



Between Plague, Passions and Pogroms: the Role of Emotions in anti-Jewish Violence During the Black Death

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Introduction

In 1832 a German professor of the history of medicine, Justus Hecker, wrote the following:

*In conformity with a general law of nature, such a state of excitement brings about a change, beneficial or detrimental, according to circumstances, so that nations either attain a higher degree of moral worth, or sink deeper in ignorance and vice. All this, however, takes place upon a much grander scale than through the ordinary vicissitudes of war and peace, or the rise and fall of empires, because the powers of nature themselves produce plagues, and subjugate the human will, which, in the contentions of nations, alone predominates.*¹

If we filter out the typically 19th-century nationalist rhetoric and ideas of moralism and naturalism from this quote, we are left with an interesting observation: “[...] the powers of nature themselves produce plagues and subjugate the human will”. If we translate this into 21st-century parlance; Hecker effectively says that natural forces trump human agency. In his view human agency only exists within the confines set by nature. This view was popularised about one hundred years later by Fernand Braudel and it remains tantalising to this day.² This area of research is arguably where history becomes most interesting. How do human beings manage to live their lives whilst dealing with forces that are entirely outside of their control, or out of the control of other human beings for that matter. As ever; they make choices and find narratives to explain what is happening to them and to their environment. This thesis will look at one such narrative. This narrative incidentally coincides with Hecker’s own subject of interest: the Black Death. More specifically it will look at anti-Jewish violence in the wake of the Black Death. This period saw the most severe persecution of Jews before the 20th-century.³ Historians have often sought for ideological and rational reasons behind this anti-Jewish violence, oftentimes they encapsulate those sentiments which they cannot put their finger on in the term ‘prejudice’. However, that term itself is rather diffuse and in a historiographical context it seems to imply that prejudice is a mere epiphenomenon of larger societal phenomena such as political and/or religious differences. In this way of thinking; prejudice is simply fuelled by irrationality and is thus difficult to historicise.⁴ Yet, we have to do little more than to look at our own experience of life to realise that humans are not purely rational creatures. This also means that we cannot simply brush aside a potential irrational, or rather, an emotional reasoning behind the behaviour and ideas of a historical actor with words such as “irrational” or “aberrant”.

In 1941 Lucien Febvre noticed this gap in historical reasoning and called for ‘a vast collective study of the fundamental sentiments of humanity and their forms’ in a paper published in the *Annales* journal.⁵ He added: ‘when a Historian says, Napoleon had a fit of rage, is his task not complete?’. He answered his own question by saying: ‘Not at all! For we have no idea what rage meant in Napoleon’s time and what public displays of rage looked like’.⁶ Febvre’s call for such an approach to history was not taken up until the early 1970’s when the history of mentalities was developed. But, as Piroska Nagy argues: attention for what is felt in history is not the same as a history of feeling itself. Put in more banal terms this means that the historian of the emotions will not just acknowledge that emotions play a role in history but he will also recognise that emotions and the manner in which they are perceived

¹ Justus Friedrich Karl Hecker, *Der schwarze Tod im vierzehnten Jahrhundert: Nach den Quellen für Ärzte und gebildete Nichtärzte bearbeitet*, Trans. Benjamin Guy Babington as: ‘The Black Death in the fourteenth Century’ (London, 1833), 3.

² Though he did not use the works of Hecker in his magnum opus “The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II”.

³ Samuel Cohn Jr., ‘The Black Death and the Burning of Jews’, *Past and Present* 196-1 (2007), 3-36, here: 36.

⁴ < <https://www.mpib-berlin.mpg.de/en/research/history-of-emotions/projects/emotions-and-the-body/feelings-against-jews-emotional-history-of-modern-anti-semitism> > Consulted: 31-01-2019.

⁵ Damien Boquet & Piroska Nagy, *Sensible Moyen Âge: Une Histoire des Émotions dans l’Occident Médiéval*, trans. Robert Shaw as ‘Medieval Sensibilities: A History of Emotions in the Middle Ages (Cambridge, 2018), 3.

⁶ Jan Plamper, *The History of Emotions: An Introduction* (Oxford, 2017) 40-42.

change over time.⁷ This thesis will attempt to embed itself into the newly flourishing genre of the history of emotions to shed a new light onto the role emotions played in the anti-Jewish violence that went hand in hand with the coming of the Black Death. It will do so on the basis of the question: How were emotions employed in anti-Jewish discourse during the Black Death? In order to answer this question four separate sources will be analysed for their emotional usage and content. Firstly it will look at a decidedly anti-Jewish narrative which seems to show a degree of sympathy towards the anti-Jewish pogroms that occurred in the German lands. This source represents an individual's response to the wider array of anti-Jewish polemics. The second source to be analysed looks at the role of group-emotions concerning the pogrom in Strasbourg (1349) and is decidedly less positive about the fate that befell the Jews there. The third source to be analysed is a papal bull issued by pope Clement VI against anti-Jewish violence. This source is used to analyse how regimes dealt with outbreaks of pogroms and how they tried to maintain control over the hysteria that broke out all over Europe. Lastly we shall see what it was like to be at the receiving end of well-poisoning charges. Due to a severe lack of contemporary Jewish sources we cannot see these accusations through their eyes. We can however look at the narrative of the German Mystic Henry Suso who found himself accused of poisoning the well in an unnamed German village. In all of these sources we shall look at the emotional discourse in them. Thus we shall look at the usage of emotions in the sources themselves and their functions rather than trying to find feelings in a past reality.

Before moving on towards the *Status Quaestionis* (SQ) it may prove useful to explain some of the terminology used throughout this thesis. Firstly the terms 'Black Death' and 'Plague' will be used interchangeably. The term Black Death was not used during the Middle Ages, rather it seems to be a 19th-century invention; it was possibly coined by the aforementioned Justus Hecker though sources on this vary. Whatever the case of the origin of the term may be, it has been fully adopted within the modern historical discourse that this thesis shall follow. Like the word 'plague' it commonly refers to the pandemic, probably caused by the bacterium *Yersinia Pestis*, which raged through Europe between 1346 and 1353.⁸ Likewise the terms 'history of emotions' 'emotional history' and 'emotions history' will be used interchangeably. The usage of these different terms throughout this thesis only exists for the sake of variety and not to indicate different historiographical approaches. The term anti-Jewish on the contrary is chosen very deliberately. It refers to actions and sentiments held against the people of the Jewish faith, not the Jewish ethnicity for which the term anti-Semitic would be more appropriate.⁹ The anti-Jewish term is used to detach the violence perpetrated against Jews during the Middle Ages from that of the violence perpetrated by the Nazi's in the 20th-century. This latter form of racism presupposes modern notions of race and eugenics that were alien to the Middle Ages, hence this thesis prefers to use the term 'anti-Jewish'. Having clarified the terminology of this thesis we can move on to the *Status Quaestionis*. After that there follows a chapter on the methodology of the history of emotions, this is an emergent field in historiography thus its methods are still in development. Therefore a chapter on explaining its methods is in order. Chapter four will focus on the origins and development of anti-Jewish polemics and violence from the early days of Christianity onward. This thesis argues that these polemics have been culturally transmitted through the ages and have become internalised, inherent even, to the mentalities of large swaths of medieval society. In the last chapter we shall analyse the aforementioned sources to then move on to conclusions about them and on medieval anti-Jewish violence in general.

⁷ Boquet & Nagy, *Sensible Moyen Âge*, 5.

⁸ Ole J. Benedictow, *The Black Death 1346-1353: The Complete History* (Woodbridge, 2004), 9-24.

⁹ David Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism: The Western Tradition* (New York, 2013), 3.

Chapter 2: Status Quaestionis – Towards the integration of emotions into historical research

To assess the SQ for this thesis it is prudent to first remark on the fact that this thesis effectively operates within the field of three different, but interconnected, strands of historical research. These strands are: the history of anti-Jewish violence, the history of the Black Death and lastly the history of emotions. It may also prove to be informative to elaborate on the symbiosis of these three different strands of historical research. It will become clear that all three of these strands have been discussed in various different combinations. However, the question of a symbiosis of all three strands remains unaddressed.

Historiography provides a relative abundance of works that address the unfortunate fate of the Jews during the Black Death. Many works related to the Black Death contain at least some references to anti-Jewish violence during the plague. Vice versa many works on the history of anti-Jewish violence refer to the pogroms that coincided with the Black Death as an example of extreme anti-Jewish violence. On the whole there is no real doubt amongst scholars that the Jews were amongst the biggest victims of the capricious atmosphere that accompanied the Black Death. Needless to say different historians choose to emphasise different causes and effects of this victimisation of the Jews in their works, some of these historians will now be discussed.

Jo Hays for instance puts the blame for the explosion of anti-Jewish violence during the Black Death onto the Flagellant movement, which according to him ignited the massacring. Hays argues that the Flagellants are exemplary of the various anti-authoritarian popular movements that arose in the wake of the Black Death.¹⁰ Hays' rather political interpretation of the anti-Jewish violence that accompanied that plague is, as we shall see, fairly common in the historiography of the subject. Christoph Cluse researched persecutions of Jews in the Southern Low Countries. He concludes, contrary to Hays, that the responsibility of the Flagellant movement has been overemphasised in historical research. Instead Cluse argues that the responsibility for the persecutions lies with local patrician and municipal authorities who, according to him, facilitated and perpetrated the anti-Jewish massacres. Much the same as Hays, Cluse sees in these anti-Jewish massacres an anti-authoritarian element at play. He emphasises that the occurrence of pogroms is a sign of a deterioration of the power held by the dukes and counts of the Southern Low Countries. He argues that the landlords were ultimately responsible of the protection of the Jews and that their failing to do so is a sign of their deteriorating power. In this light the insubordinate behaviour of the local patrician governments can be seen as an attempt to undermine ducal power and can also be seen as an attempt to gain or hold on to some form of autonomy. Despite his emphasis on political power struggles Cluse does not entirely release the Flagellant movement from blame. He acknowledges that the Flagellant movement probably facilitated the spread of rumours of well-poisoning, a common accusation made against the Jews during the high Middle Ages. On top of that Cluse postulates that the Flagellants were, at least in part, interconnected with local authorities since the movement's members came from the midst of the urban population. Though the coming of Flagellant-processions certainly led to highly emotional scenes we should be careful with placing too much of the blame on the movement. In Strasbourg about two thousand Jews were killed over the course of three days in early February.¹¹ However, according to a chronicle written by Fritsche Closener in 1360, the flagellants did not reach Strasbourg until mid-July.¹² Thus the influence of the flagellant movement should be researched on a case-by-case basis. Cluse does acknowledge that there was a real and genuine fear for a Jewish conspiracy against Christians, he states that "certain people believed the Jews were capable of anything".¹³

¹⁰ Jo N. Hays, *The Burdens of Disease: Epidemics and Human Response in Western History* (London, 2009), 50-53.

¹¹ John Aberth, *An Environmental History of the Middle Ages: The Crucible of Nature* (London, 2013), 69.

¹² John Aberth, *The Black Death, The Great Mortality 1348-1350: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston, 2005), 126.

¹³ Christoph M. Cluse, *Jodenvervolgingen ten tijde van de pest (1349-1350) In de Zuidelijke Nederlanden*, in: J. Lemli (ed.), *De pest in de Nederlanden* (Brussels, 1999), 45-83, here: 45-81.

Jörg Müller has focused his research on Jewish-Christian relations in the Middle Ages. He argues that the anti-Jewish pogroms of the mid-14th-century are in fact the culmination of a process that started in the 1280's.¹⁴ Müller shows how anti-Jewish pogroms first occurred as isolated cases during latter part of the 13th-century but became increasingly more widespread. According to Müller the pogroms that occurred in this period compounded one another with more rumours about Jewish misdeeds. Each rumour confirmed and aggravated the already volatile mix of anti-Jewish prejudice ultimately culminating in the Black Death pogroms. Amongst these rumours Müller lists longstanding views of Jews as Christ-killers but also more recently developed rumours of the Jews committing infanticide to obtain blood for some sinister ritual as well as accusations of host-desecration. Ultimately, Müller argues, these rumours had their bases in a wide kaleidoscope of causes, these being: internal political strife in the German lands caused by the absence of a strong imperial power, the Jews' position as moneylenders, crusading zeal and the aforementioned rumours of murder and host-desecration. According to Müller all these prejudices were actively encouraged by the local nobility and the mendicant orders.¹⁵ Lastly Müller postulates that the Black Death pogroms show a lot of the same causes as previous pogroms. However, where these previous pogroms had remained rather local in character, the plague acted as a catalyst for them to become wide-spread. This would have led to rather tumultuous spontaneous pogroms in the German lands in 1348 which later became more coordinated and institutionalised in 1349.¹⁶

Müller's idea of a varied landscape of anti-Jewish prejudice is echoed by Samuel Cohn in his essay *The Black Death and the Burning of Jews* and by Robert Chazan, who has done extensive research on anti-Jewish ideas in the Middle Ages. Chazan takes a somewhat teleological approach wherein he draws a direct line between the anti-Jewish and those of the 19th and 20th-centuries. He argues that transalpine Europe developed very rapidly from the 11th-century onward and that this development into economical avenues that were both profitable but also made them vulnerable to the rest of society. Chazan then argues that anti-Jewish imagery spread a negative image of Jews even in areas where there previously were no Jews. He also argues that even after the Jews were expelled from an area the imagery from earlier centuries would embed itself and continue an own and independent existence.¹⁷

Where the Black Death forms a catalyst for Anti-Jewish violence in the narratives of Müller and Chazan it is the driving force in the research carried out by Samuel Cohn. Cohn rejects two prevalent theories on medieval violence against Jews. Firstly he dismantles the notion that the pogroms stemmed from what may be called "popular prejudice". Secondly he argues against the notion held amongst some historians that the Black Death pogroms were an example of class struggle against a supposedly usurious Jewish elite.¹⁸ Instead, according to Cohn, it was the Christian elites who launched a campaign of slander against the Jews which they used to instigate and carry out the pogroms.¹⁹ Cohn concludes this on the basis of some three hundred chronicles.²⁰ However, he is also quick to remark on the fact that not every outburst of anti-Jewish violence can be tarred with the same brush. The groups of perpetrators and protectors of the Jews can change rapidly as circumstances changed and cannot always be explained rationally.²¹

¹⁴ Jörg Müller, 'Erez Gezerah – Land of Persecution: Pogroms Against the Jews in the Regnum Teutonicum from c. 1280 to 1350', in: Christoph M. Cluse (ed.), *The Jews of Europe in the Middle Ages (Tenth to Fifteenth Centuries): Proceedings of the International Symposium Held at Speyer 20-25 October 2002* (Turhout, 2004), 245-260, here: 245.

¹⁵ Müller, 'Erez Gezerah – Land of Persecution', 245-254.

¹⁶ Ibidem, 256-257.

¹⁷ Robert Chazan, 'Medieval Anti-Semitism', in: David Berger (ed.), *History and Hate: The Dimensions of Anti-Semitism* (Philadelphia, 1986), 49-66, here: 63-64.

¹⁸ Cohn Jr., 'The Burning of Jews', 11-17.

¹⁹ Ibidem, 36.

²⁰ Ibidem, 7.

²¹ Ibidem, 35.

Albert Winkler however is highly critical of Cohn's assertions. He points to social mobility in medieval German guilds, according to Winkler: [...] *rulers of the cities, especially those who rose from the guilds, may have continued to hold lower-class mores*, according to him would make them more likely to be influenced by calls for persecution from the lower classes in society.²² He lists around thirty sources wherein the lower classes are somehow implicated in instigating the pogroms, either by actively participating in the pogroms or by asking the local authorities to start persecuting the Jews.²³ This however does not mean that Cohn's assertions are entirely wrong. Winkler states that it is more likely that there was an interplay between different social strata in society wherein each group in society had its own motives for persecuting the Jews.²⁴

All authors mentioned above make various allusions to emotions. Cohn uses the words "mass hysteria" to describe the events of 1348-1349.²⁵ Later he adds "nor can it [anti-Jewish violence] be explained rationally".²⁶ Müller, Cluse and Chazan employ similar phrases. Müller for instance employs the word "tumultuous" when speaking about the 1348 pogroms in the Holy Roman Empire. He actually argues that the pogroms only gained a pinch of legality and organisation when local rulers took control of the pogroms a year later.²⁷ Cluse speaks of "a usually real fear of well-poisoning".²⁸ "Fear" is also the word used by Chazan. He describes a western-European society which increasingly more fearful and paranoid from the 11th-century onward, stating that violence and societal change often go hand in hand.²⁹ Winkler also speaks of fear, he says: *fear of the approach of the Black Death set in motion the pogrom in Basel*.³⁰ However, none of the authors mentioned above historicises the emotions that they mention as playing a role in their narratives. Instead they have a tendency intellectualise emotions and to simply see them as a force that could drive action. In this they are obviously not mistaken, emotions also had a real presence and existence in the past and it is interesting to look at this side of emotions too.

This is not to say that historians have not attempted to integrate a deeper exploration of emotions into their research concerning the Black Death. Mathilde van Dijk for instance has looked into the role of emotion in the *Devotio Moderna*, a Catholic reform movement in the Netherlands which established itself in the wake of the Black Death. Van Dijk, much like we are doing in this thesis, looked at perception and performance of emotions in the writings of some of the earliest "modern devotees". By doing this she aimed to challenge a notion commonly held since the 19th-century that the adherents of the *Devotio Moderna* are somehow the forbearers to a typically Dutch emotional style.³¹ Van Dijk's research is a tantalising and innovative starting point for this thesis; in the sense that she has tried to get a better understanding of the dynamic between people's emotions and the plague. However, van Dijk researched a catholic reform-movement and notes of anti-Jewish violence are absent from her narrative. This does not mean that there have not been historians who have applied insights from the affective turn to questions surrounding anti-Jewish sentiments.

²² Albert Winkler, 'The Clamor of the People: Popular Support for the Persecution of Jews in Switzerland and Germany at the Approach of the Black Death, 1348-1350', *Swiss-American Historical Society Review* 53-2 (2017), 31-61, here: 44-46.

²³ Winkler, 'The Clamor of the People', 39-44.

²⁴ Ibidem, 61.

²⁵ Cohn, 'The Burning of Jews', 32.

²⁶ Ibidem, 35.

²⁷ Müller, 'Erez Gezerah', 257.

²⁸ Cluse, 'Jodenvervolgingen', 81.

²⁹ Chazan, 'Medieval anti-Semitism', 52.

³⁰ Winkler, 'The Clamor of the People', 49-50.

³¹ Mathilde van Dijk, 'The Devotio Moderna, the Emotions and the Search for Dutchness', *BMGN- Low Countries Historical Review* 129-2 (2014), 20-41, here: 40-41.

Uffa Jensen and Stefanie Schüler-Springorum have researched the influence of emotions on modern Anti-Semitism. They argue that current research into anti-Semitism shows a degree of weakness in its handling of the concept of anti-Semitism and that this weakness can be overcome by looking at the affective dimensions of this phenomenon. They argue that historiography has largely decontextualized and essentialised anti-Semitism by applying specific historical theories to it. Instead Jensen and Schüler-Springorum propose to view emotions as bodily experiences rather than cognitions.³²

The article written by Jensen and Schüler-Springorum leads us back to the idea of a symbiosis postulated at the start of this chapter and gives us some room for an intermediate summarization. Though this thesis operates in the same thematic field as the aforementioned article, the timeframe wherein it operates is some seven hundred years apart from the timeframe of this thesis. It is much the same story with the other works presented in this SQ, they all combine two out of the three strands of historical research mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Authors like Hays, Cluse, Müller, Cohn and Chazan have all been sensitive to the fate of the Jews during their research concerning the Black Death. Out of these aforementioned authors, Cluse and Cohn, each individually, reference emotions as explicitly playing some role in their constructed narratives, though neither author historicizes these emotions. The one author that did historicize emotions in her research into the Black Death was Mathilde van Dijk, though her interest lay with the *Devotio Moderna* and not with anti-Jewish violence. On the basis of the surveyed literature this thesis would state that there is a lacuna in the research concerning anti-Jewish violence during the Black Death, which is to say there has been no symbiosis between all three strands of historiography mentioned at the start of this chapter. This thesis comes to this preliminary conclusion on the same basis as Jensen and Schüler-Springorum. These two authors argued against the essentialization and oversimplification of emotions as seen in Cohn, Cluse and many other works of history. This thesis will do the same, it will argue that a lack of sensitivity towards the emotions, both perceived and performed, of historical actors leaves us a lacuna in the historiography. It is the aim of this thesis to fill that lacuna and add recent insights from emotions history to the already available research. Before that can be achieved however it is prudent to first look at the question of the ways we can conceptualise the emotions of the past. After which we can ask ourselves what went into these emotions. It is questions like these which will later help us answer the matter of the emotional scripts applied to the Jews during the Black Death.

³² Uffa Jensen & Stefanie Schüler-Springorum, 'Einführung: Gefühle gegen Juden. Die Emotionsgeschichte des modernen Antisemitismus', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 39:4 (2013), 413-442, here: 437-438.

Chapter 3: thinking about the script, conceptions of emotions in past and present

The field of the history of emotions has been blossoming for some years now. At present (2019) we can distinguish three schools of thought within the history of emotions. The French school (as represented by Damien Boquet and Piroska Nagy), the Italian school (spearheaded by Carla Casagrande and Silvana Vecchio) and the Anglo-Saxon school (represented by Barbara Rosenwein and William Reddy). Though the historiography of these schools goes back several decades little synthesis between them has been achieved, this despite numerous calls for such a synthesis.³³ What is achieved however is a set of clearly defined methods and, with that, a degree of maturity for the history of emotions as a methodology. This chapter aims to explain some of this methodology, this in order to help us better understand the role emotions played during the Black Death pogroms.

Before we do that however we need to deal with the semantics of emotion. Let us address the linguistic elephant in the room straightaway: the word emotion likely did not exist until the 17th-century. This means that emotions history has endured some critique from adherents of the linguistic turn in historiography. Vida Vukoja has discerned two paradigms relating to what we now call emotions. These are: *passio* and *Affectus*. According to Vukoja these correspond better with what we might call 'feelings' rather than to the more cognitively conceived 'emotions', the latter of which should not be used when discussing the Middle Ages according to her.³⁴ There have been historians who have tried to justify equating the medieval and modern paradigms by asserting that they bear 'a family-resemblance'.³⁵ As true as that may be, that explanation does feel like a bit of a cheap way of getting around the problem, for Vukoja's critique seems justified. This thesis would argue that historians, when wanting to analyse feelings in the past, have no other choice than to engage with a discourse familiar to themselves and that therefore the terminology of 'emotions' is justified. This idea is derived from the ideas of German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer. Gadamer posed that understanding of the past is formed through interaction with it, be it through image or through text. To achieve this the historian must employ the idea of *Horizontverschmelzung* or 'fusion of horizons' wherein the historian uses his own modern conceptions and uses them as a sort of transparent overlay placed upon the past, this in turn can create an understanding of the past.³⁶ As historians we cannot simply switch ourselves off when dealing with the past, lest we can accept that fact; we better return to the Rankian utopia of *wie es eigentlich gewesen*.

On to emotions history. Arguably the most popular theory for the research into the history of emotions is that of the "Emotional Community" as coined by Barbara Rosenwein.³⁷ Rosenwein says the following of her theory of emotional communities: *Emotional communities are largely the same as social communities [...] The researcher looking at them seeks above all to uncover systems of feeling, to establish what these communities (and the individuals within them) define and assess as valuable or harmful to them (for it is about such things that people express emotions); the emotions that they value, devalue, or ignore; the nature of the affective bonds between people that they recognize; and the modes of emotional expression that they expect, encourage, tolerate and deplore.*³⁸ Rosenwein's theory is deliberately broad and flexible and can be applied transhistorically because Rosenwein strongly links her emotional communities to textual communities.³⁹ This collectivisation of feelings is

³³ Bénédicte Sère, *Histoire des Émotions: l'Heure des synthèses. Notes Critique, Revue l'histoire des Religions* 234-1 (2017), 119-132, here: 119-120.

³⁴ Vida Vukoja, 'Passion, a forgotten feeling', in: Fabienne Baider & Georgeta Cislaru (ed.), *Linguistic Approaches to Emotions in Context* (Amsterdam, 2014), 39-65, here: 39-65.

³⁵ Martin Pickavé & Lisa Shapiro, 'Introduction', in: Martin Pickavé & Lisa Shapiro (ed.), *Emotion and Cognitive Life in Medieval and Early Modern Philosophy* (Oxford, 2012), 1-8, here: 7-8.

³⁶ Harry Jansen, *Triptiek van de Tijd: Geschiedenis in drievoud* (Nijmegen, 2010) 112-115.

³⁷ Andrew Lynch, 'Emotional Community', in: Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Early Modern Emotions: an Introduction* (New York, 2017), 3-6, here: 3.

³⁸ Barbara H. Rosenwein, 'Problems and Methods in the History of Emotions', *Passions in Context* 1-1 (2010), 2-32, here: 11.

³⁹ Lynch, *Emotional Community*, 4-5.

elaborated on by Sara Ahmed who argues that larger shared identities (i.e. communities) can themselves become ‘objects of feeling’ which people can gather around, in the context of this thesis that could be Christianity or Judaism for instance.⁴⁰ When accounting for the position of the individual within the framework of emotional communities Rosenwein uses the metaphor of a large overarching circles which contain smaller ones. The overarching one represents the most dominant emotional community in a society, the smaller ones represent smaller emotional communities which operate within the framework of the larger one, each with its own ‘feeling rules’, values, assumptions and accepted modes of expression.⁴¹ The scope of Rosenwein’s influence on emotions history is enormous and can hardly be ignored. However, the sources which have been surveyed for this thesis all indicate a more rigidly binary mode of thought wherein animosity takes the lead. There also is some evidence to suggest that societal elites (ranging from rural knights to urban oligarchs to feudal lords and leading religious leaders) used culturally transmitted anti-Jewish sentiments from the past to flare up an emotional response towards the Jews to further their own agendas.⁴² In other words they aimed to ‘other’ the Jews and to exclude them from society, therefore a different methodology than the Emotional Community may prove to be more suitable, though the concept will be utilised where necessary.

This thesis will draw most heavily from several interconnected methods.⁴³ These are William Reddy’s concept of ‘emotives’, which he himself combines with what he calls ‘emotional regimes’ we shall follow him in using this combination of terms. To that this thesis will add the concept of performed emotion, a concept which has its roots in cultural anthropology.⁴⁴ These three concepts shall be combined to sketch out ‘emotional scripts’. The nature of this type of script is often violent and strongly anti-Jewish in nature though it should be noted here that these scripts were often latent and would, as it were, flare up during times of (imminent) crisis.⁴⁵ This thesis works from the hypothesis that social memory can be culturally and transhistorically transmitted and can provoke real emotions at different times in history.⁴⁶ And Indeed within the field of social psychology there is substantial evidence for instance animosity toward other groups in society can be culturally transmitted through the generations.⁴⁷ Likewise notions of violence are subject to the same mechanism.⁴⁸ The latter part of this chapter will be geared towards explaining some of the methodologies used throughout this thesis and will likewise argue why said methodologies are used.

William Reddy coined the term ‘emotives’ in the late ‘90’s of the 20th-century and expanded on the concept in his influential book *the navigation of feeling* (2001). In his works Reddy opposes himself to a constructionist conceptualisation of emotions while at the same time rejecting a completely universalist view as well.⁴⁹ Instead, Reddy rejects this dualistic opposition in the nature versus culture debate altogether by asserting that culture and nature are interdependent. Rather than

⁴⁰ Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotions*, (Edinburgh, 2004), 13.

⁴¹ Barbara Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 2006), 24.

⁴² Cohn, *The Burning of Jews*, 36.

⁴³ It Should be noted that Rosenwein also includes these in her work. See: Rosenwein, *Emotional communities*, 16-23.

⁴⁴ Katie Barclay, ‘Performance and Performativity’ in: Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Early Modern Emotions: an Introduction* (New York, 2017), 14-16, here: 14-15.

⁴⁵ Elukin, *Living Together Living Apart*, 95-100.

⁴⁶ Maria Cattell & Jacob Climo, *Introduction: Meaning in Social Memory and History: Anthropological Perspectives*, in: Jacob Climo & Maria Cattell (eds.), ‘Social Memory and History: Anthropological Perspectives’ (Walnut Creek, 2002), 1-36, here: 25-28.

⁴⁷ Bernd Six, Kristina Geppert & Ute Schönpflug, ‘The Intergenerational Transmission of Xenophobia and Rightism in East Germany’, in: Ute Schönpflug (ed.), *Cultural Transmission: Psychological, Developmental, Social and Methodological aspects* (Cambridge, 2009), 370-390, here: 372-388.

⁴⁸ Haci-Halil Uslucan & Urs Fuhrer, ‘Intergenerational Transmission of Violence’, in: Ute Schönpflug (ed.), *Cultural Transmission: Psychological, Developmental, Social and Methodological aspects* (Cambridge, 2009), 391-418, here: 412-413.

⁴⁹ Rob Boddice, *The History of Emotions* (Manchester, 2018), 62.

our feelings being biological (i.e. neurological) or cultural (i.e. a social construct) in nature they should be seen as a single integrated category of analysis which can be called: 'biocultural'.⁵⁰ From this biocultural conception of emotions Reddy postulates that individuals translate their inwardly held feelings into a language which adheres to, and is shaped, by societal conventions in an attempt to convey their inwardly held feelings to others; for these 'affective utterances' Reddy uses the term: 'emotives'.⁵¹ These emotives serve three main functions: they describe one's feelings, they can have rational intentions (i.e. achieving some kind of change both internally and in others) and they have self-exploring and self-altering effects.⁵² Uttering one's felt feelings thus creates a feedback-loop, through utterance of feelings the individual can change his own bodily state of feeling and by performing them to others the individual can encourage others to change their behaviour, to perform other types of behaviour or change feelings in the other.⁵³

This idea of performed behaviour is closely linked to the idea of performed emotion. This idea is derived from the sociological concept of the dramaturgical perspective as coined by Sociologist Erving Goffman. According to Goffman social reality is constructed through interaction between individuals in 'situations'. In these situations humans tend to act out a role best suited to achieving their own individual goals by speaking, dressing and acting in a manner which is most socially appropriate to the given social context, this also means acting out the appropriate emotions.⁵⁴ This constructivist notion of the self and its emotions finds its most radical incarnation in the theories of Judith Butler who states that the self and the emotions attached to it do not pre-exist the performance.⁵⁵ However, this thesis would argue that this is perhaps too radical of a stance to take, for it negates any form of personal agency and therefore also negates the option of personal accountability. Rather, this thesis will follow the assertion made by Elizabeth Ermath that the self and its emotions do pre-exist the discursive/performative but can only be articulated through performance.⁵⁶ This view allows us to see how emotions function in the past, it makes them active, they 'do' and 'achieve' rather than being a passive speech act. In this way emotions become part of a continuum that sits on the border between the ontological and the communicative, they are shaped by articulating them in a performance as well as existing in an individual's internal reality. Likewise it allows the modern historian to historicise the usage of emotions in medieval political rhetoric rather than to hunt for traces of what was literally felt in the past.

This idea of the emotion tied up with the political brings us back to the ideas of William Reddy. More specifically it brings us to his idea of the 'emotional regime'. This emotional regime governs the context wherein emotions can be expressed.⁵⁷ According to Reddy: *Emotional Control is the real site of the exercise of power*.⁵⁸ Thus emotional regimes set the bounds for the modes of expression of emotion, they require expression of certain emotions and discourage the expression of what they consider deviant emotions.⁵⁹ Likewise they have the means to punish, be it through physical pain or psychologically through for instance social exiling, deviant modes of emotional expression when these should occur.⁶⁰

⁵⁰ Boddice, *History of Emotions*, 62-63.

⁵¹ William Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: a Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge, 2001), 104-111.

⁵² Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, 111.

⁵³ For an explanation of the feeling-body feedback-loop see: Boddice, *History of Emotions*, 63-70; For effects of performance and utterance see: Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, 111.

⁵⁴ Barclay, *Performance*, 14.

⁵⁵ Ibidem, 15.

⁵⁶ Ibidem, 15.

⁵⁷ Tania Colwell, 'Emotives and Emotional Regimes', in: Susan Broomhall (ed.), *Early Modern Emotions: an Introduction* (New York, 2017), 7-10, here: 7.

⁵⁸ As quoted in: Barbara Rosenwein & Riccardo Cristiani, *What is the History of Emotions?* (Cambridge, 2018), 36.

⁵⁹ Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*, 125.

⁶⁰ Ibidem, 125.

This politicising of emotions can also be found in the works of Stephen D. White. White emphasises how much medieval political rhetoric relied on public emotional utterance.⁶¹ Likewise White connects the performative side of emotions to that of what he calls: *a quasi-judicial appraisal of the person or persons responsible for it*.⁶² While performing an emotion the actor publically justifies whichever emotion he is performing by showing his inwardly held emotions to others.⁶³ White uses this insight to explain that the use of emotions is in fact highly conventionalised from the 11th-century onwards, especially in a political setting.⁶⁴ He argues that this creates social scripts which were to be followed and which, like the emotional regime as coined by William Reddy, provides bounds for which emotion is appropriate to a given situation.⁶⁵ In other words: it is through scripting the emotion that they become part of social conventions. When one understands how the script is formed, one is that much closer to understanding how emotions may have been perceived, used and generally thought of during the Middle Ages.

Much theory has been discussed during this chapter so it may prove useful to summarize it before moving on to the various elements that went into the scripts used in the discourse surrounding anti-Jewish violence during the Black Death. As we shall see in the next two chapters; the emotional lens through which the Jews were viewed is largely religiously, rather than secularly, informed. This means that religious experience guided much of the anti-Jewish emotional regime that we shall encounter during these chapters. This was further compounded by the rise of the mendicant orders and the flagellant movement (see: chapter 5) which both advocated for a stronger emphasis on the emotional experience of Christ and Christians.⁶⁶ This new emphasis could be given shape in the form of what William Reddy has called emotives, which are utterances of inwardly held feelings which adhere to social conventions. These conventions are guided by emotional regimes set in place and enforced by those with the authority to do so (i.e. nobles and clergy). We can also observe how emotions were performed within the context of these emotional regimes. For as we have seen these emotional performances serve two functions: they signify to others how the individual feels but the performance also creates a feedback loop wherein the emotions of the individual are both affirmed and shaped. Stephen White argued that these performances became conventionalised over time and formed what he calls: scripts. The next chapter will give an overview of instances of anti-Jewish violence to show the formation of these scripts, thereafter we shall see how these scripts were employed and how they were sometimes at odds with each other.

⁶¹ Stephen White, 'The Politics of Anger', in: Barbara Rosenwein (ed.), *Anger's Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 1998), 127-154, here:131-139.

⁶² White, *The Politics of Anger*, 140.

⁶³ Ibidem, 140.

⁶⁴ Ibidem, 142-150.

⁶⁵ Ibidem, 142.

⁶⁶ Nirit Ben-Aryeh Debby, *Italian Pulpits: Preaching Art and Spectacle*, in: Katrine L. Jansen & Miri Rubin (eds.), 'Charisma and Religious Authority: Jewish, Christian and Muslim Preaching 1200-1500' (Turnhout, 2010), 123-143, here: 142-143.

Chapter 3: Building the Script: Anti-Jewish polemics before the advent of the Black Death

If we aim to understand how medieval German society felt about Jews, we have to understand what formed those feelings, because feelings did not exist in a historical vacuum. It is through this that we can attain some sort of understanding of the emotional scripts that underlie anti-Jewish violence in the 14th-century. Anti-Jewish sentiments have a long and complex history that goes back to antiquity. Giving an exhaustive overview of ancient anti-Jewish ideas would perhaps be too much of a good thing for the scope of this thesis though. That being said, there are historians who argue that there is a direct line from ancient anti-Judaism to our times, one such historian is David Nirenberg. Nirenberg argues that the ancient Egyptians set the precedent for anti-Jewish polemics for later civilisations. Basing himself on the writings of Flavius Josephus, Nirenberg states that the characteristics of the archetypal untrustworthy, lawless and impious Jew were developed in ancient Egypt out of practical necessity. The Jews were, from the outset, an anomaly and an exception to ancient society and therefore a useful other on which negative projections could be made. This dynamic carried over to later civilisations because after the diaspora the Jews remained an other and an anomaly in the territories where they settled in. Their surroundings changed but their relation to the larger society around them did not.⁶⁷ Arguably the most important basis for medieval views of the Jews are the writings of St. Augustine of Hippo. Augustine developed what has been called the witness-theory. This theory allowed the Christians to account for the continued Jewish presence in their communities. The theory entails that Jews should be allowed to live amongst Christian communities because their people were witness to Christ's life, death and resurrection. Their rejection of Christ as the messiah meant that the Jews were, according to official position of the early medieval church, condemned to a life of servitude and wretchedness. This Jewish state of servitude also functioned as a confirmation of the moral righteousness of the Christian Gospels. Likewise, converted Jews served much the same function in Medieval society. They were there as a constant reminder of the truth of the Gospels. Above all their conversion presaged the fate of all Jews on judgement day.⁶⁸ Though the witness-theory of St. Augustine forms the official line of the church during the Middle Ages the letters of Paul the Apostle arguably had a bigger emotional impact on Christian polemics against the Jews during the Middle Ages.⁶⁹ Paul's view of the Jews is profoundly ambiguous, on the one hand, in his letter to the Romans (chapters 9 through 11) he foreshadows Augustine's witness theory yet in Galatians and I Corinthians he warns for the corrupting influence of Judaism on Christianity.⁷⁰ During most of the Medieval period there was a tension between the desire to adhere to the principals of coexistence set in Romans and the anxiety that can be seen in Galatians and I Corinthians.⁷¹ But as Miri Rubin points out, these conflicting answers to the relationship between the two religions did not turn truly sinister or violent until ca. 1100. Rubin speaks of anti-Judaism largely in the context of narrative and its reception. She argues that the early Christians developed a language of Jewish guilt which echoed through time.⁷² It is the construction of this narrative of Jewish guilt that shall be the focus of the rest of this chapter.

Rubin's research focusses on medieval stories of host-desecration, these were highly influential at the time of the Black Death-pogroms. But before delving into those stories we shall take a closer look at the aforementioned year 1100 CE. This period sees the start of the crusades and they play a pivotal role in the dynamic between Christianity and the world outside of it.

⁶⁷ Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism*, 46-47.

⁶⁸ Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales: The Narrative Assault on Late Medieval Jews* (London, 1999), 7.

⁶⁹ Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism*, 53-55.

⁷⁰ Kenneth Stow, *Popes, Church, and Jews in the Middle Ages: Confrontation and Response* (Aldershot, 2007), 1-7.

⁷¹ Stow, *Popes, Church, and Jews*, 1.

⁷² Miri Rubin, 'Imagining the Jew: The Late Medieval Eucharistic Discourse', in: Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia & Hartmut Lehmann (eds.), *In and Out of the Ghetto: Jewish-Gentile Relationships in Late Medieval and Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge, 1995), 177-208, here: 178.

The crusades were not just a just and holy war against Muslims from the Christian perspective, they were also seen as a righteous vengeance for the crucifixion of Christ by the crusaders themselves.⁷³

Historian Kate McGrath has argued that “the rhetoric of anger and vengeance lies at the heart of every crusade-chronicle”. She also argues that Pope Urban II deliberately employed this so-called “vengeance script”, appealing and alluding to emotions such as anger, shame and disgust in order to gain support for the crusade during his famous speech at Clermont.⁷⁴ More importantly many contemporary authors bring up the matter of righteousness when writing about Urban’s speech.⁷⁵ Righteousness was a key element in medieval discourse surrounding violence. Without a righteous cause violence would simply be a sin; we see this mechanic at work in many medieval texts. We see it for instance in the Middle English romance of *Richard Coeur de Lion* (set during the Third Crusade) wherein acts of unbridled violence are deplored and condemned.⁷⁶ We also see this mechanic at work in the works of Albert of Aachen who called the massacres of Jews in the Rhineland (which followed the first crusade) excessively cruel. Likewise, these massacres severely detracted from the original meaning and purpose of the crusade in his view. According to Albert taking the holy city of Jerusalem from the Seljuk Turks was the primary objective, not the extermination of the Jews.⁷⁷ There is however a degree of ambivalence in Albert’s narrative of the Rhineland massacres of 1096. He describes the events of that year in Mainz where a band of Crusaders under the command of a man called Emicho indiscriminately killed the local Jews. Albert condemns this action in harsh words, the ambivalence lies in his treatment of the Jews in this narrative. He calls them “[...] hostile to Christ” and refers to them as “exiled”.⁷⁸ Albert is however more concerned with the behaviour of the Crusaders who drank and whored their way from one village to the next, neglecting their sacred mission to the Holy Land. The problem for Albert is not that the Jews were massacred, the problem lies in the manner in which this happened, it was not righteous.⁷⁹ To put this into more banal terms: it was okay to kill the Jews, they were the enemy of Christ, but only be killed under certain circumstances.

Medieval Europe had no shortage of such circumstances, there were tales abound. Stories circulated around Europe containing accusations of host desecration, ritual murder and blood libel. We can see an increase in the spread of such stories throughout the 12th and 13th-centuries.⁸⁰ One of the most common slanders directed at medieval Jews was that of ritual murder. One famous, and possibly the first, example of such a narrative is that of William of Norwich, which first appeared in 1144. The narrative was coined by a local monk by the name of Thomas of Monmouth and it tells about a pan-European conspiracy wherein Jews would ritually crucify a Christian boy every Easter so they would be restored to the Holy Land. Supposedly the Jews chose a boy by the name of William for the 1144 ritual and shortly after the sacrifice had been performed miracles began to happen around the site where William was supposedly killed and a shrine was erected. Scholars have pointed out that the story did not gain much support in the Norwich area as evidenced by the meagre amount of offerings made at the shrine.⁸¹ Paradoxically the story did spread fast around England and later to the continent. In England this blood libel sparked relatively little anti-Jewish violence, with only about half of the accusations made leading to some form of violence, often minor.⁸²

⁷³ Kate McGrath, ‘The Zeal of God: The Representation of Anger in the Latin Crusade Accounts of the 1096 Rhineland Massacres’, in: Kristine T. Utterback & Merrill Llewelyn (eds.), *Jews in Medieval Christendom “Slay Them Not”* (Leiden, 2013), 25-44, here: 26-27.

⁷⁴ McGrath, ‘The Zeal of God’, 28.

⁷⁵ Ibidem, 29.

⁷⁶ Marcel Elias, ‘Violence, Excess, and the Composite Emotional Rhetoric of Richard Coeur de Lion’, in: *Studies in Philology* 114-1 (2017), 1-38, here: 36-38.

⁷⁷ McGrath, ‘The Zeal of God’, 34-36.

⁷⁸ Ibidem, 37-38.

⁷⁹ Ibidem, 38.

⁸⁰ Ibidem, 43-44.

⁸¹ Jonathan Elukin, *Living Together Living Apart: Rethinking Jewish-Christian Relations in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, 2007), 97-98.

⁸² Elukin, *Living Together Living Apart*, 99.

Contrarily the Holy Roman Empire saw bigger outbursts of violence when similar accusations of ritual murder arose. Two examples of this type of violence are the pogrom in Mainz in 1283 and the story of “Good Werner” from 1287. Both these narratives have much in common with the story of William of Norwich. Like that English story these German ones speak of a Christian boy murdered by Jews during Easter which was followed by a miracle on the site of the murder which in turn was followed by widespread pogroms.⁸³ When we place these occurrences of ritual murder in a larger context of anti-Jewish scripts we see how an English narrative invention became the stereotypical script to which others would refer. Likewise it is not difficult to see how this narrative of blood libel would gain strength. Each instance wherein these stories would be repeated and/or remodelled added to the viability of similar narratives which in turn would confirm the validity of the initial narrative, thus we see a vicious cycle of anti-Jewish narrative constructs building upon itself.

By the end of the 13th-century another type of anti-Jewish narrative would arise: that of host desecration. The first documented case of a charge of host desecration occurred in Paris in 1290 and from that point onward the libel of host desecration and the blood libel became more or less interchangeable.⁸⁴ In a typical *exemplum* of a host desecration story a Jew tries to feed the host to his dog. The dog refuses to eat it and in turn attacks his owner.⁸⁵ It should also be noted here that this story is an *exemplum*, a moral anecdote, to show the power of the host. Other groups seen as enemies of the Church could easily fulfil the same nefarious role in this type of narrative; though under the influence of mendicant theologians these stories became increasingly more tied up with the Jews and increasingly more widespread.⁸⁶ We could say that the host desecration narrative became embedded in local memory as well as in universal Christian lore.⁸⁷ This spread of the host desecration narrative usually went hand in hand with political power struggles. If such a power struggle occurred, political factions would often indirectly attack the Jews under the protection of the opposing party to undermine that party’s financial position. This was often achieved by inciting violence against Jews in local communities but increasingly these pogroms would occur spontaneously without much interference from local authorities.⁸⁸ Whether the pogroms were deliberately incited or occurred spontaneously, the political goal was always the same: to undermine both the financial as well as the moral position of the opposing party. This was done because the Jews were still the main moneylenders in medieval society, taking them out of the equation would severely undermine the finances of an enemy whose weak governmental authority was often dependant on Jewish loans. Likewise it was the moral duty of local rulers to protect the Jews from harm and failing to do so would undermine the moral position of these rulers.⁸⁹ It is important to note here that although political, economic and religious motivations all played a role during these episodes of anti-Jewish violence, all of these motives are part of a complex of INUS-conditions. Yet hatred of the Jews, whether incited or not, was almost omnipresent in Christian thinking during the latter part of the 13th-century and stories of ritual sacrifice and host desecration further compounded this.⁹⁰ The proverbial nail in the coffin for the start of the Black Death pogroms came in the form of a new libel which came in the form of stories of well-poisoning which arose at the beginning of the 14th-century.⁹¹ This libel consisted of accusations

⁸³ Müller, ‘Erez Gezerah’ 248-251.

⁸⁴ Ibidem, 250-251.

⁸⁵ Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1994), 124.

⁸⁶ Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 122-123.

⁸⁷ Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales*, 194.

⁸⁸ Müller, ‘Erez Gezerah’ 251.

⁸⁹ Ibidem, 252-254.

⁹⁰ Boquet & Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, 232-234.

⁹¹ Tzafir Barzilay, ‘Early Accusations of Well Poisoning Against the Jews: Medieval Reality or Historiographical Fiction’, *Medieval Encounters: Jewish, Christian and Muslim Culture in Confluence and Dialogue* 22-5 (2016), 517-539, here: 537.

of Jews poisoning water sources by defecating or menstruating in them in an attempt to wipe out Christianity.⁹² A similar narrative was deployed to accuse lepers of various calamities in 1321.⁹³

Apart from an ever increasing array of anti-Jewish narratives we also see increased legal measures taken against the Jews. The first evidence of legal limitations placed upon them in the German lands comes from the reign of King Rudolf I of Habsburg (r. 1273-1291). Rudolf came to power after a thirteen year interregnum and was perpetually strapped for cash. When Jews tried to flee the city of Mainz, which had become internally politically unstable, he had their property confiscated. According to some historians Rudolf set the precedent for the changing view of the Jews in the empire from “wards of the emperor” to “objects of financial exploitation” during the latter part of the 13th-century. This was primarily achieved through the use of legalism. Rudolf emphasised the close bonds between Jews and the reigning monarch and in 1286 he mandated higher taxes for the Jews by making use of his royal rights over them. This enforcing of imperial rights over the Jews meant that their *de facto* legal position deteriorated severely.⁹⁴ Similar legislation came into place in England and France during the 13th-century though it was not always enforced nor necessarily driven by popular animosity towards the Jews. The Jews were not expelled from the Holy Roman Empire, this contrary to England (1290) and France (1306) but all over Europe the Legal apparatus for Jewish persecution was in place by the early 14th-century.⁹⁵ This legal apparatus was also largely responsible for aiding the geographical spread of the well-poisoning libel. This is evidenced by, amongst others, the 1348 exchange between Rodolphe d’Oron, bailiff of Lausanne and Conrad von Winterthur, mayor of Strasbourg wherein the latter enquires after rumours of well-poisoning in Lausanne. D’Oron replies that they have taken several confessions and he sends a copy of one of these along, one which he also send to the cities of Bern and Fribourg at their respective requests.⁹⁶ A similar exchange of information on Jewish well-poisoning was made between the cities of Strasbourg and Cologne.⁹⁷ All the cities mentioned above saw pogroms occur in 1348 and 1349. Though it may be a bridge too far to suggest that men like d’Oron and Von Winterthur are personally responsible for these pogroms, the information they exchanged may well have added to the geographical spread of the well-poisoning libel.

⁹² Carole Stone, ‘Anti-Semitism in the Miracle tales of the Virgin’, *Medieval Encounters: Jewish, Christian and Muslim Culture in Confluence and Dialogue* 5-3 (1999), 364-374, here: 368.

⁹³ Samuel Cohn, ‘Coping with Epidemic Crises, from Antiquity to the Present’, in: Alex Brown, Andy Burn & Rob Doherty (eds.), *Crises in Economic and Social History: A Comparative Perspective* (Woodbridge, 2015), 189-212, here: 195.

⁹⁴ *Ibidem*, 245-249.

⁹⁵ Robert Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe 950–1250* (Oxford, 2007), 39-42. See also: Elukin, *Living Together Living Apart*, 7.

⁹⁶ Rosemary Horrox, *The Black Death* (Manchester, 1994), 210-211.

⁹⁷ Horrox, *The Black Death*, 219-220.

Paradoxically, given long the list of instances of anti-Jewish violence mentioned above, there is also some historical evidence to suggest that the narrative of continuous Jewish persecution may be altogether too monochromatic.⁹⁸ If perceived through the lens of long-term integration and continuity as opposed to through the lens of polemics; the paradigm of anti-Jewish violence changes from that of a persecuting society into one of relative openness and stability interspersed with episodes of violence.⁹⁹ This is because in a long term perspective we see more relatively peaceful contacts and normal interactions occurring between Jews and Christians in Medieval Europe.¹⁰⁰ To quote Jonathan Elukin: *It is difficult to imagine that relatively open relations between Jews and Christians could have formed unless social norms allowed for such contacts. If mutual antipathy was truly and constantly dominant, how could such relations have evolved? Peaceful relations between Jews and Christians did not mean that antagonism did not exist, but that animus was not a constant feature of social relations.*¹⁰¹ This of course does not mean that violence did not occur and it does not take away from the horrific nature of that violence. However, Elukin's point of view enables us to see anti-Jewish violence not as a continuous stream but rather as a series of outbursts; each with its own causes and effects that were both unique to each episode but also part of a larger anti-Jewish undercurrent.¹⁰² Historians have also stressed that the language used against Jews was part of part of a much larger discourse of abuse and rhetoric of violence that was not exclusively aimed at the Jews.¹⁰³ This idea harkens back to Johan Huizinga's idiom of "the violent tenure of life in the middle ages". For Huizinga the middle ages are characterized by an intensity and absoluteness of expression and experience, he invariably describes this manner of expression and experience as "childlike".¹⁰⁴ For Elukin it means that being a victim of violence was not a fate solely reserved for the Jews.¹⁰⁵ Whether we follow Huizinga's idiom or not, historians can become blind to the commonality of violent polemics in the middle ages. Despite the long history of anti-Jewish violence before the Black Death it is important to not lose ourselves in a teleological narrative of modern anti-Semitism and keep an eye on the larger polemic trends of medieval violence. That means that if we are to understand anti-Jewish violence in an emotional context we have to acknowledge both the uniqueness of each event and its relation to the larger current of anti-Jewish polemics, since each episode will have its own emotional load. We should also acknowledge that that emotional load is informed, through cultural transmission, by historical events and ideas.

To that end, let us take a moment to summarise this chapter. This chapter has aimed to provide an overview of instances in the development of particular types of anti-Jewish rhetoric, polemics and violence. From the earliest days of their recorded history the Jews were viewed as "the other", this was the case in ancient Egypt and this dynamic carried over to other areas where Jews settled. During antiquity the apostle Paul and Augustine of Hippo developed a blueprint for Christians on how to deal with the Jews in their society. Though initially the works of Augustine, basing himself on Paul's letter to the Romans, proved to be the most influential. Both the letter to Romans and Augustine viewed the Jews as witnesses to Christ's life and advocated relative tolerance towards them. In the course of the medieval period we can see a shift from this relative tolerance to increasing hostility, theologically this can be attributed to an increased importance given to statements made about the Jews in Galatians and I Corinthians. Some historians attribute this to the events in the Rhineland that coincided with the First Crusade, during this period we see Jews being represented as the enemies of Christ. Throughout the 12th and 13th-centuries we see the rise in more popular (though some were clearly incited by

⁹⁸ Elukin, *Living Together Living Apart*, 1-5.

⁹⁹ Ibidem, 7-10.

¹⁰⁰ Albrecht Classen, 'Complex Relations Between Jews and Christians in Late Medieval German and Other Literature', in: Kristine T. Utterback & Merrill Llewelyn (eds.), *Jews in Medieval Christendom "Slay Them Not"* (Leiden, 2013), 314-338, here: 337-338.

¹⁰¹ Elukin, *Living Together Living Apart*, 9.

¹⁰² Ibidem, 95-100.

¹⁰³ Ibidem, 92-95.

¹⁰⁴ Johan Huizinga, *Herfsttij der Middeleeuwen* (Amsterdam, 1919, reprint: 2018), 19-46.

¹⁰⁵ Elukin, *Living Together Living Apart*, 90. See also: Cohn, 'Coping with Epidemic Crises', 195.

clergymen) narratives of supposed violence of Jews against Christians. These narratives become increasingly more heinous ranging from ritual murder of Christian boys to host-desecration to primitive biological warfare. None of these narratives were developed in a vacuum however.¹⁰⁶ Some were tied up with the emotionally charged feast of Easter, others were blatant copies of narratives first directed at lepers and yet others were fabricated as the result of political and economic power struggles rather than a reflection of reality. These power struggles likewise led to increasing judicial pressure on the Jews through the use of legalism and threat of expulsion. Yet, between all these instances of violence and slander a spirit of peaceful coexistence existed and violence only occurred when a provocation was perceived; the amount of these perceived provocations increased rapidly under the influence of Church reform from the 11th-century onward.¹⁰⁷

Tying this back to the theories about emotions presented in the previous chapter a clearer picture emerges. We can assert that all the elements elaborated on above feed into the emotional script that Christians developed about the Jews over time. Within this script emotives about Jews were slowly formed and culturally transmitted to later generations. These scripts were acted out, through emotional performance, in times of imminent crisis or catastrophe like for instance the Black Death to achieve personal goals of various nature. This is not to say that emotions ranged freely. As we shall see in the next chapter they were governed by an emotional regime. This regime was enforced by the clergy and the local elites who attempted to retain control over the Christian emotional response towards the Jews. The next chapter will show some of these mechanisms at work.

¹⁰⁶ Stow, *Popes, Church and Jews*, 18.

¹⁰⁷ Boquet & Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, 231-233.

Chapter 5: Performing the script: emotions in four Black Death sources

In this last chapter we shall venture out of the realms of historiography and methodology and into the past. Historians have dabbled with the seemingly paradoxical nature of anti-Jewish language during the period of the Black Death. On the one hand they see clergy trying to live by the witness theory by St. Augustine. On the other hand they see clergy devote a lot of energy to the use of strong anti-Jewish polemics and derogatory language against the Jews.¹⁰⁸ The history of emotions can shed more light on this apparent paradox. By analysing the emotions used in the selected sources we can uncover the, emotives, emotional regimes and performances of emotion at work in these sources. In other words, we shall look at the usage of emotions in the sources. We shall first look at a source which quite clearly supports anti-Jewish violence. Then we will move on to one that is less positive about it. After that we shall take a look at the papal response to anti-Jewish hysteria of this period to analyse the emotional regime that underlies the discourse in the other two sources. Lastly we shall look at the performative side of emotions of those who found themselves at the receiving end of this hysteria.

We start out with an account written down by Heinrich Truchsess von Diessenhoven, former chaplain of Pope John XXII and canon of Constance. Von Diessenhoven's account takes the form of a chronicle, giving the appearance of a certain degree of objectivity, this does not mean that emotives do not occur in it. The account opens up with the statement that the first persecution of Jews occurred in Sölden in modern-day Austria in 1348. Von Diessenhoven narrates that the Jews were burned to death after a rumour had reached the town that they had poisoned the wells and springs in the area. This was confirmed by confessions (attained under torture) by other Jews and by some Christians who, according to Von Diessenhoven, were complicit in the act. This, again according to the author, puts the deceitfulness of the Jews 'beyond the point of doubt'. He then continues by saying that within the year all the Jews in the area between Cologne and Austria had been put to death as a result of God's judgment against those who '[while trying] to overturn the rock [on which the church is founded] crushed themselves to death and were damned forever'. Here Von Diessenhoven makes an allusion to the gospel of Matthew (16:18) wherein Jesus tells Peter that he is the Rock on which his church shall be built, thus emphasising the strength of the Roman Catholic Church.¹⁰⁹ He then proceeds to list a number of other pogroms that occurred in the German lands. He does not shy away from gruesome details when he describes scenes in the town of Horw (modern-day Switzerland) where Jews, severely burned but still half alive get their heads caved in with clubs and stones by the surrounding mob when they tried to escape the flames. The narrator says that by doing this the crowd send 'those who wanted to escape the fire to hell'. Then the text makes another allusion to the Gospel of Matthew when it says: 'his blood be upon us and upon our children'.¹¹⁰ Here Von Diessenhoven explicitly states that this is the fulfilment of the curse the Jews placed upon themselves when in the New Testament they reply with the aforementioned words to Pilate's statement of blamelessness.

From an emotions history standpoint we have to first remark on the increased importance of feeling during this period. This mainly revolved around the repeated meditative contemplation of Christ's passion. Christians were encouraged to excite feelings of fear, pain hope and love within themselves to intimately experience Christ's passion and imitate it.¹¹¹ This could be expressed in episodes of weeping and wailing by the devout but also found its expression in the visual arts. There we see a transition from images of a somewhat aristocratic depiction of Christ change into almost grotesque depictions of a Christ. In this new visual language we see Christ hanging on the cross by his sagged limbs, his side pierced and the crown of thorns on his head, covered in bleeding gaping wounds. This style was particularly popular in the German territories thereby indicating an increased emphasis

¹⁰⁸ Elukin, *Living Together Living Apart*, 93-95.

¹⁰⁹ The Gospel according to Matthew 16:18: "And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it".

¹¹⁰ The Gospel according to Matthew: 27:25.

¹¹¹ Anthony Bale, *Feeling Persecuted: Christians, Jews and Images of Violence in the Middle Ages* (London, 2010), 27.

on feeling and experiencing Christ's passion in this area.¹¹² We can deduce two main emotives from passage mentioned above, these are hate and anger towards the Jews whom Von Diessenhoven quite clearly frames as being a threat towards Christendom. This hatred was build up over the centuries as we have seen in chapter 4. Likewise we can almost taste a lust for vengeance on behalf of Christ. On a more supplementary level we can also see a degree of defiance directed towards the Jews which is especially evident in the use of the aforementioned metaphor of the rock. This tone of defiance can only exist when the feeling of threat is actually intrinsically felt. On that same supplementary level we see a degree of rejoice in God's judgement over the Jews when Von Diessenhoven says: 'And blessed be God who confounded the ungodly who were plotting the extinction of his Chuch [...]'.¹¹³ The anger that is displayed in the source may seem to be at odds with the traditional Christian notion of 'turning the other cheek'. However this does not seem to have been the case since Thomas Aquinas' influential *Treatise on the Passions*. In this work Aquinas argues that Christ's example is the main criterion in judging the sinfulness of feelings. In the New Testament Christ shows anger over the presence of moneylenders in the temple and therefore, Aquinas reasons, the emotion of anger is therefore not wholly sinful.¹¹⁴ Medieval anger also finds philosophical grounding in the works of John Duns Scotus. In Duns Scotus' work anger is conceptualised as a strong dislike towards the object at which the anger is aimed. According to Scotus anger desires to remove that object and seeks to punish it because it has caused offence or is in the way of something that one desires.¹¹⁵ Duns Scotus is one of the most famous and influential philosophers of the medieval period but it would perhaps go too far to assert that his particular conception of anger fuelled the spree of anti-Jewish violence in the 14th-century. Given the fact that Duns Scotus died only thirty-eight years before the outbreak of the Black Death we can assert that his work reflects a certain zeitgeist. This because we see anger directed at the Jews in the timeframe of the Black Death function during the Black Death in much the same manner as Duns Scotus describes it.

When speaking of this zeitgeist it should also be noted that the emotive of anger about Jewish well-poisoning is as much part of Heinrich von Diessenhoven's individual emotional world as it is part of the emotions at play in the larger collective of Medieval German society. Many of the sources indicate a widespread feeling of anger directed towards the Jews. One notable exception to this widespread feeling of anger is a source that exhibits a large degree of scepticism towards the well-poisoning libel which comes from the town-counsel of Cologne in which it is stated that they do not believe the Jews are responsible for the spread of the Black Death.¹¹⁶ However, as evidenced by the hundreds of pogroms throughout the German territories, many did not share the Cologne-view.¹¹⁷ This means that we can safely say that there is a shared, social emotional element at play here. Von Diessenhoven's account is a window into a world where many shared his anti-Jewish prejudice and where many shared his belief in a Jewish conspiracy to overthrow Christianity. Thus we can speak of a world in severe emotional crisis. People were genuinely scared and angry and felt justified in their anger by, amongst others, Aquinas' interpretation of this emotion and acted it out along the lines of Duns Scotus' conception of the emotion. The most important thing about this anger though is that it is a shared anger. The shared anger and hatred felt towards the Jews is functional in the account of Von Diessenhoven. It reinforces bonds of identity and it clearly marks who belongs and who does not. The account effectively creates an 'affective contract' between those who share the same emotion. Von Diessenhoven's particular use of emotives binds him to the wider emotional community of Christians that held anti-Jewish sentiments. This, according to the theory by Barbara Rosenwein

¹¹² Jan van Laarhoven, *Beeldtaal van de Christelijke Kunst: Geschiedenis van de Iconografie* (Nijmegen, 2011), 200.

¹¹³ Horrox, *The Black Death*, 208.

¹¹⁴ Nicholas Lombardo, 'Emotions and Psychological Health in Aquinas', in: Elena Carrera (ed.), *Emotions and Health 1200-1700* (Leiden, 2013), 19-46, here: 40-41.

¹¹⁵ Simo Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy* (Oxford, 2004), 264

¹¹⁶ Horrox, *The Black Death*, 219-220.

¹¹⁷ Müller, *Erez Gezerah*, 252-253.

mentioned earlier in this thesis, functions within the greater sphere of medieval Christianity.¹¹⁸ One might call this community in which Von Diessenhoven embeds himself an “emotional sub-community” within medieval Christianity. We can thus assert that Von Diessenhoven employs an emotional script when speaking of anti-Jewish violence. The New Testament provides much of the inspiration for this script. It is the New Testament that sets the bounds for Von Diessenhoven’s emotives, yet referring to it also provides readers the basis for a shared emotional experience.¹¹⁹

The last paragraph of Von Diessenhoven’s account ends on a somewhat more sinister note than the simple listing of occurrences of pogroms. Firstly he tells us how Duke Albrecht of Austria was forced to cease his protection of the Jews in his realm under pressure from angry citizens. After this passage Von Diessenhoven continues to narrate that now the Jews of Austria will suffer the same fate as their fellow Jews did in the rest of the German lands, for ‘they are accursed to God’. Here again we see a theologically motivated hatred that becomes especially clear when viewing this passage in context. Von Diessenhoven says that he sees the fulfilment of prophecy and ‘the end of the Hebrews’. Though Von Diessenhoven also sees the fulfilment of Augustine’s witness theory coming to pass yet he thinks this fulfilment will not happen in Europe but ‘across the sea’. The last sentence of this part of the chronicle is maybe the most telling. He says: ‘So let me make an end of the Jews here’, this simple sentence has a lot of emotional implications. We could take it at face value and simply interpret it as a signifier that Von Diessenhoven is done speaking about the Jews in his chronicle. Nevertheless, given the anti-Jewish sentiments propagated in the rest of the text this would seem unlikely. We also have the option to interpret this as a sign of anticipation and of hope. That one day all the Jews of Europe will be exterminated. Theologically this could perhaps signify the second coming, if this is the case we should read this as having a joyous emotional undertone.¹²⁰

Anger and hatred are mostly implicit throughout the source but this is also because, given the relative universality of anti-Jewish thinking in medieval Christianity, it is not entirely necessary to be explicit about this. Another feature that stands out is the relative lack of reference to the plague itself, this in itself can also mean two things. We could assume that, as with the universality of anti-Jewish thinking, the plague is so omnipresent and part of the mind-set of anyone who reads it that mentioning it would be considered superfluous. On the other hand we could better interpret this as a signifier for Von Diessenhoven’s individual goals. He uses the crisis of the Black Death merely to confirm his own theological observations (i.e. the fulfilment of prophecy). Thus the Black Death is not the core of his narrative. Instead he uses the crisis brought on by the pandemic to stir up latent emotions concerning the Jews as a harbinger of prophecy, this usage could be called performative.¹²¹

We see this performative side of emotions on multiple levels in this chronicle. Within the narrative itself various groups of people perform emotions for various means and ends. We see for instance the citizens of several Austrian towns collectively write an angry letter to Duke Albrecht of Austria demanding he cease his protection of the Jewry.¹²² The way in which these emotions are framed within the narrative, how their performance is described, tells us more of the author’s intentions. It would be common for higher placed clergymen such as Von Diessenhoven to be rather disdainful of people drawn together by a common and shared emotion; these are often presented as being uncontrolled as a sign of the ignorance of the mob.¹²³ The fact that Von Diessenhoven does not condemn the performed outpouring of emotions by the citizens of these Austrian towns is indicative of the fact that he is in agreement with their goals. This can also be seen in passages where Von Diessenhoven himself performs implicit emotions in his chronicle. Though there is an air of objectivity in his narrative he in fact fashions a believable scenario wherein his readers and himself can find common emotional ground which adheres to the acceptable norms of emotional behaviour and emotional

¹¹⁸ Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities*, 61-62.

¹¹⁹ Boquet & Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, 244-245.

¹²⁰ Horrox, *The Black Death*, 208-210.

¹²¹ Elukin, *Living Together Living Apart*, 95-100; Bouquet & Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, 246-247

¹²² Ibidem, 210.

¹²³ Boquet & Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, 221.

expression that they share.¹²⁴ His readers and Von Diessenhoven himself can rally around a shared feeling of hatred of the Jews and a shared hope for an imminent last judgement. This shared emotional experience could be very comforting in a time of crisis.

Where Von Diessenhoven's account shows us how an individual's use of emotives and the manner in which he presents performed emotion can tie into a larger emotional community. But we can also analyse emotional responses on a group level. A particularly well-suited case-study for this is the chronicle written by Mathias of Neuenburg which dates from either 1349 or 1350. Neuenburg tells us about the lead-up to the pogrom in Strasbourg, the largest of such an event to take place during the Black Death.¹²⁵ This pogrom was highly emotional in nature, so emotional in fact that some historians have called it hysterical.¹²⁶ It is likely that Neuenburg, a clerk in service of Berthold of Bücheck, bishop of Strasbourg, was actually an eyewitness to the events he describes. His entries into the chronicle end in 1350.¹²⁷ Neuenburg's narrative is also rather different from the one by Von Diessenhoven; it contains dialogue and seems less concerned with implicating the Jews in a plot to overthrow Christianity. Rather, he focusses on political strife within the city caused by the matter of Jewish well-poisoning. It is within this political strife that we can see how emotives and emotional performance were employed as communication strategies in a broader social context.

Neuenburg opens up with a very short overview of which cities have exterminated their Jews but then he swiftly moves the narrative on to the specific case of the city of Basel. He relates that the Jews had written to the cities of Basel, Freiburg and Strasbourg that they had been attacked in various other towns. The nobles and aldermen of these cities made efforts to protect the Jews from harm but they are then confronted by an angry mob of townspeople in Basel. Here Neuenburg says "the councillors were terrified".¹²⁸ The use of this emotive is in fact a narrative framing device that sets the stage for a contradistinction that continues throughout the text. The mob then demands that the Jews will be banished from the city. Then the councillors 'did not dare leave the palace'. Neuenburg again employs the emotive of fear when describing the feeling of the councillors and the townsfolk keep applying pressure on them by crying out they 'do not want the Jews to stay here anymore'. The highest officials of the three cities then meet and contrary to their own inclination they decide to have the Jews arrested because '[they] feared the people's outcry'. The bishop of Strasbourg briefly resists by denying having heard anything bad about the Jews in his city but relents when 'the populace cries out against the Jews'.¹²⁹ At this point it should be noted that Berthold of Bücheck, bishop of Strasbourg and patron of Neuenburg had managed to extort some 8300 marks from the Jews of Strasbourg, on the charge of blood libel, to pay for his three of his nieces dowries.¹³⁰ A final meeting between the most important officials is held and afterwards the Jews are arrested and executed in all major population centres. The Lord Mayor of Strasbourg, Peter Swarber, tries to resist the persecutions fearing it will make the bishop and the barons more power hungry but to no avail, for he could not resist 'the clamour of the mob'. Swarber was apparently universally hated by both nobles and commoners, both considered him to be too mighty.¹³¹ After a confrontation with the guilds he 'fearfully resigns and is stripped of his office' put under pressure by the mob. New officials are elected from amongst the guilds and like in the town of Horw in Von Diessenhoven's narrative carnage ensues. According to Neuenburg anyone who tried to protect the Jews was subject to the resentment of the people and he paints a picture of frightened administrators succumbing to the will of the mob and neglecting their duties to protect the Jews.

¹²⁴ Ibidem, 219.

¹²⁵ Aberth, *The Black Death*, 151.

¹²⁶ Ibidem, 117.

¹²⁷ Ibidem, 151.

¹²⁸ Ibidem, 151.

¹²⁹ Ibidem, 152

¹³⁰ Ibidem, 152.

¹³¹ Ibidem, 153.

As a final nail in the coffin Neuenburg tells of the arrival of the flagellants who take advantage of what Neuenburg sees as the gullible people who they incite to commit more violence against the Jews.¹³²

Neuenburg's use of emotives is quite limited in its scope, but it is very deliberate. He makes a near constant rhetorical juxtaposition between the angry roaring mob with its uncontrolled anger and the frightened rulers who fail to protect the Jews. In making this juxtaposition Neuenburg condemns them both. Unlike Von Diessenhoven, who exhibits some degree sympathy towards the angry mob Neuenburg scornfully frames them as aggressive rabble. This form of rhetoric can be considered typical for the Late Middle Ages. It serves to discredit, depoliticize and delegitimise the plea of the lower classes in society.¹³³ It has to be said though that the motivations of these lower classes may not have stemmed from a form of disinterest. Firstly they deliberately use their anger against the Jews to force themselves into a position of more power. This point is proved by the fact that they succeeded in appointing four new mayors who, along with a representative from the butchers' guild, attain political power in the city.¹³⁴ Likewise, it is the burghers of the city of Strasbourg that manage to obtain the houses that belonged to the Jews or '[have] been put to other uses'.¹³⁵ Disinterested or not it should be noted that in Neuenburg's narrative 'the people' are very public in the performance of their emotions. Throughout the narrative there is a more or less scripted choreography wherein emotions are publically expressed not just as a matter of communication but the driver of political action. The public element of the performance of emotion is indispensable in achieving political gain.¹³⁶

Thus we also see Neuenburg creating a narrative wherein those who are tasked with protecting the Jews constantly hide, meet in secret or cower in fear behind palace walls. In other words, they are not publically exclaiming their emotions and therefore they lose part of their political force.¹³⁷ The emotive of fear is used to condemn an emotional regime that is failing in its duties to the Jews (i.e. failing to protect them). According to medieval cultural norms the lack of public performance of emotions would harm the personal honour and social standing of men like Peter Swarber who consequently fled the city after being deposed as mayor.¹³⁸ We can thus assume that Neuenburg did not belong to the emotional communities of either the violently anti-Jewish mob or to that of the burgher-elite. He uses emotives to discredit them both. It is more likely that Neuenburg followed the official policies of the church which shall be discussed in the next paragraph. We should nevertheless never underestimate the extent to which all groups in society were truly terrified. Some may have used the crisis to further personal or economical goals but it is key to see that this could not have happened without the emotives that were employed.

The zealotry exhibited by Von Diessenhoven and violence of the people of Strasbourg was met with strong opposition. This came in the form of a reissuing of a papal bull known as *Sicut Judeis* by Pope Clemens VI. This bull held that Jews should not be converted by force, killed or their person or possessions otherwise hurt. This bull was first released in the wake of the Rhineland massacres by that accompanied the first crusade by Pope Calixtus II and it was more or less customary for popes to reissue it, especially in times of crisis, to protect the Jews. Clement VI was however forced to reissue the bull thrice in 1348, first on July 5th, second on September 26th and again on October 1st. To the latter he added the latter he added an addition known as *Quamvis Perfidiam* which urged all prelates and clergy to take action against anyone persecuting the Jews.¹³⁹

¹³² Ibidem, 154

¹³³ Boquet & Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, 220-221.

¹³⁴ Aberth, *The Black Death*, 154

¹³⁵ Alfred Haverkamp, 'Jewish Quarters during the Late Middle Ages', in: Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia & Hartmut Lehmann (eds.), *In and Out of the Ghetto: Jewish-Gentile Relationships in Late Medieval and Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge, 1995), 13-28, here: 24.

¹³⁶ Boquet & Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, 222.

¹³⁷ Ibidem, 222.

¹³⁸ Aberth, *The Black Death*, 154.

¹³⁹ Aberth, *The Black Death*, 158-159.

Coming from the context of the history of emotions this thesis would argue for a reinterpretation of this source. Not only does it serve to adhere by the witness-theory set out by St. Augustine, it also serves as a marker for who is in charge of the emotional regime.

Contrary to more radical clergy like Von Diessenhoven, Clement VI does not appear to have been a believer in the well-poisoning accusations made against the Jews. It is more likely that he thought the plague was brought on by 'miasma', a corruption of the air. When the Black Death first broke out, the Pope was quick to organise religious processions in the hopes of mitigating the effects of the disease by appeasing God. When this showed no lasting effect the Pope consulted his personal physician Guy De Chauliac.¹⁴⁰ De Chauliac published a well-known treatise in which he tries to explain the disease and offers advice for remedying it. In this document he explains that the conjunction of Saturn, Mars and Jupiter is causing the epidemic and that it spreads from person to person through the air.¹⁴¹ Accordingly he recommended that the Pope to sleep between two roaring fires to keep the corrupted air away.¹⁴² Not entirely unsurprisingly these roaring fires managed to keep plague-infested rats at bay insuring the pope did not get ill.¹⁴³ This contrary to de Chauliac who was ill with bubonic plague for seven weeks but managed to survive.¹⁴⁴ The pope also observed that the Jews were dying of the plague as well and that Christians even died in areas where Jews were not present.¹⁴⁵ This, dare we say, more empirical approach to the plague enabled the Pope to deny the two most prevalent reasonings behind the anti-Jewish violence of his day. Firstly it enabled him to reject the notion that the plague was a punishment from God send because the Christians allowed Christ-killers to live amongst them. And secondly it allowed him to deny the well-poisoning libel.¹⁴⁶ It is against this more rational explanation of the plague that we must read the *Sicut Judeis* that Clement issued.

Clement's first issuing of the bull is not particularly remarkable on a textual level, it does not deviate from the standard bull. It does follow the paradoxical tradition set out by Augustine however. On the one hand it calls the Jews perfidious and it remarks upon their stubbornness in refusing to interpret the old testament correctly. Yet on the other hand it persists in the idea that they deserve protection because Jesus had chosen to be born a Jew. Likewise it calls upon the idea of Christian piety when arguing for clemency towards the Jews.¹⁴⁷ We can recognise the standard rhetoric that had been prevalent for over two hundred years by the time of its issuing in this part of the bull. Timing-wise this first issuing of *Sicut Judeis* by Clement VI is more interesting. The first pogroms started occurring in the spring of 1348.¹⁴⁸ According to chronicler Konrad of Megenberg the pope was personally blamed for the plague.¹⁴⁹ From an emotions history point of view this is interesting for it opens up the possibility that Clement had some sort of personal empathy for the Jews since they were both being scapegoated. Whatever Clement's personal motivations may have been, his reissuing of *Sicut Judeis* on the 5th of July proved to be ineffective. The second reissuing included instructions for clergy to take actions against pogroms and those perpetrating them.¹⁵⁰ The third reissuing included a few additional lines on the greed of those making the accusations against the Jews. Likewise it remarks on the fact that if accusations are to be made they should be brought before proper judges and not be solved by 'hot-headedness'. He also says that the legitimate judgements have 'done nothing to cool the rage of the Christians but rather inflamed them even more'.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁰ Benedictow, *The Black Death*, 97.

¹⁴¹ Ria Jansen-Sieben, 'Ooggetuigen en Flagellanten Anno 1349', in: J. Lemli (ed.), *De pest in de Nederlanden* (Brussels, 1999), 85-108, here: 89-92.

¹⁴² Benedictow, *The Black Death*, 97-98.

¹⁴³ Ibidem, 98.

¹⁴⁴ Jansen-Sieben, *Ooggetuigen*, 92.

¹⁴⁵ David Herlihy, *The Black Death and the Transformation of the West* (Cambridge, 1997), 65.

¹⁴⁶ Benedictow, *The Black Death*, 98.

¹⁴⁷ Aberth, *The Black Death*, 158-159.

¹⁴⁸ Ibidem, 139.

¹⁴⁹ Ibidem, 158.

¹⁵⁰ Horrox, *The Black Death*, 222.

¹⁵¹ Ibidem, 221.

Greed, hot-headedness and rage are all forms of emotives in this narrative. In this case they are employed as engines of change.¹⁵² At least this is how they are intended. The context in which they are used assigns a clear negative value to them. Meaning that by using them in the context of a papal-bull Clement effectively orders Christians not to apply these emotions to Jews in the context of well-poisoning narratives. This thesis would therefore argue that the reissuing of *Sicut Judeis* is an attempt to curtail these emotions. On this basis we can say that Clement is trying to impose an emotional regime onto Christians who are persecuting Jews on the pretext of well-poisoning. In a functioning emotional regime this would mean that the not-performing of such emotions becomes mandatory. His clergy, in the form of people like (amongst others) the aforementioned Konrad of Megenberg. Megenberg wrote a lengthy treatise in which he concludes by saying '[...] it does not seem to me that the pitiful Jewish race is the cause of this general mortality which has spread throughout almost the whole world'.¹⁵³ In this he shows himself a loyal follower of the Pope in rejecting anti-Jewish polemics. Yet, Clement's use of emotives fails to alter the state of feeling of those to whom they are addressed, thus the feedback-loop of emotives changing behaviour in others does not occur, they are not internalised by .¹⁵⁴ This is where the element of fear of the Black Death becomes key. However hard Clement, Mathias of Neuenburg or Konrad of Megenberg argue against the well-poisoning libel it keeps on persisting. The angry mob of Neuenburg does not trust to judicial system to solve the problem. Clement's bull is not heeded and however nuanced Megenberg's reasonings are they do not stop the pogroms. The fear of the Black Death discredited traditional leadership and undermined confidence in them leading to the formation of new popular religious movements such as the flagellants.¹⁵⁵ Emotional attitudes of chroniclers such as Heinrich von Diessenhoven do not change.¹⁵⁶ The landscape of these unchanging emotional attitudes towards the Jews is varied. Some are affected by centuries of culturally transmitted anti-Jewish hatred, others by to lure of economic advantage and yet others, like von Diessenhoven, see the onset of the Last Judgement on the horizon. Whatever the underlying narrative may be, it is clear that all these groups had become radicalised through their fears and general anti-Jewish hatred.¹⁵⁷ Thus Clement's traditional emotional regime had to an extent failed. He cannot undermine the newly developed emotional script. Though there certainly were those like Peter Swaber of Strasbourg and Duke Albrecht of Austria who tried to protect the Jews but they were all urged by fear to save their own skin and caved under the pressure of angry mobs that forced their hand.

Before moving on to the general conclusion of this thesis there is some room for seeing what it was like to be at the receiving end of all this anger and hatred. Efforts have been made to reconstruct the Jewish experience during the Black Death. There survives a Jewish narrative from the city of Worms from the 17th-century which relates this Jewish experience which had been passed on through local tradition.¹⁵⁸ By the time this was published 350 years had passed since the Black Death and therefore this thesis gives preference to a non-Jewish victim of an attempted pogrom. This comes in the from the autobiography of Heinrich Seuse (also known as Henry Suso), a 14th-century German mystic. It was not uncommon for wandering mystics, or all manner of strangers and foreigners for that matter, to be at the receiving end of severe hostility when entering a new town, like the Jews these people were often accused of bringing the Black Death with them.¹⁵⁹ Seuse's narrative begins with him arriving at an anonymous village fair along with a traveling companion.

¹⁵² Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities*, 19.

¹⁵³ Aberth, *The Black Death*, 157-158.

¹⁵⁴ Ibidem, 18-20.

¹⁵⁵ Herlihy, *Transformation of the West*, 65-68.

¹⁵⁶ Cohn, *The Burning of Jews*, 17.

¹⁵⁷ Elukin, 94-95.

¹⁵⁸ Lucia Raspe, 'The Black Death in Jewish Sources: a Second Look at Mayse Nissim', *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 94-3 (2004), 471-489, here: 472-473.

¹⁵⁹ Herlihy, *Transformation of the West*, 66-67

This companion wishes to dry his clothes by the fire somewhere and Seuse continues to go about his own business. While drying his clothes the companion gets drunk and gets in to a fracas a group of men from the village. At this point the soldier who try to intervene accuse the companion of poisoning the wells in the village. Seuse's companion then 'cries out' in a sort of panic and frames him by telling the guards that is was Seuse who had poisoned the wells. A group of 'ruffians' heard the story and the 'ragged and cried with loud voices' to then 'run off with wild ferocious gestures'. Seuse uses the same narrative strategy that we saw in Neuenberg earlier. He depicts their emotions as senseless, impulsive and unjust, equating them to wild animals.¹⁶⁰ This narrative strategy is a form of performance to Seuse's readers. It indicates immediately that these 'ruffians' are in the wrong and that their anger is based on their own gullibility. Heinrich Seuse obviously was not present when these men came hunting after him, if he was that would have taken away the need for such a hunt altogether. But to the mediaeval chronicle this does not matter much. What is more important is that this narrative sits within a believable scenario that appeals to the norms of behaviour and emotional expression of the times, one that Seuse's readers would expect.¹⁶¹ We see a repetition of this narrative strategy in the confrontation between Seuse and the angry villagers. They call Seuse 'the unclean murderer', the dichotomy between clean and unclean is often used is often employed in pre-modern discourse to describe unwanted elements in society.¹⁶² The villagers then discuss how to execute Seuse, whether to drown him in the Rhine, to burn him alive or to run him through with a pike. Seuse then employs various emotives. He felt 'bitter fear' and shows (i.e. performs) this by 'groaning deeply' and '[has] large tears running down his face'. In this case the emotives have an effect, some in the crowd see Seuse's anguish and 'wept bitterly' they also 'beat their chests in compassion' likewise they 'struck their hands together over their heads'. These are all performances, or rather expected performances, of compassionate feelings. Yet at this point no one comes to Seuse's aid out of fear of being treated violently by the mob themselves. This can be tied back to the assertion made in chapter four that Jews and Christians often lived side-by-side rather peacefully. As we have seen in the text by Neuenburg there was actually some degree of compassion for the Jews. But those who did not hold radical ideas like Heinrich von Diessenhoven were just as afraid to voice their possible objections out of fear. Thus we can say that fear was an essential component in both starting the pogroms themselves and the lack of action against them. Heinrich Seuse's story does get a happy-ending when he is saved from the mob by a local friar who came to his rescue.

The point is already made clear though. Seuse may not be a Jew but he suffers the same treatment accompanied by similar derogatory discourse. This discourse is both driven by emotives and the performance of them. The discourse is also not fundamentally different from that directed at lepers in 1321 or Jews during the Rhineland massacres. All these discourses are governed by fear of outsiders and a general fear over oncoming crisis and they find their expression in emotives. These emotives function as a script to guide, shape, narrate and interpret behaviour. How this is done and how the narrative of Heinrich Seuse ties into the other narratives will be discussed in the next chapter: the conclusions.

¹⁶⁰ Boquet & Nagy, *Medieval Sensibilities*, 221.

¹⁶¹ Ibidem, 219.

¹⁶² Natalie Zemon Davis, 'The Rites of Violence: Religious Riot in Sixteenth-Century France', *Past & Present* 59 (1973), 51-91, here: 57-60.

Conclusions

This thesis has tried to shed light on the role which emotions played in anti-Jewish violence during the Black Death. During this period the Jews were accused by the largely Christian society around them of poisoning the wells in cities, towns and villages all around Europe. This sparked one of the most prolonged and most deadly episodes of anti-Jewish violence in history.

Based on the SQ this thesis has concluded that, despite there being a lot of excellent research performed on all subjects, no synthesis has been made of anti-Jewish history, Black Death history and the history of emotions. It has also been observed that the current historiography of both the history of anti-Jewish violence in the Middle Ages and in Black Death-history tends to not specify the nature of the emotions that they include in their works. This thesis has tried to give an impulse to the developing of a synthesis of the three aforementioned strands of historiography. In order to do this the methods of the history of emotions have been discussed at length. This thesis has drawn, for the most part, on the theories of emotions history developed by William Reddy. This has been done because the theory of the emotional regime better accommodates the hierarchical structure within the Catholic Church than for instance the theory of the emotional community would do. The emotional regime is the force that sets bounds for the forms in which emotions can be expressed. Throughout this thesis we have asserted that this is the Catholic Church. We have also analysed which emotives were used in the sources. The emotive is any form of affective utterance, they are communications of internal emotions put into language. Lastly there is the concept of emotional performance, these performances show to others how an individual feels and also serve to influence the individual conceptualises his own emotions.

This thesis has also argued that these emotional regimes, emotives and emotional performances do not exist in a vacuum. We have therefore analysed various different episodes of anti-Jewish polemics and violence through the ages and we have argued that these have influenced the emotions attached to anti-Jewish violence and polemics of the 14th-century through preserved social memory. The position of the Jew as the fundamental other goes back all the way to ancient Egypt where the view of archetypical untrustworthy, lawless and impious Jew was first developed. But the polemics against the Jews really start taking shape in the writings of the apostle Paul. Paul's message about the relation between Christians was paradoxical, on the one hand he argued for peaceful coexistence yet on the other he promoted animosity. This paradox was inherited by Christians of the Middle Ages and we see both elements of the paradox in the treatment of Jews in the Middle Ages. The official position of the Church was built upon the witness theory developed by Augustine of Hippo. This theory entails that Jews should be allowed to live amongst Christian communities because their people were witness to Christ's life, death and resurrection and will be converted during the second coming. We have little evidence that much anti-Jewish violence occurred between the fall of the Western Roman Empire and the start of the first crusade. It is from the early 12th-century onward that we see the emotional script that would lead to the Black Death-pogroms take shape. This was informed by stories of ritual sacrifice and host-desecration that spread throughout Europe, all interlocking and building upon each other. As we have seen in the cases of pope Clement VI and Mathias of Neuenburg these stories were not universally believed. However, we see in the narrative of Heinrich Seuse just how difficult it was for most people to intervene in pogroms even if they wanted to for it could easily lead to violence against the one trying to intervene. The spread of these narratives lead to an increasingly hostile environment for the Jews during the 14th-century and the Black Death can be seen as the fuse that lit the powder keg.

We have seen various different emotional responses to the explosion of this powder keg who's underlying scripts are all interlinked in some way. In the first account we saw a theologically informed form of anti-Judaism. In the entire account by Heinrich von Diessenhoven we see him almost gleefully list which towns executed their Jews, sometimes listing gruesome details and other times expressing his joy over these pogroms in numbers. On the basis of this analysis of discourse we can say that von Diessenhoven is exemplary of a particular emotional-subgroup. One where the pogroms are placed in a script wherein they are received with enthusiasm. We can contrast this emotional-subgroup with the

one Mathias of Neuenburg is in. Neuenburg describes the impact of the well-poisoning libel on the political actors of Strasbourg. Where emotives and emotional performance are less prevalent in von Diessenhoven's narrative they feature more prominently in the narrative of Neuenburg. He describes how emotives and emotional performance could be used to achieve political change. In Neuenburg's narrative both the anonymous angry mob and those who the mob is angry with are placed in a negative light through the use of emotives which are embedded in an script of emotional crisis. Some actors use these scripts to further their own social position where others fail to oppose that script and lose their power. However this was done over the backs of the Strasbourg Jews something Neuenburg condemns through framing emotions in a distinctly negative manner.

Both these narratives function under the umbrella of the emotional regime set forth by the Roman Catholic Church. This thesis has argued that the *Sicut Judeis* issued by Clement VI is not just an attempt to curtail the amount of pogroms in Europe, it is also an attempt to gain back control over the emotional regime since hysteria has run amok. The increase in pogroms and the rise of texts like the one written by Heinrich von Diessenhoven illustrate that the power over the emotional regime that the church traditionally held was subject to erosion because of the Black Death. New scripts of emotional expression are being developed or performed on a larger scale. The *Sicut Judeis* is an attempt to redirect the emotional regime of Christians by using negative emotives such as 'greed' and 'rage' though ultimately this failed. The mechanism of this failing of the emotional regime is exemplified in this thesis by the narrative left to us by Heinrich Seuse. Seuse portrays his assailants as violent, brutish and wild, thereby discrediting their emotions towards them. Yet his own emotives and emotional performance seem unable to sway them from the idea that he has poisoned the wells. This shows us that however much the clergy tried to suppress the hysteria that told hold of Europe through reason and legislation the emotions proved to be more powerful. This is then what the history of emotions teaches us. However much we emphasise the role of political, theological and economic forces, during the Black Death-pogroms emotions always played a pivotal role. Be it to express joy over the fulfilment of prophecy, the frustration over the uneducated mob, the attempt to regain control over the emotional regime or the plea for mercy from a persecuted individual; they all find expression in emotives. These emotives all have complex histories of their own, they all adhere to their own scripts. This thesis has attempted to show these different scripts in action and has attempted to interpret them. This leads us to conclude that emotional scripts were used to achieve concrete change in the behaviour of others. The script was provided by different interpretations of Christianity yet it finds its expression, its performance, shaped by individual emotives. These were employed by the authors to further their own particular goals. Thus emotions are an integral part of medieval discourse. The clash of narratives between Clement VI and Heinrich von Diessenhoven in particular shows us that in a crisis situation an appeal to the rational side of the mind can easily lose to the internalised emotional scripts of entire communities with the destruction of thousands of people as a consequence.

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