteria such as birth, titles and privileges, and subjective criteria like the opinions of

others.[80] The frequency of dueling declined as a man aged; although, of course, the elderly could

theoretically challenge someone to a fight. For example, man named Zamet fought two duels at

the age of sixty.[81] But for the most part, the classic French duel was exclusive to middle-aged

men of the upper classes.

Duels typically followed a pattern: someone impugned a man's honor, he issued a

challenge to the offender, both sides agreed upon a weapon, and the two dueled. The weapon of

choice in the French duel was the rapier, a one-handed sword that nobles usually carried on their

persons. It was less common for duelers to use pistols, but it was standard for the duelers to fight

on foot, without armor, and in public. Once the authorities outlawed the duel, combatants moved

away from public areas and into the woods. This partly explains the lack of sources regarding

the lethality of the duel, but the best estimate is that between 300 and 500 people died during the

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[77] Frederic J. Baumgartner, *France in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 260.
[78] Carroll, *Blood and Violence*, 260-261.
[79] François Billacois, *The Duel: Its Rise and Fall in Early Modern France*, ed. and trans. by Trista Selous (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 5.
[80] Charles Walton, *Policing Public Opinion in the French Revolution: The Culture of Calumny and the Problem of Free Speech* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 43.
[81] Billacois, *The Duel*, 73.

first few decades of the seventeenth century.[82] Duels often ended before someone died—each

combatant usually brought his own "seconds" to stop the duel at the sight of first blood.

Duels between noblemen often took the form of "quarrels over precedence."[83] An insult

over precedence could involve a simple gesture such as refusing to completely remove one's hat

in the presence of another gentleman. This is exactly what happened between two noblemen,

Deslandes and Duplessis-Châtillon, in 1640. The ensuing fight spilled into the streets, resulting

in wounds for both men.[84] But not every insult necessitated a duel, especially if the insulter was

of a lower social standing. For instance, the Duke of Elbeuf—an illegitimate member of the

royal family—refused to participate in a duel after a "simple gentleman" insulted him.[85] Insults

over religion, however, were a guaranteed way to impugn a man's honor and instigate a duel.

Since honor was considered "as important as life itself," it is not surprising that accusing a

Catholic of being a Huguenot would result in violence.[86]

Even though dueling was technically outlawed after 1602, it remained a common form of

dispute resolution until Louis XIV's reign. One major reason was that the king did not want his

nobles killing themselves. Historians estimate that noblemen comprised only about two percent,

or 380,000, of France's population during the sixteenth century, and the non-battlefield deaths of

noblemen put a strain on the military's leadership.[87] The monopolization of force by the state

and the inculcation of less-violent behaviors in young men were also important factors. The

establishment of institutions, such as the Academie d'Equitation founded by Antoine de Pluvinel

in 1594, taught politeness and manner to young noblemen. During the seventeenth century it

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[82] Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, 79.
[83] Billacois, *The Duel*, 77-79.
[84] Carroll, *Blood and Violence*, 87.
[85] Billacois, *The Duel*, 74.
[86] Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, 76.
[87] This figure is perhaps a relatively high estimate; Davis Bitton, *The French Nobility in Crisis, 1560-1640*
(Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969), 40.

became the mark of a gentleman to be cultured in this sense, although it was still important for

him to be able to defend his own honor when the occasion arose.[88] Thus, just as the Reformation

inherited the duel from the medieval period, the duel was passed down to later generations.

Another form of violence inherited from the medieval period was tyrannicide, which both

Catholic and Protestant scholars countenanced.[89] The philosophical origins of tyrannicide can be

traced all the way back to pre-Socratic philosophers. Throughout history, distinguished thinkers

such as Aristotle and Cicero approved of the practice.[90] In the medieval period, John of

Salisbury and then Thomas Aquinas both sanctioned the killing of a head of state under certain

conditions.[91] Thomas Aquinas appealed to Cicero to justify this position, stating, "Then indeed

he who kills a tyrant for the liberation of his country, is praised, and he receives a reward."[92] By

the sixteenth century, Catholics such as Juan Mariana, a Spanish Jesuit who taught in Paris from

1569-1574, stipulated that if a leader qualified as a tyrant then private citizens had a moral

responsibility to assassinate him.[93] For Mariana, the religious affiliation of the tyrant functioned

as the most important qualifying criterion.[94] Protestants, such as Theodore Beza, advanced a

somewhat different argument, positing that lesser magistrates should lead a rebellion against a

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[88] Baumgartner, *France in the Sixteenth Century*, 262-263.

[89] This was an extremely controversial issue because what was anarchic regicide to one man was lawful tyrannicide to another. Harald E. Braun, *Juan de Mariana and Early Modern Spanish Political Thought* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 81.

[90] Oscar Jászi and John D. Lewis, *Against the Tyrant: The Theory and Tradition of Tyrannicide* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1957), 3-5.

[91] Roland Mousnier, *The Assassination of Henry IV: The Tyrannicide Problem and the Consolidation of the French Absolute Monarchy in the Early Seventeenth Century*, trans. Joan Spencer (New York: Faber and Faber, 1973), 104-105.

[92] *Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*, 44.2.2, vol. 8 of *Opera Omnia* ed. Stanislas Édouard Fretté and Paul Maré (Paris: Vivès, 1889), 591. "Tunc enim qui ad liberationem patriae tyrannum occidit, laudatur, et praemium accipit."

[93] Alan Soons, *Juan de Mariana*, (Boston: Twayne, 1982), 59. Most Jesuits disagreed with Mariana, and many thought tyrannicide was inherently unjustifiable; Harro Höpfl, *Jesuit Political Thought: The Society of Jesus and the State, c. 1540-1630* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 315-318.

[94] Richard Dessens, *La pensée politique de Jésuite espagnol Juan de Marian* (Lille: Atelier national de reproduction des thèses, 2003), 147-149.

tyrant in defense of the true faith.[95] Although speculating about what might justify tyrannicide

greatly differs from actually killing the king, the manifestations of tyrannicide in Reformation

France must be understood within these traditions.[96] A brief consideration of the assassinations

of Henry I Duke of Guise (1588), King Henry III (1589), and King Henry IV (1610) reveals the

unique status of tyrannicide as an innovation from the Wars of Religion.

Henry I Duke of Guise formed the Holy Catholic League in 1576, an organization that

unsuccessfully sought to prevent the ascension of Henry III to the throne of France. The League

drew most of its members from the Parisian bourgeoisie, not the *menu people*, which gave its

leader tremendous political power.[97] French Catholics knew Henry as their champion on the

battlefield; he commanded several military victories over the Huguenots in the Wars of Religion.

He was also popular because it was rumored that he had ordered the assassination of Admiral

Gaspard de Coligny, his Huguenot counterpart. The Duke of Guise also had designs on the

throne. On May 12, 1588, the Day of the Barricades, the duke arrived in Paris, incited a revolt,

and forced the king to flee the city, which left the Catholic League in control of France.

King Henry needed to act boldly if he was to reassert control over the country, so it is not

surprising that the Duke of Guise met a violent end. On December 23, the king summoned the

duke to the royal court and had him promptly assassinated. Interestingly, in order to preserve the

honor of each individual present, multiple assassins killed the duke in a "collective act" by

stabbing him at the same time.[98] As a result, no single person could be blamed for the murder.

King Henry also ordered the assassination of the duke's brother, Louis II, Cardinal of Guise, the

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[95] Robert D. Linder, *The Reformation Era* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2009), 133.

[96] J.W. Allen, *A History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Methuen, 1951) 304-308.

[97] Robert Descimon, *Qui etaient les seize? Mythes et réalités de la Ligue parisienne, 1585-1594* (Paris: Fédération des Sociétés Historiques et Archéologiques de Paris et de l'Ile-de France, 1983), 19.

[98] Orest Ranum, "The French Ritual of Tyrannicide in Late Sixteenth Century," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 11 (Spring 1980): 66.

very next day. In the aftermath of two assassinations in which he was complicit, the king could

not remain in control of the government, and he was forced to move with his Parlement to Tours.

But the Duke of Guise's death carried more far-reaching consequences than the temporary

relocation of the king's Parlement. For the first time, a French king used religion as the state-

sanctioned rationalization for murder, which qualified him as a tyrant in the eyes of many French

Catholics. This led to the downfall of King Henry himself.

King Henry III was unpopular before the assassination of the Duke of Guise because he

had aligned himself with Henry of Navarre, a Huguenot and future heir to the throne. After the

duke's death, only a handful of cities remained loyal to the king, so he spent the remainder of his

reign trying to gain control of France.[99] On July 31, 1589, the king spent the night outside of

Paris at Saint-Cloud, planning to assault the capital.[100] On the next day Jacques Clément, a

twenty-two year old Dominican lay brother, pretended to have a confidential message for the

king. Once he was close enough, Clément mortally wounded the king with a dagger that he had

concealed underneath his cloak. The royal guards immediately killed Clément, and the king died

the next day.[101]

The first case of tyrannicide in the Reformation sparked an outburst of joy among French

Catholics. This was understandable for Parisians, whose city was under siege by the king's

army. But Jacques Clément's portrait was placed on the altars of several monasteries, Pope

Sixtus V praised his actions, and many French churchmen even lobbied for his canonization.[102]

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[99] Nicolas Le Roux, *Un régicide au nom de Dieu: L'assassinat d'Henri III* (Paris: Gallimard, 2006), 224.
[100] Mousnier, *The Assassination of Henry IV*, 11.
[101] Victor Duruy, *A History of France*, trans. M. Carey (Boston: Wright and Potter, 1896), 363.
[102] Mousnier, *The Assassination of Henry IV*, 174.

Many Catholics saw the killing as a "miracle."[103] The death of the king portended danger for

future French monarchs.

Henry of Navarre, the future King Henry IV, was a Huguenot before he ascended to the

throne, which was a serious concern for many Frenchmen. After the St. Bartholomew's Day

Massacre he was compelled to nominally become Catholic, but he remained a Protestant at

heart.[104] Pope Sixtus V passed a papal bull in 1585 that dispossessed Henry of his rights to the

crown because of his Protestant sympathies.[105] As a result, several *politique* advisors urged

Henry to publicly embrace Catholicism and submit to the pope's wishes. This is exactly what

André Maillard argued in a work published in 1585.[106] Not only would the traditional

ceremonies of royal succession have to be adjusted if the prince remained a Huguenot, but a

Huguenot monarch would send confusing signals about national unity.[107] On July 25, 1593

Henry publicly accepted the Roman faith at the abbey of Saint-Denis in the presence of several

French bishops.[108]

Despite the eventual conversion of Henry and his ascension to the throne, other members

of French society loathed the king for giving limited freedom of worship to the Huguenots in the

1598 Edict of Nantes. Catholic fundamentalists argued that the king embodied the definition of a

tyrant, and therefore needed to be killed.[109] François Ravaillac was a Catholic zealot who

believed that if the king was murdered, then the Wars of Religion would resume and France

would be purged of Protestantism once and for all. On May 14, 1610, he successfully entered

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[103] Crouzet, *Guerriers de Dieu*, vol. 2, 485.
[104] Ronald S. Love, *Blood and Religion: The Conscience of Henry IV, 1553-1593* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 66.
[105] Mousnier, *The Assassination of Henry IV*, 110.
[106] André Maillard, "Advertissement au Roy de Navarre de se reunir avec le Roy & la foy Catholique," (n.p., 1585), 4. For Maillard's background, see: Baumgartner, *Radical Reactionaries*, 70-71.
[107] Ibid., 27; 30.
[108] Mousnier, *The Assassination of Henry IV*, 111.
[109] Ibid., 158-183.

the king's carriage—which was fortuitously exposed due to slow traffic—and stabbed him to

death.[110] Although he never admitted to having any accomplices, the logistics of Ravaillac's

attack strongly suggest a wider conspiracy to murder the king.[111] Ravaillac was tortured with

"pincers, molten lead, boiling oil, burning pitch, and molten wax" before he was "dismembered

by four horses" before his remains were "reduced to ashes and thrown to the wind."[112] This

punishment was unprecedented only because it combined several pre-existing methods of torture

within one victim.[113] Just as the ideology supporting tyrannicide predated the sixteenth century,

so too did the punishments for it.

III. Coexistence and Toleration

Certainly not every Frenchman participated in religious violence, and many were

vehemently opposed to the civil wars.[114] For example, one pamphlet written in 1568 by an

anonymous author states, "Of all the evils that the civil wars have brought to France, certainly

the most deplorable and the most pernicious is… violence…. Unto whom God has given the

grace to see and to know the proper remedies for the [war], the consequence of dubious weapons,

closes their mouths and ties their hands."[115] Even during the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, a

relatively small minority of Parisian Catholics carried out the bloodletting while the vast

majority of Catholics remained at home.[116]

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[110] Ibid., 24.
[111] Ibid., 28.
[112] Simon H. Cuttler, *The Law of Treason and Treason Trials in Later Medieval France* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 116.
[113] Ibid., 117-119.
[114] This is a general characteristic of popular violence. Charles Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence*, 12.
[115] "Exhortation à la Paix," (n.p., 1568), 2. "Entre les maux, que les guerres civiles ont apportez à la France, cestuicy le plus deplorable & le plus pernicieux est…violence…. Ausquels Dieu ait fait la grace de voir & cognoistre les remedes propes pour c'est effect, le douteux evenemet des armes les rend irresolus, & le peu d'asseurance qu'ils ont, leur ferme la bouch, & leur lie les mains."
[116] Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross*, 104-105.

At the same time, not every Frenchman supported the cessation of the Wars of Religion. Some Catholics despised Henry IV's policies of religious coexistence so much so that they decided to exile themselves from France. The majority of these people came from the Parisian wing of the Catholic League, and they found a home in the homogenously Catholic city of Brussels.[117] One historian, when discussing why the Leaguers left their home country, states, "The Leaguers were Christians who struggled to reform themselves, they were not unconditional Tridentines; they became so out of necessity, because the Catholic Reformation was the only credible response to the Protestant Reformation…."[118] Once it became apparent in the 1590s that Protestantism was a permanent part of France, Catholic Leaguers were forced to choose between a multi-religious community or exile.

Given the endemic violence of the Wars of Religion, it is perplexing that early modern France produced the first European experiment with religious coexistence. The Edict of Beaulieu (1576), the Edict of Poitiers (1577), and the Edit of Nantes (1598) gave Protestants unprecedented, although qualified, rights to freedom of worship. And yet religious violence did not simply fade into the past after the Edict of Nantes. The mutilation of corpses persisted throughout the early modern period, noblemen continued to duel into the twentieth century, and the speculative justifications for regicide remained powerful after the Wars of Religion.[119] Religious tolerance was not always assured; in the 1685 Edict of Fontainebleau, King Louis XIV revoked the rights granted to Huguenots almost a century earlier. Thus just as the patterns of violence inherited by Frenchmen in the Protestant and Catholic Reformations derived from the

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[117] Robert Descimon and José Javier Ruiz Ibáñez, *Les Ligueurs de l'exil: Le refuge catholique français après 1594* (Seyssel, France: Champ Vallon, 2005), 67-68.
[118] Ibid., 46.
[119] William Beik, *Urban Protest in Seventeenth-Century France: The Culture of Retribution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Pres, 1997), 68-69; Billacois, *The Duel*, 182-188.

medieval period, the same forms of violence persisted throughout France long after the sixteenth century.

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