

## Introduction:

### Medieval Revolt in Context

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This anthology is part of an emerging body of historiography devoted to late medieval uprisings and to popular politics more generally that has developed since the turn of the millennium. These topics, hotly contested in the 1970s and 1980s, had fallen out of vogue in the previous decade, as attention shifted from classical social and political history to new kinds of cultural history. The renewed attention to medieval revolts reflects the return of political history to the fore since the new millennium but in a very different way, as our understanding of the state and violence have undergone a thorough revision and as the insights of the cultural turn have transformed how we read the events that made up a rebellion and the sources that report them. Continental scholars, often in the earlier stages of their careers, have been particularly prominent producers of new work on medieval revolt, publishing a series of inter-related essay collections.<sup>1</sup> The 2006 publication of Samuel K. Cohn, jr.'s *Lust for Liberty: The Politics of Social Revolt in Medieval Europe* has also galvanized much scholarship, particularly among Anglophones.<sup>2</sup> The fruit of this work, often pursued collaboratively, has rapidly pushed the study of revolt in a number of new directions, which we hope not only to showcase here, but also to drive forward by bringing together work from a dynamic group of historians (plus a classicist and a literary scholar) from continental Europe, North America, and the UK.

The aims of our work in this volume are heuristic and exploratory rather than

definitive. There is an overall consensus among the authors here that our approach to medieval uprisings must take account of their actors' agency within their historically specific societies, but also that our access to those actors and societies is mediated – and often obscured – by the texts that report them. From these agreed methodological starting points, our investigations move in a variety of directions and work to raise questions, as well as to answer them. Drawing on instances of revolt from Ireland to Syria and from periods to either side of the later Middle Ages as well as the core centuries from 1250 to 1500, contributors think about how uprisings worked, why they happened, whom they implicated, what they meant to contemporaries, and how we might understand them now.

I have divided the volume into three parts, each focused on a particular area of inquiry, though aspects of these themes are common to nearly every essay. The first group of essays is particularly concerned with the conceptualization of revolt in both modern and medieval thinking.<sup>3</sup> Fundamentally, what are we studying and how do we know that the events and actions we group together as a revolt should be categorized as such? This is partly a problem of language and sources, due to the documents' semantic variability, the imperfect approximation of modern categories with medieval ones, and the authorial programmes of medieval writers. The problem also stems from how medieval 'states' worked differently to our own governments, a difference that drives the book's second section on the relationship between revolt and the institutions, ideas, and practices that structured society. In the modern West, where there is a clear distinction between the apparatus of the state and the society it governs and where the state has a monopoly on legitimate violence, revolt can be identified as collective violence by non-state actors making claims that implicates the state, even

when they are not directed at it.<sup>4</sup> But medieval polities were considerably more fragmented than modern states. ‘Revolt’ in such a context, might not have been construed as such by contemporaries. The role of violence is key, for it served not only strategic goals but also as a means of communication in this highly gestural society. Communication, through acts and signs, as well as words, is thus the third theme of the volume. The repertoires, models, and media through which rebels made their aims known and through which they effected their protests give us a window on to the political culture of rebels and the wider society. At the same time, problems of reception, memorialization (or its opposite), and propagandistic intent return us to the interpretative questions that underlie the first section.

These themes reflect areas of inquiry fundamental to current scholarship on medieval revolt, but they also arise out of and benefit from a long historiographical tradition.

The new medieval political history of the last decade has made a major impact on the approaches taken here, but many of the fundamental questions and problems that shaped our inquiries have been stable features of the scholarship for a long time, however novel our proposed solutions. The following introduction thus not only draws together the themes of this book, but also shows how recent work, including our own in this and other publications, has extended and developed – as well as revised – the contributions of older approaches. This volume embodies a particular historiographical moment. We hope it will provide a resource for students and a foundation for revolutionary studies in the future.

## The Age of Revolt through the Ages of Revolution

Interest in the uprisings of the later Middle Ages, a period once called ‘the age *par excellence* of “popular revolutions”’, has waxed and waned with historical circumstances, particularly political ones.<sup>5</sup> Despite medieval chroniclers’ fascination with the uprisings of their day, historians in Europe’s *anciens régimes* were basically uninterested in them. Modern historians first turned their attention to medieval revolts during the Age of Revolution that began in 1789 (or 1776), that witnessed the great tumults of 1848, and that gave rise to Marxism. The first studies of what might be thought of (however unjustly) as the canonical medieval revolts – the 1358 French Jacquerie, the 1378 Florentine Ciompi revolt, and the 1381 English Rising – were written in more or less conscious reaction to the political upheavals of their own day.<sup>6</sup> Siméon Luce, author of the first study of the Jacquerie, wrote in 1859 that the politics of the Parisian rebel leader Étienne Marcel ‘contained the seed of the principles of 1789’.<sup>7</sup> The first modern treatment of the Ciompi, written by Jean Charles Léonard de Sismondi in the early nineteenth century and revised in 1840, fitted the uprising into the author’s liberal but anti-democrat vision of bourgeois political freedom; the rebels themselves he characterised as ‘enemies of the republic... incapable of liberal feelings’.<sup>8</sup> The English Rising, as Barrie Dobson wrote, only ‘ceased to be regarded as primarily “A Warnyng to Be Ware” after the publication of Thomas Paine’s *The Rights of Man* in 1792’. Its historiography first flourished after the advent of Marxism and the social tumult of the 1880s when André Réville discovered the vast extent of the archival records.<sup>9</sup>

The anachronism of nineteenth-century writers may seem overwhelming to us now,

but twentieth- and twenty-first-century historiography on medieval revolt has tracked contemporary political circumstances with remarkable coincidence. A major wave of interest in the topic arose in the early 1970s, concomitant with the social and political unrest that had begun in the previous decade. A cluster of books – Mollat and Wolff's *Ongles bleus*, Fourquin's *Les soulèvements populaires au Moyen Âge*, and Hilton's *Bond Men Made Free* – was published nearly simultaneously and stood as the essential works, especially in Anglophone historiography, until very recently.<sup>10</sup> The current generation's re-assessment of late medieval polities that became visible at the turn of the millennium no doubt owes something to the rearrangement of global politics in the post-Cold War era and the rise of 'non-state actors'.<sup>11</sup> The subsequent prominence of 'popular movements', ranging from protests at World Trade Organization meetings to the 'Arab Spring' to the 2011 London Riots, has neatly coincided with the revitalization of interest in revolt and medieval 'popular politics'.<sup>12</sup>

That historiography is shaped by the historical context in which it is written does not necessarily mean that its arguments are wrong, even if we sometimes find them infelicitously phrased. We cannot help but see things from our own vantage, and different perspectives reveal different aspects of the past in different lights. But it is worth unpacking those influences to understand how they have worked in relation with other intellectual currents to create particular views of the historical past, which we now build upon, modify, or utterly eschew. For the study of medieval revolt, it is notable that although the past two centuries have seen major shifts in method and interpretation, some central problems have remained surprisingly constant. The relationship between revolt and the state (however conceptualized), attention to social dynamics and non-elite groups (even if sometimes unfavourable), and a profound

concern for language, sources, and source criticism are threads that have run through the scholarship since the beginning of the nineteenth century.

*The State and the Perimeters of 'Revolt'*

Studies of medieval revolt have almost invariably organized themselves around the concept of the state as the arena within which revolts take place and take on meaning. For nineteenth-century historians, who saw medieval uprisings as disruptive eruptions and deviations from normal politics, revolts were directed against the state by constituencies outside of it who opposed its power. Twentieth-century historians, too, understood revolt an expression of opposition to the state, especially to the growth of royal governments. Mollat and Wolff, for example, argued that fourteenth-century revolts erupted in protest against 'the invasion of society by the State', particularly in terms of tax demands.<sup>13</sup> Even in 2006, the rise of the late medieval state was portrayed as something that rebels organized themselves to oppose as an encroachment on 'liberty' understood in the modern sense as freedom from hierarchic control.<sup>14</sup>

As should already be clear, most of the essays in this volume envisage the state in a different and more multi-dimensional way than was the case for earlier historians, and this re-assessment of the state necessarily entails the reconceptualization of late medieval revolt. Nevertheless, the relationship between uprisings and their institutional political context remains central in current writing. Indeed, the political ramifications of revolt are perhaps more important to current historiography than they

have ever been before. New historiography on late medieval politics has revised the view that the remarkable growth of government in the later Middle Ages was an inherently antagonistic process imposed upon an unwilling population, which was thus primed for rebellion. Historians have increasingly shown that ‘the rise of the state’ was a dialogic process in which the governed had considerable agency, often clamouring for *more* government rather than less. People employed the infrastructure and even the ideology of late medieval authorities to their own ends, not just accidentally benefitting from the expansion of government but actively abetting and encouraging it.<sup>15</sup>

In this light, popular protest can often be understood to reflect not unease with the growing reach of government, but dissatisfaction with its limitations. As John Watts’s 2009 book on late medieval politics put it ‘the development of government and its associated politics helped to create and advertise a set of political expectations among the governed’, which created opposition when disappointed.<sup>16</sup> It was not just the state’s fulfilment of its ambitions that engendered criticism, but also its failures to live up to its promises. Analyses of the ubiquitous late medieval discourse of the common good, including those of Hartrich, Titone, and Oliva Herrer in this volume, have repeatedly shown how rebels employed the government’s own language of *bonum commune* (common good), *res publica* (republic or ‘public thing’), or ‘common weal’ to criticise authorities and to advance their own programmes.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, Watts has argued elsewhere that this kind of language actually necessitated intervention by common people in late medieval English politics.<sup>18</sup>

A related shift has been the move to view ‘the state’ not as a monolithic entity in

contrast to or opposition with ‘society’, but rather as a collection of institutions, practices, and ideas indistinct from the people and structures it purported to govern. Watts’s book pointed to the ways through which late medieval states ‘generated structures and resources which smaller powers could use to consolidate their influence or jurisdiction locally’.<sup>19</sup> In cities, where most medieval revolts took place, these resources included not only ‘public’ governmental bodies as we would now think of them, such as royal representatives or the town council, but also such ‘private’ institutions as craft guilds, confraternities, neighbourhood associations, and long established factions, such as the Florentine Guelf Party.<sup>20</sup> In a comparative study of Bruges and York, Jelle Haemers and Christian Liddy pointed to the ways that major revolts in both cities were not only organized by the craft guilds but also employed long-established venues for and methods of complaint to pursue their aims.<sup>21</sup> Patrick Lantschner took this argument further, showing how this fragmentary and multi-centric nature of medieval government meant that, especially in urban contexts, groups could marshal resources from a variety of power bases to pursue their claims.<sup>22</sup>

Conflict was a normal part of this process, and so as Lantschner writes, ‘revolts were not, in general at least, an antithesis, subversion or pathology of the political order’, but rather ‘intensifications of existing processes of negotiation that were ordinarily taking place around the multiple nodes and layers of the city’s political structure’.<sup>23</sup> In this light, Samuel Cohn’s remarkable finding in *Lust for Liberty* that over a thousand popular uprisings took place between 1250 and 1425 not only seems plausible, but appears to be a logical outcome of the make-up of late medieval cities. While the German lands of the Empire were outside of Cohn’s purview, the hundreds of civic

revolts that Gisela Naegle's essay discusses reflect the same phenomenon. The essays in this volume show that such rebellions were usually (though not exclusively) made possible by insurgents' mobilization of pre-existing structures rather than the invention of novel forms. They illustrate that rebellion could function as one extreme of a continuum of normal political processes in late medieval contexts as different as those of Damascus and the English Midlands.

That changes in our view of the state have necessarily resulted in changes in our understanding of revolt is related to a shift in thinking about what violence meant and how it functioned in medieval society. For modern historians whose view of the state was bounded by their experience of the state's '*monopoly* of the *legitimate* use of physical force in the enforcement of its order', violence by what we might call 'non-state' (usually meaning 'non-royal') actors was inherently a disorderly usurpation of governmental prerogatives.<sup>24</sup> But as it has become clearer that 'the state' in the late Middle Ages was much more polycentric, multi-layered, and diffuse than modern Western governments, there has been a consequent move to understand some kinds of violence not as crime but as politics.<sup>25</sup> This kind of reassessment is behind Justine Smithuis's provocative sketch of the relationship between violence and elite leadership of revolt, and it is central, too, to my suggestion that there are lights in which the Jacquerie might be better seen as a military undertaking than as a revolt.

If authority for legitimate violence was a contested question – or simply an open one – this makes the identification of 'revolt' a more uncertain exercise. That violence (real or threatened) should be a key marker seems at least implicit in nearly all of the essays here.<sup>26</sup> But that this violence be direct against 'the state' presents a more

problematic requirement. As Lantschner has argued, many of the groups and institutions involved in rebel coalitions not only had access to the infrastructure of warfare, such as weapons, troops, and banners, but could also make a reasonable legal claim to exercise violence legitimately either on the basis of their institutional ties or because of medieval ideas about justified resistance to tyranny.<sup>27</sup> The legalistic concerns that seem ubiquitous in late medieval society were fundamental to many rebellions and are at the forefront of contributions by Lantschner, Hartrich, Smithuis, and Challet, and are touched on by most others.<sup>28</sup> What constituted a revolt for medieval contemporaries, and what should constitute a revolt for historians now, therefore depends partly on one's perspective, as the essays in the first part of this book illustrate and explore.

### *Social dynamics and non-elites*

Alongside an emphasis on politics in a relatively strict sense, our enquiries have been shaped by a social historical program whose roots again reach back to the subject's earliest historiography. Nineteenth-century studies of medieval revolt were strongly influenced by the period's radically democratic developments, which turned historians' attention not just to the dramatic episodes of revolt, but also to the role of non-elites as historical actors in a broader way. We may have little time for Augustin Thierry's obviously anachronistic characterization in 1827 of the 1112 Laon commune's revolt as the direct ancestor of the French Revolution.<sup>29</sup> On the other hand, his opposition to historiography 'in which the broad mass of the nation disappears under mantles of the court' strikes a sympathetic cord with more recent

efforts to rescue ordinary people ‘from the enormous condescension of posterity’.<sup>30</sup> Twentieth-century historiography ‘from below’, itself partly driven by the major social changes of the 1960s, was fundamental to the studies of medieval revolt that appeared in the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>31</sup>

While the cultural turn moved many historians’ interests away from social history in the later 1980s and 1990s, the turn of the millennium brought renewed attention to how ‘little people’ and their social networks shaped history.<sup>32</sup> The study of medieval revolts stands separate from this larger historiographical field, but it both benefits from and contributes to it a great deal. Medieval sources, which were almost exclusively produced by and for elites, usually have little to say about ordinary people. Except, that is, when they were rebelling. Such exceptional glimpses must be treated very cautiously, with due attention to authorial programs and audience reception, semantics and philology, as well as the obvious fact that they describe acute episodes, not everyday existence. Indeed, Myles Lavan suggests that in the early Roman Empire, the social reality of revolt is irretrievable from elite sources written for the purpose of confirming imperial agendas. The medievalists are more optimistic, but still careful. Paul Freedman’s contribution, on the interplay of peasant and seigneurial violence as portrayed in written and visual sources, is particularly mindful of the interpretive gaps between what the sources intended to tell their audiences, what those audiences might have understood, and what we as historians want to know.<sup>33</sup>

The social world of non-elites as revealed – however partially – through the lens of revolt was one whose inhabitants often show a surprising capacity for political action,

though its extent was more varied than misleadingly homogenous terms like the ‘masses’, ‘commoners’, or ‘little people’ convey.<sup>34</sup> As Gianluca Raccagni shows, although recent emphasis on aristocrats in the central Middle Ages has obscured northern Italy’s communal institutions and culture, the political participation of non-elites was key to civic life, even in extramural political struggles. The range of terms that Jan Dumolyn and Jelle Haemers’s contribution identifies for collective actions in the Low Countries speaks to the variety of ways that urban workers could seek to influence their political and economic fates, even if their bosses and rulers denigrated their efforts. Yet, as Justine Smithuis’s essay reminds us, when a group of non-elites banded together, they nonetheless often had to make ‘vertical’ alliances with their social betters for strategic reasons. And as Eliza Hartrich points out, how a person ‘revolted’ in late medieval England depended a great deal on his or her particular social context: for an unfree English peasant, a lawsuit outside seigniorial jurisdiction might actually be just as effectively ‘rebellious’ in its implications as an armed uprising.

How revolt worked in different social and political contexts is one of the major heuristic dynamics of this book. While the recent re-imagining of the relationship between revolt and the state has been especially focused on urban environments in the late Middle Ages, many of the essays in this book cross those borders, looking at revolts that took place in the countryside and/or in periods outside the core late medieval centuries. Patrick Lantschner’s article shows that his model can work for Islamic cities, as well as Western ones, but he is clear here, as elsewhere, that not all configurations of urban government were equally productive of uprisings.<sup>35</sup> Lavan’s discussion certainly suggests that in an autocratic polity like that of imperial Rome,

conflict was the very antithesis of how politics and government were thought ideally to work. Early medieval political configurations based on rural lordship may have been less productive of revolt, as Chris Wickham argues, though the idea of ‘bad lordship’ served as a galvanizing criticism in the twelfth- and thirteenth-century Lombard Leagues’ struggle with the Emperor, as Raccagni outlines. In the early modern cities of Haberkern’s chapter, the kinds of infrastructure available to rebels were similar to those employed by their late medieval predecessors, but the advent of new kinds of religious struggle – not to mention printing – made for different types of leaders and processes of mobilization.

The question of differences in revolt between rural and urban setting, once a major historiographical focus, has been less urgent in recent years as historians have emphasized relationships between town and country and even partnerships between urban and rural rebels.<sup>36</sup> Cohn’s survey of mostly narrative sources produced a surprisingly meagre harvest of rural revolts, putting paid to Marc Bloch’s famous claim that ‘peasant revolts were as natural to traditional Europe as strikes are today’.<sup>37</sup> It seems possible that there were more rural revolts of varying size and importance that we know about, particularly given that they are more likely to be found in under-exploited archival sources than in the chronicles upon which Cohn’s survey depended.<sup>38</sup> The countryside had a rich social and political landscape of communities and institutions, and it is certain that peasants and rural artisans had knowledge and opinions about politics.<sup>39</sup> Rural people may have been hit hardest by the economic and demographic pressures of the period, especially in the decades following the Black Death (from 1348), though there is far from a consensus on this point, let alone on how such factors might have affected revolt.<sup>40</sup> (Contrast, for example, Cohn’s

argument, that the Black Death's effects galvanized a spirit of liberty leading to revolt, with that of Mollat and Wolff, for whom the post-plague revolts were those of desperation). But if country-dwellers had socio-political infrastructure and ideologies to draw upon in pursuit of their grievances, they had fewer of these tools – not to mention relative wealth and population density – than were available to their urban counterparts.

The fact that social position conditioned how one might engage in revolt is nowhere clearer than with regard to gender. Yet, with the exception of a classic article on the English Rising, work on the intersection of gender and social structure in medieval Europe has little discussed women's involvement in popular politics or protest.<sup>41</sup> This may well be because medieval revolt was a particularly masculine undertaking. One of Cohn's remarkable findings in *Lust for Liberty* was that, contrary to received wisdom and historiographic tradition, women did not dominate late medieval popular movements. Indeed, they were almost entirely absent from them. In this volume, Cohn reprises that research but contrasts it with the situation in the early modern centuries, when women seem to have been more active. This may be one of the areas in which England differed from the continent.<sup>42</sup> But even regarding continental rebellions, not all observers agree with the negative assessment; it may be necessary to look more closely, again especially at archival sources.<sup>43</sup>

Women do make cameo appearances in some of the articles here besides Cohn's. Raccagni notes a few instances of women acting in support of their cities against the emperor, and Prescott, Titone, and Oliva Herrer also mention participation by the occasional woman in episodes from their uprisings. Gender, though less so the

experiences of actual women (or so we think), is addressed in my own piece and that of Vincent Challet. As we both argue, the sources' charges of rebel violence against women may have had more to do with their literary efforts to portray rebels as aliens to normal social practice than with the realities of revolt. It is clear that women were on the whole less prominent as public agents of insurgency in medieval revolts than men were. Whether women might have had a greater role to play in private and how those 'private' roles related to 'public' action are questions that probably require much more research into workers' and peasants' households and family lives than has currently been done, as well as a more thorough reconceptualization of the intersections between the 'public', the 'private', and the 'personal' in the lives of medieval common people.<sup>44</sup>

### *Communicative Strategies*

A final area of emphasis in this collection, arising out of a shared concern for rigorous source criticism, is that of language and communication. Advances in manuscript studies and philology were central to the nineteenth-century historical professionalization and archival training programs that enabled early revolt historians like Luce and Réville to discover and exploit the historical records that had lain forgotten for centuries. Technical mastery and empirical discovery remain fundamental to the research presented here, much of which is based on unpublished sources. We are also greatly indebted to new ways of reading sources and new areas of investigation brought to prominence by the linguistic and cultural turns of the 1980s and 1990s.<sup>45</sup> Insights from literary theory, from sociology, and from

anthropology have transformed how we analyse rebels' reported speech, their banners, badges, and rituals, and the variety of responses with which they were met.<sup>46</sup> The resultant focus on how language, signs, and acts constructed meaning – and therefore power – both during the revolts themselves and in the sources that report them has led to some of the most interesting efforts to recover how and why medieval people rebelled.

As Jan Dumolyn and Jelle Haemers assert in this volume, 'The history of medieval contentious politics cannot be reduced to political quarrels or armed confrontations; it is also a history of discursive conflicts'. The names and works by which rebellions were recorded were important sites of this struggle. As Vincent Challet has shown elsewhere, the names given to rebels or to their movements were often employed to deprive them of legitimacy, a strategy that Prescott also describes in his essay on the English Rising in this volume.<sup>47</sup> Revolts in German-speaking imperial lands also went by a variety of names that frequently conveyed fear, derision, or suspicion, as Naegle's chapter shows. But as Dumolyn and Haemers demonstrate here as elsewhere, folk naming and official labelling could be interwoven.<sup>48</sup> My own chapter suggests that rebels themselves might have contested the derogatory implications of such names and re-appropriated them as positive markers.

The naming of a revolt was part of the larger process of shaping its memory and meaning, a process that we can partially access through the creation and transmission of historical records. These records are fraught with interpretive difficulties: they followed generic conventions with implications for interpretation, and they were also instruments through which their creators consciously sought to control an uprising's

reception and posterity. Chronicles – stylized stories written almost exclusively by and for social elites – and judicial documents – stereotyped accounts representing victorious authority – used revolts to draw moral or historical lessons, when they did not try to suppress their memory altogether.<sup>49</sup> Such programmes might be entirely successful at obscuring rebel voices and perspectives, as Lavan fears for the Roman imperial case. Those who work on later periods must carefully consider the insights he has gleaned from work on discourses of modern counter-insurgency, and Freedman’s essay goes a long way toward this. But in contrast to imperial Roman sources, those of the late Middle Ages are more numerous and more varied in type and in terms of the discourses of power in which they participated. They sometimes betray evidence of confusion, contradiction, or even open ideological contestation.<sup>50</sup> Here, we try to exploit these cracks, not necessarily in the hope of finding out ‘what really happened’ – for our view will always be partial in both senses of that term – but rather to access other ways that these events might have been imagined and understood.

Far preferable to looking at what was said about rebels after the fact, of course, is to focus on what they themselves said at the time. Whether rebels (reportedly) cried, ‘Long live the king!’, ‘For our common good and profit!’, or ‘Death to the treacherous governor!’ when they stormed a palace or a grain silo gives us insights into their specific grievances and their wider socio-political culture. Our evidence here, of course, is obviously mediated by the same sources and consequently subject to the same interpretative problems as that of the memorialization of revolt. As Christian Liddy’s chapter discusses, the surveillance and suppression of rebellious discourse was a major preoccupation of English authorities, but their efforts were

often unsuccessful. We know that bill-casting, pamphleteering, and the distribution of circular letters took place, as well as the composition of sermons, songs, and even visual art.<sup>51</sup> Gisela Naegle is able to trace some networks of communication in the medieval Empire, while Philip Haberkern's evidence allows him to examine how the leaders of early modern religious rebellions manipulated a variety of media, including print, before and during uprisings. For earlier rebellions, we sometimes have the petitions or complaints submitted by rebels, but the literary production of most revolts was either immediately destroyed or has proved too ephemeral for the centuries. The sources as we have them sometimes present the rebels as almost speechless (though they frequently also consider them noisy), but in many cases, especially urban ones, they give us a surprising amount of evidence about what the rebels supposedly said.

Recent analyses of these utterances have argued that rebels' words were based upon an established and deeply meaningful linguistic repertoire.<sup>52</sup> Here and there, we may catch glimpses of the 'hidden transcripts' of workers' and peasants' resistance to the hegemonic ideologies of exploitative regimes that the anthropologist James Scott has taught us to look for.<sup>53</sup> But, even allowing for the sources' normalizing agendas, much rebellious speech was not drawn from now obscure idioms of non-elite culture. Rather, their language usually reflected a discourse of values commonly held: peace, justice, profit, liberty, and, as discussed above, the common good. Christian humility, spiritual equality, and holy poverty were also normative values that shaped the rebels' language and social imagination, much as they did those of their enemies.<sup>54</sup>

Shared discourses, however, did not necessarily mean that popular political visions were conservative or anodyne. As Titone's essay on 'disciplined dissent' in Sicily

shows, rebels might strategically adopt the language of obedience to princely authority in order to advance programmes whose socio-political implications were actually rather radical. In England and Flanders, the valorisation of the ‘commonwealth’, combined with the inclusion of the ‘commons’ in politics, meant that political discourse was not always hegemonic nor resistance hidden. Rather, dissent was integral to civic political life, as Watts, Lantschner, and Haemers and Liddy have emphasized elsewhere, and as Hartrich expands upon in this book.<sup>55</sup>

In addition to the written and spoken word, rebellion and its repression were also articulated and pursued through signs, including clothing, banners, flags, and badges, as well as rituals of many types. The passions that flag-burning or Nazi salutes provoke in our own times perhaps give us some insight into the potentially powerful effects that signs might produce, a power that must have been much greater in the mostly non-literate (or para-literate) societies of the Middle Ages. Research into the semiotic life of medieval societies, often inspired by anthropological work, has shown the rich language of signs and rituals that groups employed to express and to effect their objectives, including those of rebellion.<sup>56</sup> Flags and banners were used to rally followers, as has been particularly well documented in Italy.<sup>57</sup> Bells sounded throughout cities and countryside alike to call inhabitants to rebellion.<sup>58</sup> In Flanders, guildsmen gathered under their banners and in arms in the market squares, a practice evocatively called the *waepening*, to signal their revolt.<sup>59</sup> In the neighbouring northern French cities, it has been argued, street theatre and revolt might blend seamlessly into one another.<sup>60</sup>

Rituals are one place we might look for the ‘non-rational’ features of revolts,

especially in terms of carnivalesque or ‘popular religious’ elements and their emotional impact. The folkloric or ludic aspects of rebellion are central to some classic works of medieval and early modern historiography on revolt,<sup>61</sup> but these topics are mostly absent here. As Dumolyn and Haemers note, some of the names given to Flemish revolts may have associations with liturgical feasts or popular celebrations. There are also some reports of apparently festive behaviour in the English Rising, and the names given to it such as ‘the rifling time’ emphasized this characteristic, but Prescott observes that we must consider whether and how the sources’ authors used this aspect to discredit the Rising.<sup>62</sup> This point is all the more salient given the interplay discussed in Freedman’s chapter between the reports of gruesome and ritualistic violence in rebellions and that of their suppression and punishment by the authorities. Festive behaviour may be less central to medieval revolts than was once thought – indeed I know of only two possible examples in the Jacquerie<sup>63</sup> – but its appearances in the sources require the most sensitive of readings.

Apocalypticism, prophecy, spiritual experience, and even religious language are also sparsely in evidence in this volume, again despite seminal work in the field.<sup>64</sup> When such subjects do appear, they are in contexts different to those examined in most other chapters. Lantschner shows that Islam, as a legal framework as well as a religious one, was central to revolt in Damascus to a much greater extent than Christianity was in Bolognese revolts, while prophecy and preaching were major media of rebellion in the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century landscapes explored by Philip Haberkern.<sup>65</sup> But as Oliva Herrer notes in his chapter, the millenarianism once ascribed to rural rebels during the War of the Communities of Castile has, at best, a doubtful evidentiary basis. It is true that if we had been able to include essays on heresy and popular

crusade, these kinds of topics would have been more in evidence.<sup>66</sup> (It is particularly regrettable that John Arnold was unable to include his conference contribution on remembering heresy and rebellion in Southern France in the volume). Still, that these topics are not a major theme of discussion reflects the fact that the types of conflict that we have concentrated on simply did not evince major elements of religious structures or spiritual experiences.

The emphases in this volume may thus suggest an inattention to their affective implications for rebels and their targets. Our relative reserve on this topic partly reflects an unwillingness to copy the sources' ascription of irrational and/or excessively emotional motives to medieval insurgents, particularly as the sources seem very selective about what they do tell us of rebels' affective experience. While *hilaria* (joy or fun) is mentioned at least once in the Flemish sources discussed by Dumolyn and Haemers, our sources are generally much more expansive about the rebels' anger – perhaps because *ira* was a mortal sin – and their targets' fear. Moreover, as Freedman's article stresses, we cannot know what medieval audiences found 'fun' or 'funny'. It is difficult enough to access such responses in the sources produced by elites for themselves,<sup>67</sup> and their description of rebels' feelings is at best second-hand, when not fantastical and/or programmatically biased. The growing body of scholarship on the historicity of emotions will no doubt expand our understanding of the role that affective experience and emotive language played in revolts and their records,<sup>68</sup> but many of the essays here do note such affective expressions, at least in passing. My own chapter makes clear that terror was essential not only to many contemporaries' experience of the Jacquerie – including those who were allegedly

forced to participate in it – but also to efforts to shape its memory afterward.

Fear's centrality to the mechanisms of revolt and its reception is also implicit in the attention that we pay to violence, a theme that runs throughout this collection. As discussed above, new insights into the multi-polar nature of political authority in the late Middle Ages have taken place in step with a more positive re-evaluation of the role of violence in medieval society. Here, we understand violence and the threat thereof as a strategic tool for the accomplishment of rebellion and its suppression – that is, as physical force causing destruction, pain, and terror – but we also consider it as a form of communication. In the absence of recorded speech, which the sources often ignored or suppressed and which they always mediate with some effect, such violence may be our only entrée to rebels' mental architecture.<sup>69</sup> For historians of medieval violence more generally, anthropology has been fundamental to understanding violence as a complex phenomenon whose form, use, and meaning are highly dependent upon socio-political and cultural context.<sup>70</sup> For the study of revolt in particular, this approach has meant a re-evaluation of what medieval chroniclers often represented as the savagery of rebellions. Drawing also upon sociological research, historians of revolt increasingly think about violent acts as part of a 'repertoire' of actions with established meanings and social functions that rebels consciously employed in significant ways.<sup>71</sup>

The essays in this book show that what violence meant was entirely context specific and subject to change. Challet speaks in terms of a 'grammar of violence' whose vocabulary was nonetheless geographically (and presumably, chronologically) specific. Violence was often carefully targeted and limited, as Titone shows in Sicily,

and indeed could backfire if it exceeded limits, as Challet argues. It could serve not only materially strategic ends, such as the destruction of opponents' fortresses, jails, or archives, but also a means of communicating specific grievances or even as social commentary. As Paul Freedman demonstrates, the brutal repression of revolt might draw upon long-established tropes and stereotypes, but audiences' interpretation of those acts could vary tremendously, sometimes in ways alien to our own seemingly intuitive (but actually culturally-conditioned) reactions. What was most 'violent' in medieval eyes might not be a murder or a housebreaking but rather a lawsuit, as Hartrich argues, or even, as Challet suggests, a handshake.

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Historians have only recently begun to appreciate fully just how much the revolts of the later Middle Ages can tell us about the people, practices, and ideas that constituted historical society. How we understand the relationship between legal authority, violence, and politics has undergone a transformation in recent years. Building on those insights and attentive to the critical role of language and performance in shaping revolts and their sources, we hope to have provided a more complex but also more satisfying reading of a variety of revolts in a range of geographic and chronological contexts. None of us would claim to have definitive answers to the questions we have asked, nor even to have asked all the questions we ought to have done. The full potential of the study of medieval revolts for medieval historiography is long from being realized. What we aim to have done in this volume is to have moved the conversation forward. If the evidence we have found and the arguments in which we employ it start more debates than they settle, we will have accomplished our most

important objective.

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<sup>1</sup> Collections include M. T. Fögen (ed.), *Ordnung und Aufruhr im Mittelalter. Historische und juristische Studien zur Rebellion*, Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1995; M. Bourin, G. Cherubini, and G. Pinto (eds), *Rivolte urbane e rivolte contadine nell'Europa del Trecento: un conforto*, Florence: Firenze University Press 2008; G. Brunel and S. Brunet (eds), *'Haro sur le seigneur!': Les luttes anti-seigneuriales dans l'Europe médiévale et moderne*, Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 2009; H. R. Oliva Herrer, V. Challet, J. Dumolyn, and M. A. Carmona Ruiz (eds), *La comunidad medieval como esfera pública*, Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 2014; J. Dumolyn, J. Haemers, H. R. Oliva Herrer, and V. Challet (eds), *The Voices of the People in Late Medieval Europe: Communication and Popular Politics*, Turnhout: Brepols, 2014, and J. A. Solórzano Telechea, B. Arízaga Bolumburu, and J. Haemers (eds), *Los grupos populares en la ciudad medieval europea*, Logroño: Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, 2014.

<sup>2</sup> S. K. Cohn, jr., *Lust for Liberty: The Politics of Social Revolt in Medieval Europe, 1200–1450: Italy, France, and Flanders*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006. Cohn also published a source reader for teaching: *Popular Protest in Late Medieval Europe: Italy, France, and Flanders*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004 and a comparative study on England: *Popular Protest in Late Medieval Towns*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> All authors carefully consider the problems of historical identification and sources' languages but spend little time making distinctions between modern categories like 'revolt', 'rebellion', 'uprising', etc., which do not seem useful given the sources' own

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semantic variability (discussed below and at length throughout the volume). Cf. the essay of Dumolyn and Haemers, who prefer the sociologist Charles Tilly's term 'contentious politics'.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. D. L. Horowitz, *The Deadly Ethnic Riot*, Berkley, CA: California University Press, 2001; C. Tilly and S. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Boulder, CO: Paradigm, 2007; D. Frost and R. Phillips, (eds), *Liverpool '81 Remembering the Riots*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011; and see n. 11, below.

<sup>5</sup> Quote from M. Mollat and P. Wolff, *The Popular Revolutions of the Late Middle Ages*, trans. by A. L. Lytton-Sells, London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1973, p. 11.

<sup>6</sup> On the Ciompi, see P. Lantschner, 'The "Ciompi Revolution" constructed: modern historians and the nineteenth-century paradigm of revolution', *Annali di Storia di Firenze*, 4, 2009, pp. 277–97. Spanish *comunero* historiography has some similarities, discussed in H. R. Oliva Herrer's essay in this volume.

<sup>7</sup> S. Luce, *Histoire de la Jacquerie d'après des documents inédits*, 1<sup>st</sup> edn, Paris: A. Durand, 1859, pp. 147–8, new edn, Paris: Honoré Champion, 1894, pp. 127–8.

<sup>8</sup> J. C. L. S. de Sismondi, *Histoire des républiques italiennes du Moyen Âge*, new edn, 10 vols, Paris: Furne et ce., 1840 [1809–18], 4: 455.

<sup>9</sup> R. B. Dobson, *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, London: Macmillan, 1983, pp. xliii–xliv. Similarly, see A. Wood, *The 1549 Rebellions and the Making of Early Modern England*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, pp. 257–64. A. Réville, *Le soulèvement des travailleurs d'Angleterre en 1381*, Paris: A. Picard et fils, 1898.

<sup>10</sup> M. Mollat and P. Wolff, *Ongles bleus, Jacques et Ciompi: Les révolutions populaires en Europe aux XIV<sup>e</sup> et XV<sup>e</sup> siècles*, Paris: Calman-Lévy, 1970, trans. as Mollat and Wolff, *Popular Revolutions*; G. Fourquin, *Les soulèvements populaires au Moyen Âge*,

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Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1972, trans. by A. Chesters as *The Anatomy of Popular Rebellion in the Middle Ages*, Oxford: North-Holland, 1978; R. H. Hilton, *Bond Men Made Free: Medieval Peasant Movements and the English Rising of 1381*, New York, Viking Press, 1973. See also P. Blickle (ed.), *Revolte und Revolution in Europa*, Munich: Oldenbourg, 1975 and P. Blickle and C. Catt, 'Peasant revolts in the German empire in the late Middle Ages', *Social History*, 4, 1979, pp. 223–39.

<sup>11</sup> For the way that the concept of 'revolution' has run into difficulties in recent history, see J. Foran, D. Lane, and A. Zivkovic (eds), *Revolution in the Making of the Modern World: Social Identities, Globalization, and Modernity*, Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2008, pt. 4.

<sup>12</sup> For the influence of recent events on studies of medieval revolt, see J. Haemers, 'A victorious state and defeated rebels? Historians' views of violence and urban revolts in medieval Flanders', in D. Nicholas, B. S. Bachrach, and J. M. Murray (eds), *Comparative Perspectives on History and Historians: Essays in Memory of Bryce Lyon (1920-2007)*, Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2012, pp. 112–3 and the conclusion to A. Prescott, "'Great and horrible rumour": shaping the English Revolt of 1381', in this volume. I also wish to thank my student S. Monaghan for her thoughtful essay 'Making sense of madness: writing about rebels and rioters in 1381 and 2011' written for ME3425 'The Age of Revolt', University of St Andrews, 2014.

<sup>13</sup> Mollat and Wolff, *Popular Revolutions*, p. 283.

<sup>14</sup> Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, ch. 10.

<sup>15</sup> E.g. G. Harriss, *Shaping the Nation: England, 1360–1461*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005; D. L. Smail, *The Consumption of Justice: Emotions, Publicity, and Legal Culture in Marseille, 1264–1423*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003; J. Watts,

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*The Making of Polities: Europe, 1300-1500*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009; J. Firnhaber-Baker, *Violence and the State in Languedoc, 1250–1400*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014; P. Lantschner, *The Logic of Political Conflict in Late Medieval Cities: Italy and the Southern Low Countries, 1370–1440*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

<sup>16</sup> Watts, *The Making of Polities*, p. 273.

<sup>17</sup> E. Lecuppre-Desjardin and A.-L. van Bruaene (eds), *De Bono Communi: The Discourse and Practice of the Common Good in the European City (13<sup>th</sup>–16<sup>th</sup> C.)*, Turnhout: Brepols, 2010. See also (among many others) P. Blickle, ‘Der Gemeine Nutzen. Ein kommunaler Wert und seine politische Karriere’, in H. Münkler and H. Bluhm (eds), *Gemeinwohl und Gemeinsinn. Historische Semantiken politischer Leitbegriffe*, Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2001, pp. 85–107; V. Challet, ‘Political *topos* or community principle? *Res publica* as a source of legitimacy in the French peasants’ revolts of the late Middle Ages’ in W. Blockmans, A. Holenstein, J. Mathieu, and D. Schläppi (eds), *Empowering Interactions: Political Cultures and the Emergence of the State in Europe 1300–1900*, Farnham and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009, pp. 205–18; J. Dumolyn, ‘“Our land is only founded on trade and industry”: Economic discourses in fifteenth-century Bruges’, *JMH*, 36, 2010, 374–89; and essays by C. Fletcher, J. Watts, and A. Stella in Dumolyn et al. (eds), *Voices of the People* and by M. Asenjo González, J. Haemers, H. R. Oliva Herrer, and J. Firnhaber-Baker in Oliva Herrer et al. (eds), *La comunidad*.

<sup>18</sup> J. Watts, ‘Popular voices in England’s War of the Roses, c. 1445–c. 1485’, in Dumolyn et al. (eds), *Voices of the People*, 107–22.

<sup>19</sup> Watts, *The Making of Polities*, p. 275.

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<sup>20</sup> On the relative frequency of urban to rural revolts see Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, ch. 2 and contributions by Prescott, Firnhaber-Baker, Wickham, and Oliva Herrer in this volume, as well as further discussion below. The English case may have differed from that of continental societies: S. K. Cohn, jr., ‘Revolts of the late Middle Ages and the peculiarities of the English’ in R. Goddard, J. Langdon, and M. Müller (eds), *Survival and Discord in Medieval Society: Essays in Honour of Christopher Dyer*, Turnhout: Brepols, 2010, pp. 269–85.

<sup>21</sup> J. Haemers and C. Liddy, ‘Popular politics in the late medieval city: York and Bruges’, *EHR*, 128, 2013, pp. 771–805; and see J. Haemers, ‘Governing and gathering about the common welfare of the town: the petitions of the craft guilds of Leuven, 1378’, in Oliva Herrer et al. (eds), *La comunidad*, pp. 153–69.

<sup>22</sup> P. Lantschner, ‘Revolts and the political order of cities in the late Middle Ages’, *P&P*, 225, 2014, pp. 5–11; idem, *The Logic of Political Conflict*.

<sup>23</sup> Lantschner, ‘Revolts and the political order’, p. 4.

<sup>24</sup> M. Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, ed. and trans. by A.M. Henderson and T. Parsons, New York: Oxford University Press, 1947, p. 154.

<sup>25</sup> This revision has taken place in dialogue with developments in the scholarship on ‘feud’: e.g. P. C. Maddern, *Violence and Social Order: East Anglia, 1422–1442*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992; H. Zmora, *State and Nobility in Early Modern Germany: The Knightly Feud in Franconia, 1440–1567*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997; H. Kaminsky, ‘The noble feud in the later Middle Ages’, *P&P*, 177, 2002, pp. 55–83; A. Zorzi, ‘*Fracta est civitas magna in tres partes: conflitto e costituzione nell’Italia comunale*’, *Scienza e politica*, 39, 2008, pp. 61–87; works by Harriss and Firnhaber-Baker cited in n. 15, above; and seminally, if problematically, O. Brunner, *Land und*

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*Herrschaft: Grundfragen der territorialen Verfassungsgeschichte Südostdeutschlands im Mittelalter*, 1<sup>st</sup> edn, Baden bei Wien: Rohrer, 1939, trans. (of the 4<sup>th</sup> edn) by H. Kaminsky and J. Van Horn Melton as *Land and Lordship: Structures of Governance in Medieval Austria*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992.

<sup>26</sup> As Haemers and Liddy put it, ‘What separated revolt and rebellion from other kinds of collective action was the threat (not necessarily the reality) of physical force and the refusal to submit to the wishes of the authorities’ (‘Popular politics’, p. 785). Cf. Liddy in this volume and Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, p. 4.

<sup>27</sup> Lantschner, ‘Revolts and the political order’, pp. 37–44.

<sup>28</sup> See also A. Wood, ‘Collective violence, social drama and rituals of rebellion in late medieval and early modern England’ in S. Carroll (ed.), *Cultures of Violence: Interpersonal Violence in Historical Perspective*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, pp. 101–4; Haemers and Liddy, ‘Popular politics’, esp. p. 800.

<sup>29</sup> A. Thierry, *Lettres sur l’histoire de France, pour servir d’introduction à l’étude de cette histoire*, Paris: Sautet, 1827, pp. 270–312.

<sup>30</sup> Thierry, *Lettres sur l’histoire de France*, p. 4, quoted in P. den Boer, ‘Historical writing in France, 1800–1914’, in S. Macintyre, J. Maiguaschca, and A. Pók (eds), *The Oxford History of Historical Writing*, vol. 4: 1800–1945, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 187–8. ‘Condescension’: E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, London, V. Gollancz, 1963, p. 12.

<sup>31</sup> On history from below, see E. P. Thompson, ‘History from below’, *The Times Literary Supplement*, 7 April 1966, pp. 279–80; J. Sharpe, ‘History from below’, in P. Burke (ed.), *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001, ch. 2. On the implications of social changes in the Anglo-American academy, see G. M.

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Spiegel, *The Past as Text: The Theory and Practice of Medieval Historiography*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997, pp. 71, 78–9 and E. R. Leach, ‘Glimpses of the unmentionable in the history of British social anthropology’, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 13, 1984, pp. 1–23.

<sup>32</sup> E.g. works cited in n. 39, below; P. Freedman, *Images of the Medieval Peasant*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999; idem and M. Bourin (eds), *Forms of Servitude in Northern and Central Europe: Decline, Resistance, and Expansion*, Turnhout: Brepols, 2005; P. Boglioni, R. Delort, and C. Gauvard (eds), *Le petit peuple dans l’Occident médiéval: Terminologies, perceptions, réalités*, Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2002; and for the early Middle Ages, C. Wickham, *Framing the Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean, 400–800*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, pt. 3. Work on English rural commoners remained robust through the end of the millennium. Important books since 2000 include P. R. Schofield, *Peasant and Community in Medieval England, 1200–1500*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003; C. Briggs, *Credit and Village Society in Fourteenth-Century England*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009; and Goddard, Langdon, and Müller (eds), *Survival and Discord*.

<sup>33</sup> See also S. Greenblatt, ‘Murdering peasants: status, genre, and the representation of rebellion’, *Representations*, 1, 1983, pp. 1–29 and P. Strohm, ‘“A revelle!”: chronicle evidence and the rebel voice’, in *Hochon’s Arrow: The Social Imagination of Fourteenth-Century Texts*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992, ch. 2.

<sup>34</sup> V. Challet and I. Forrest, ‘The masses’, in C. Fletcher, J.-P. Genet, and J. Watts (eds), *Government and Political Life in England and France, c.1300–c.1500*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015, pp. 279–316; J. Watts, ‘Public or plebs: the changing meaning of “the commons”, 1381–1549’, in H. Pryce and J. Watts (eds), *Power and*

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*Identity in the Middle Ages: Essays in Memory of Rees Davies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 242–60.

<sup>35</sup> Lantschner, ‘Revolts and the political order’, pp. 5, 33–4.

<sup>36</sup> W. H. TeBrake, *A Plague of Insurrection: Popular Politics and Peasant Revolt in Flanders, 1323–1328*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993; V. Challet, ‘La révolte des Tuchins: banditisme social ou sociabilité villageoise?’, *Médiévales*, 17, 1998, pp. 101–12; S. K. Cohn, jr., *Creating the Florentine State: Peasants and Rebellion, 1348–1434*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999; and see essays by Prescott, Oliva Herrer, and Firnhaber-Baker in this volume. For older views, see R. H. Hilton, ‘Révoltes rurales et révoltes urbaines au Moyen Âge’, in F. Gambrelle and M. Trebitsch (eds), *Révolte et société, Actes du IVe colloque d’histoire au présent*, 2 vols, Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1989, 2: 25–33.

<sup>37</sup> M. Bloch, *French Rural History: An Essay on its Basic Characteristics*, trans. J. Sondheimer, London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1966 [French edn, 1931], p. 170. (1931 was a ‘today’ of more, and much more radical, labour strikes than we are accustomed to in our own ‘today’.)

<sup>38</sup> V. Challet, ‘Un village sans histoire? La communauté de Villeveyrac en Languedoc’, in Dumolyn et al. (eds), *Voices of the People*, pp. 123–38.

<sup>39</sup> R. Faith, ‘The ‘Great Rumour’ of 1377 and peasant ideology’, *The English Rising of 1381*, ed. R. H. Hilton and T. H. Aston, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984, pp. 43–73; D. A. Carpenter, ‘English peasants in politics, 1258–1267’, *P&P*, 136, 1992, pp. 3–42; C. Gauvard, ‘Rumeur et stéréotypes à la fin du Moyen Âge’, in *La circulation des nouvelles au Moyen Âge*, Rome: École française de Rome, 1994, pp. 157–77; J. Watts, ‘The pressure of the public on later medieval politics’, in C. Carpenter and L.

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Clark (eds), *The Fifteenth Century IV: Political Culture in Late Medieval Britain*, Woodbridge: Boydell, 2004, pp. 159–80; J. Dumolyn, ‘The vengeance of the commune: sign systems of popular politics in medieval Bruges’, in in Oliva Herrer et al. (eds), *La comunidad*, pp. 259, 268–9.

<sup>40</sup> T. H. Aston and C. H. E. Philpin (eds), *The Brenner Debate: Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-industrial Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985; B. M. S. Campbell (ed.), *Before the Black Death: Studies in the ‘Crisis’ of the Early Fourteenth Century*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991; C. Dyer, *Making a Living in the Middle Ages: The People of Britain, 850–1520*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002, pp. 228–97.

<sup>41</sup> S. Federico, ‘The imaginary society: women in 1381’, *Journal of British Studies*, 40, 2001, pp. 159–83. On gender in depictions of 1381 see W. M. Ormrod, ‘In bed with Joan of Kent: the king’s mother and the Peasants’ Revolt’, in J. Wogan-Browne (ed.), *Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts in Late Medieval Britain: Essays for Felicity Riddy*, Turnhout: Brepols, 2000, pp. 277–92. Regarding the failure of gender historians and social historians of early modern England to engage intensively with one another’s work, see A. Wood, ‘History from below and early modern social history’ <<https://manyheadedmonster.wordpress.com/2013/08/21/andy-wood-history-from-below-and-early-modern-social-history/>>.

<sup>42</sup> Cohn, *Popular Protest ... English Towns*, p. 7.

<sup>43</sup> Challet, ‘Un village sans histoire?’, p. 133.

<sup>44</sup> Federico, ‘The imaginary society’, pp. 182–3. Useful starting points include M. C. Howell, *Women, Production, and Patriarchy in Late Medieval Cities* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986; P. J. P. Goldberg, ‘The public and the private:

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women in the pre-plague economy’, in P. R. Coss and S. D. Lloyd (eds), *Thirteenth Century England III*, Woodbridge: Boydell, 1991, pp. 75–89; Freedman, *Images of the Medieval Peasant*, ch. 7; S. A. Farmer, *Surviving Poverty in Medieval Paris: Gender, Ideology, and the Daily Lives of the Poor*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002.

For masculinity of king and commoners in English politics, see the work of C. Fletcher, particularly ‘Manhood, kingship, and the public in late medieval England’, *Edad media, revista de historia*, 13, 2012, pp. 123–42.

<sup>45</sup> Justice, *Writing and Rebellion*, pp. 5–8; Dumolyn, ‘The vengeance of the commune,’ pp. 252–6.

<sup>46</sup> E.g. The influence of Clifford Geertz on P. J. Arnade, *Realms of Ritual: Burgundian Ceremony and Civic Life in Late Medieval Ghent*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996; of James C. Scott on C. Wickham, ‘Gossip and resistance among the medieval peasantry’, *P&P*, 160, 1998, pp. 3–24 and Justice, *Writing and Rebellion*; of Victor Turner on Wood, ‘Collective violence’; and of sociologists and linguists on Dumolyn and Haemers.

<sup>47</sup> V. Challet, ‘L’exclusion par le nom: réflexions sur la dénomination des révoltés à la fin du Moyen-Âge’, in N. Gonthier (ed.), *L’exclusion au Moyen Âge*, Lyon: Centre d’histoire médiévale, Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3, 2007, pp. 373–88; A. Stella, ‘“Ciompi...gens de la plus basse condition...crasseux et dépenaillés”: désigner, inférioriser, exclure’, in Boglioni, Delort, and Gauvard (eds), *Le petit peuple*, pp. 145–52.

<sup>48</sup> J. Dumolyn and J. Haemers, ‘“A bad chicken was brooding”: subversive speech in late medieval Flanders’, *P&P*, 214, 2012, pp. 45–86.

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<sup>49</sup> V. Challet, ‘Peasants’ revolts memories: *Damnatio memoriae* or hidden memories’, in L. Doležalová (ed.), *The Making of Memory in the Middle Ages*, Leiden: Brill, 2010, pp. 397–413.

<sup>50</sup> See also, Strohm, “‘A reveille!’” and A. Stella, “‘Racconciare la terra’: À l’écoute des voix des “Ciompi” de Florence en 1378’ in Dumolyn et al. (eds), *Voices of the People*, pp. 139–47.

<sup>51</sup> W. Scase, “‘Strange and wonderful bills’”: bill-casting and political discourse in late medieval England’, in R. Copeland, D. Lawton, and W. Scase (eds), *New Medieval Literatures II*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1998, pp. 225–47; E. Lecuppre-Desjardin, ‘Des portes qui parlent: placards, feuilles volantes et communication politique dans les villes des Pays-Bas à la fin du Moyen Âge’, *Bibliothèque de l’École des Chartes*, 168, 2010, pp. 151–72; M. K. Perett, ‘Vernacular songs as “oral pamphlets”: the Hussites and their propaganda campaign’, *Viator*, 42, 2011, pp. 371–92; C. Liddy, ‘Bill casting and political communication: a public sphere in late medieval English towns?’, in J. A. Solórzano Telechea and B. Arizaga Bolúmburu (eds), *La gobernanza de la ciudad europea en la Edad Media*, Logroño: Instituto de Estudios Riojanos, 2011, pp. 447–61; J. Dumolyn and J. Haemers, ‘Political poems and subversive songs: the circulation of “public poetry” in the late medieval Low Countries’, *Journal of Dutch Literature*, 5, 2014, pp. 1–22.

<sup>52</sup> Dumolyn, “‘Our land is only founded on trade and industry’”; A. Gamberini, J.-P. Genet, and A. Zorzi (eds), *The Languages of Political Society: Western Europe, 14th–17th Centuries*, Rome: Viella, 2011; and see blog contributions to the 2015 on-line symposium ‘Voices of the people’ focused on early modern and modern history: <<https://manyheadedmonster.wordpress.com/voices-of-the-people/>>.

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- <sup>53</sup> J. C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985; idem, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990.
- <sup>54</sup> Freedman, *Image of the Medieval Peasant*, ch. 11; J. H. Arnold, 'Religion and popular rebellion, from the Capuciati to Niklashausen', *Cultural and Social History*, 6, 2009, pp. 149–69.
- <sup>55</sup> Watts, 'Popular voices', pp. 114–6; Liddy and Haemers, 'Popular protest'.
- <sup>56</sup> C. de Merindol, 'Mouvements sociaux et troubles politiques à la fin du Moyen Âge: essai sur la symbolique des villes' in *Violence et contestation au Moyen Âge: Actes du 144e congrès des sociétés savantes (Paris, 1989), section d'histoire médiévale et de philologie*, Paris: C.T.H.S., 1990, pp. 267–302; Wood, 'Collective violence'; E. J. Hutchison, 'Partisan identity in the French civil war, 1405–1418: reconsidering the evidence on livery badges', *JMH*, 33, 2007, pp. 250–74.
- <sup>57</sup> Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, ch. 8; R. C. Trexler, 'Follow the flag: the Ciompi Revolt seen from the streets', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 46, 1984, pp. 357–92. For flags in northern European revolts, see Haemers and Dumolyn, Firnhaber-Baker, and Smithuis in this volume.
- <sup>58</sup> Cohn, Dumolyn, and Firnhaber-Baker in Oliva Herrer, et al (eds), *La comunidad*; J. H. Arnold and C. Goodson, 'Resounding community: the history and meaning of medieval church bells', *Viator*, 43, 2012, pp. 99–130.
- <sup>59</sup> J. Haemers, 'A moody community? Emotion and ritual in late medieval urban revolts', in E. Lecuppre-Desjardin and A.-L. Van Bruaene (eds), *Emotions in the Heart of the City (14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century)*, Turnhout: Brepols, 2005, pp. 63–81.

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<sup>60</sup> H. Skoda, *Medieval Violence: Physical Brutality in Northern France, 1270–1330*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 164–9; and more generally on performance and the medieval public sphere, C. Symes, *A Common Stage: Theater and Public Life in Medieval Arras*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007.

<sup>61</sup> N. Z. Davis, ‘The reasons of misrule’, in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France: Eight Essays*, London: Duckworth, 1975, ch. 4; R. Darnton, ‘Workers revolt: the great cat massacre of the rue Saint-Séverin’, in *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History*, New York: Basic Books, 1984, ch. 2; Y.-M. Bercé, *Histoire des Croquants*, Paris: Seuil, 1986, trans. A. Whitmore as *History of Peasant Revolts: The Social Origins of Rebellion in Early Modern France*, Cambridge: Polity, 1990.

<sup>62</sup> See also M. Aston, ‘*Corpus christi* and *corpus regni*: heresy and the Peasants’ Revolt’, *P&P*, 143, 1994, pp. 3–47.

<sup>63</sup> For example, I know of only two reports of ‘carnavalesque’ behavior during the Jacquerie: That the Jacques dressed themselves and their wives up in the nobles’ clothes (J. de Venette, *Chronique dite de Jean de Venette*, ed. C. Beaune, Paris: Le Livre de Poche, 2011, p. 176) and that an assembly featured music and dancing (AN JJ 86, no. 265, fol. 89r, ed. in Luce, *Histoire de la Jacquerie*, no. 34).

<sup>64</sup> N. Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages*, rev. edn, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970 [1957];

<sup>65</sup> On prophecy as a medium for popular politics in medieval England and France, see Challet and Forrest, ‘The masses’, pp. 291–4.

<sup>66</sup> For popular crusade, see D. Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996, ch. 2–4.

<sup>67</sup> Greenblatt, ‘Murdering peasants’.

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<sup>68</sup> E.g. Haemers, ‘A moody community?’ and other essays in Lecuppre-Desjardin and Van Bruaene (eds), *Emotions in the Heart of the City*; Challet and Forrest, ‘The masses’, pp. 294–7.

<sup>69</sup> Stella, “‘Racconciare la terra’”; B. Bommersbach, ‘Gewalt in der Jacquerie von 1358’, in N. Bulst, I. Gilcher-Holtey, and H.-G. Haupt (eds), *Gewalt im politischen Raum. Fallanalysen vom Spätmittelalter bis ins 20. Jahrhundert*, Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2008, pp. 46–81.

<sup>70</sup> For some guide to the vast scholarship, see the works cited in n. 25, above.

<sup>71</sup> C. Tilly, ‘Contentious repertoires in Great Britain, 1758–1834’, *Social Science History*, 17, 1993, pp. 253–280; idem, *Contentious Performances*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.