Jodocus Damhouder, *Praxis Rerum Criminalium*, 1562, p. 167

University of Maryland, College Park, MD, August, 18-20, 2013
### EARLY MODERN WORKSHOP: Jewish History Resources

**Volume 10: Jews and Violence in the Early Modern Period, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, August, 18-20, 2013**

Keynote Robert Davis, Ohio State University. "Typologies of Violence in Early-Modern Europe"

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Plague and Violence against Jews in Early Modern Europe
Samuel K. Cohn, Jr., University of Glasgow


Chapter CII

Of how the king sent Tristan da Cunha to India as a captain of a fleet, and on the uprising that happened in Lisbon against New Christians.

…[the second day of the massacre]

To this gang of bad men and monks, who, without fear of God were carrying on in the streets, inciting people to such cruelty, more than a thousand men from the countryside, of the same mean sort, joined the others on Monday, and fanned this evil with even greater cruelty. And since this mob could no longer find any more New Christians in the streets, with battering rams and ladders, they attacked the houses where the New Christians lived or where they knew they would be staying and dragged them out into the streets, along with their sons, wives, and daughters, and threw them together, whether dead or alive, onto the fires. Without piety, they inflicted this cruelty even onto children and babies in their cribs, grabbing them by the legs, tearing them to pieces, and smashing them by throwing them against walls. With such cruelties they did not forget to ransack houses, stealing all the gold, silver, and linen they could get their hands on. With the chaos mounting, they took many innocent men, women, boys, and girls from churches [where they had taken sanctuary] and tore them from tabernacles and statues of Our Lord and Our Lady and other saints, to which they hugged for dear life. Without any fear of God, the rabble killed them, men and women, and ceremoniously burnt them to death. On this day [20 April 1506] more than a thousand souls perished without anyone around who would dare to protect them. Few people of note took part in it [the
massacre]. Because of the plague, the most noble citizens earlier had left town.¹

¹ This plague had erupted in Lisbon six or seven months before, in October 1505, and would endure until April 1507. From Abrantes on March 11, 1506, King Manuel ordered the city to be evacuated and did so again on March 20. Jerónimo Osorio also says that the majority of the citizens (‘Maxima pars civium propter pestilentiam aberat’) had left the city by the time of the massacre. See Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, The Lisbon Massacre of 1506 and the Royal Image in the Shebet Yehudah (Cincinnati, 1976), pp. 7-8. For a translation of this section of the chronicle by the Portuguese prelate [Jerónimo Osório, De rebus Emmanuelis Regis Lusitaniae (Lisbon: Olysippone, apud Antonium Gondisaluum, 1571), see The Jew in the Medieval World: A Source Book, 315-1791, ed. Jacob R. Marcus, and revised by Marc Saperstein (New York, 1999), pp. 65-9. Orosio was born in the year of the massacre and wrote his chronicle a decade or so after Góis had published his and appears to have followed fairly closely Góis’s text. Neither Marcus nor Yerushalmi, however, makes this point. I wish to thank my colleague, Dr. Luis Gomes in Hispanic Studies, University of Glasgow, for assistance with translating Góis’s chronicle.
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Capitulo CII:
De como el Reimandou Tristão da Cunha a India por capitam de huma armada, & do alevantamento que se em Lisboa fez contra es christãos novos.

A esta turma de maos homens, & dos frades, que sem temor de Deos andavam pelas ruas concitando a povo a esta tamanha crueldade, se ajuntarão mais de mil homens da terra, da calidade dos outros, que todos juntos a seguida feira continuarão nesta maldade com mor crueza, & por ja nas ruas não acharem nenhuns christãos novos, forão cometer com vaivenes, & ecadas, as calas em que viviam, ou onde sahiam que estavam, & titandoos dellas arrasto pelas ruas, com seus filhos, molheres, & filhas, os lançavam de mistura vivos, & mortos nas sogueiras, sem nenhuma piedade, & era tamanha a crueza que ate mos mininos, & nas crianças que estavam no berço a executavão, tomandoos pelas pernas sendendoos em pedaços, & esborrachandoos darremeso nas paredes. Nas quaes cruzeas se não esquecião de lhes meter a laco as casas, & roubar todo o ouro, prata, & enxouaes que nellas schavão, vindo o negocio a tanta dissolução que das egrejas tiravão multos homens, molheres, Moços, moças, destes innocentes, desapegandoos dos Sacrarios, & das imagens de nosso Senhor, & de nossa Senhora, & outros Sanctos, come que o medo da morte os tinha abraçados, & dalli os tiravam, matando, & queimando misticamente sem nenhum temor de Deos assi a ellas como a elles. Nestes dia perecerão mais de mil almas sem aver na cidadequem ousasse de resistir, pola pouca gente de sorte que nella avia por estarem os mais dos honrados fora, por caso da peste.
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Ascanio Centorio de' Hortensii, Commendator di S. Giacomo in Compostella, I Cinque Libri degl'Avvertimenti, ordini, gride, et editti. Fatti et osservati in Milano, ne' tempi sospettosi della peste; negli anni MDLXXVI. et LXXVII con molti Avvedimenti utili, e necessarij a tutte le Città d'Europa, che cadessero in simili infortunij, e calamità [The Five Books of Advice, Decrees, Braodsheets, and Edicts promulgated at Milan when threatened by the plague during the years 1576 and 1577, along with much useful and pertinent information for all cities in Europe, for which similar disasters and calamities have happened] (Venice: Giovanni e Gio. Paolo Gioliti de' Ferrari, 1579), pp. 2-3:

This epidemic began in 1575 [first] in Trent, then Verona, etc. From Trent Jews brought the plague into the Ghetto [of Venice], where it did more than a little harm... A Jew coming from Trent, carrying goods to sell, disseminated the disease also in Mantua, and the Duke [of Milan] has ordered a house to be burnt to eradicate the disease.

p. 21:

Decrees passed by the Lords of the Board of Health of Modena concerning those suspected of carrying the plague.

Tricksters, rogues, knaves, herbalists, street singers, comedians, whores and similar sorts of odd balls are prohibited from entering the city [of Modena] with or without a certificate of health...
The officials of the Health Board are to inspect often the houses of Jews and should make sure that they are kept clean, along with the houses of the poor of St Peters.

p. 2-3:

Cominciò questa influenza nell’anno 1575...in Trento, Verona, e tra; ove da Trento la Peste da Hebrei in Ghetto fu portata, faceva non poco danno, ...anco in Mantoa seminata da un’hebreo, che da Trento ci haveva portato robbe da vendere, et il S. Duca haver fatto abbrusciare una casa per isradicarla.

p. 21:

Ordini fatti dalli Signori deputati della Sanità di Modona per il sospetti della peste... [1576]

Si prohibisce il lasciare entrare dentro la città furbi, cingari, ghitti, furfanti, herbolari, cantainbanco, commedianti, meretrici e simil sorti de genti stravaganti con fede, n’è senza...
Che si visitino spesse volte le case de gli Hebrei, e facciansi tenere nette, & le case de i poveri di San Pietro...
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Various decrees and laws of Bologna (Bologna: per Alessandro Benacci, [1576]).


With news of the plague worsening by the day in Venice and because the Jews living in that ‘Most Serene Republic’, conduct business by letter with other Jews residing in various districts and provinces outside Venice, it is well known that they could be greatly endangering others. However, to prevent any sort of danger from afflicting our Magnificent City, the Illustrious and Most Reverent Monsignor Archbishop of Nazareth [presently] Governor [of Bologna] with the agreement of the Flag-bearers of Justice and the Officials of Bologna’s Health Board,

Commands all Jewish persons, no matter why they have been allowed to settle in this city or territory, or by whatever means they have come here, lawfully or not, secretly or openly, to evacuate entirely [the city and territory of Bologna] taking with them their belongings within the next twenty-four hours.
Under pain of execution.
Havendosi ogni giorno peggiori nove del progresso della Peste in Vinetia & presendosi, che gli Hebrei, che habitano in quella Serenissima Republica, negotiano per lettere con altri Hebrei, che sono fuori in diverse Terre, & Provincie, il che quanto pericolo in esse possi apportare, si conosce manifestamente. Però per rimediare a ogni sorte de pericolo in questa Magnifica Città, Monsignor Ill. & Rev.ssmo Arcivescovo di Nazarete Governatore con volontà degli Ill. Signori Confaloniere di Giustitia & officiali di Sanità di Bologna,

Commanda che ogni persona Hebraia sia che esser si voglia che per qualunque causa fosse stata tollerata in questa Città o suo Territorio, o che per diritto, o per indiritto vi fosse venuta & vi stesse di secreto, o di palese, debba fra termine di xxiiij. hore esserone totalmente sgombrata con le persone & robbe loro.
Sotto pena della Forca.
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Silvano Razzi, Causes and Remedies for the Plague... (Florence, Giunti, 1577), p. 52.

Special remedies to enable anyone to prevent the spread of Plague

Any immoral book, ones of earthly love or other vanities, the magical arts, astrological judgement or any other sort of book that you might possess, which the Church has prohibited as being either heretical or useless for Christian living, will be immediately burnt or torn to pieces. The same goes for cards, dice, and other things unsuitable for the holy life of those wishing to be children of the Lord.

The same is to be observed especially with burning the books of Rabbis and other Jews, since they contain blasphemies and falsehoods against the laws and truth of Our Lord, Christ.
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Rimedii piu particolari a ciascuno per preservarsi dalla Peste,

Bruscierà, o straccierà subito qualunque libro dishonesto, o d’amor mondano, o d’altre vanità, arte Magica, Astrologia giudiciaria & qualsi volgia altro che havrà, il quale la Chiesa habbia prohibit per essere o heretico, o inutile alla vita Christiana. Il simile s’intende di carte, dadi, & altre cose non convenienti alla professione santissima, che facciamo d’esser figliuoli di Dio.

Veggasi anco per ogni modo di fare bruciare i libri de’Rabini & altri Hebrei, i quali contengono le bestemmie & falsità contra la legge & verità di Christo Signor nostro....
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27 August 1576
Several circumcised Spaniards have been arrested, who, it is said are converted Moslems and were sent by the Turks to spread the plague through Christendom and that others among are responsible for the suffering of the scourge throughout Christendom.

Archivio di Stato di Mantova, Archivio Gonzaga, folder 2597, page 357. Letters sent by Paolo Emilio Bardellone, head of the Health Board, to the ducal secretary Aurelio Libramonte.

3 September 1576

Today, the father Inquisitor told me, that he had heard from the abbot of St Bartholomew, that one of his fellow friars and the prior of this said church, who having come from Piacenza, reported that two Spaniards have been arrested in Milan and have confessed to have been paid along with forty others by the Turks to go through all of Italy spreading the plague. In addition, they have named three other Spaniards, who have also been captured, and two of them were in Mantua. If this report is verified, it should change the minds of the Milanese rulers, who [believe] that the plague has been spread there by a Mantuan coach driver.
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Archivio di Stato di Mantova, Archivio Gonzaga, busta 1693
Carta 230: Letter sent by Silvio Calandra, a citizen of Mantua and ambassador in Milan, to the Ducal Secretary Aurelio Libramonte.

27 Agosto 1576
Sono stati presi alcuni spagnoli circoncisi i quali si dice che sono rinegati, et mandati dal Turco per attaccar la peste in Christianita et ch essi altri loro compagn sono cagione del flagello che si patisce per tutta la Christianita.

Archivio di Stato di Mantova, Archivio Gonzaga, busta 2597.
carte 357. Letters sent by Paolo Emilio Bardellone, head of the Conservatori della Sanità, to the ducal secretary Aurelio Libramonte.

3 settembre 1576
Hoggi Il padre Inquisitore mi ha detto, che dall’Abbate di Santo Bartholomeo ha inteso, che un suo Frate Prior di detta Chiesa, che vien da Piasenza rifferisse, sicome in Milano sono stati detenuti due spagnoli c’hanno confessato esser pagati con altri 40 dal Turco perche vadino per tutta Italia attaccando la peste, et havendo nominato tre altri spagnoli sono stati presi parimente, et che due sono stati in Mantova, questo potrebbe essendo vero, far mutar opinione a quelle Signori di Milano, che gli sia stata attaccata dal Carrocciero Mantovano.
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Alessandro Canobbio, *The Progress of the Plague that occurred in Padua in 1575, Written and Observed by Alessandro Canobbio* (Venice: appresso Paolo Megietti librario in Padova, 1577)

7v Every day [the officials of the Health Board] went around discovering the plague-stricken, most of whom were found in the streets of the Jews, where they were Many of them, who were subjected to live in tiny houses, breathing unhealthy air, which always was more or less pestilential, because of the stinch that usually exuded from the Jews.

....

12v In the neighbourhood of the Jews there was a tenement, where 14 families resided, all of whom died; not even the cats survived.
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Alessandro Canobbio, *Il successo della peste occorsa in Padoua l'anno MDLXXVI. Scritta, et veduta per Alessandro Canobbio* (Venice: appresso Paolo Megietti librario in Padova, 1577)

7v Ogni giorni s'andavano scuprendo amalati, massime nelle contrade degli Hebrei, che le genti quivi erano assai & ridotte in piccole case & in un'aria malinconica, & da ogni tempo quasi pestifera, si per lo fettore, che ordinariamente esce dalli Hebrei

12v Nella contrada degli Hebrei in un Torazzo, che vi habitavano 14 famiglie, tutti morirono, si che ne anco i gatti si salvarono.