Carnival and Politics: Community Matters

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to widen the ways in which Carnival's political dimensions have ordinarily been discussed. What happens politically at Carnival should be placed in the social and cultural contexts in which a performance occurs, rather than being discussed only in terms of the performance's publicized representations. This contextual mix should in turn be understood first as composed of competing and cooperating communities, but then also as having far-reaching and lengthily enduring structural roots. The author illustrates these propositions chiefly by means of an overview of Rome's long Carnival history. There is space only to consider in detail two key sets of Roman Carnival sources, a verbal document written in the 1140s and two engravings made in the 1550s. The analysis of their social and cultural contexts leads to two other documentary groups, one stemming from fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Nuremberg and the other from the 1570s and 1580 in Romans, France. The long-term, structural thread knitting these disparate Carnival times and places together is the figure of the bear and his humanoid cousin the wildman.

1. This article was first written as an introductory lecture. Preserving this orientation, I have in these notes limited bibliographical references to those providing direct support for my assertions. I have not indicated the current state of scholarship in the many fields on which I touch, nor do I allude to general background materials on these topics. All translations in the article are by the author unless otherwise noted.

2. Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Helene Iswolsky (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1968), 474 (originally published in Russian in 1965). See chapter 3, especially pages 197–98, for his emphasis on popular mockery as bringing high people down low; this idea is illuminated from different angles throughout his book.

3. In a chapter called “The World of Carnival” in his influential book *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, Peter Burke develops this “safety-valve” view of Carnival, referring to the work of the anthropologists Max Gluckman and Victor Turner for analogous materials before quoting the pastoral letter of the Parisians. But he mistakes the letter’s context. See Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), 201–2.

Max Harris, quoting the same passage as Burke, emphasizes that its context shows that the Paris theologians were not affirming this pressure-valve view but were instead condemning it. See Max Harris, *Sacred Folly: A New History of the Feast of Fools* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), 222–23. In any case, their pastoral letter, as Harris writes and Burke also notes, does not concern Carnival but instead the Christmas-time Feast of Fools.

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Most discussions of the relation of Carnival to politics take one of three points of view.¹ Some attribute little or no political significance to Carnival: people who take part in this festivity, whether actors or onlookers, are just fooling around and having fun. Even when Carnival revelers invent songs and dances about kings, queens, mayors, or presidents, or about corrupt politicians or brutal police, such mockeries are politically irrelevant because they are evanescent, displaced shortly by other concerns. Whatever political expressions are emitted in the course of having fun involve no train of thought or action.

A second point of view does attribute political significance to Carnival. For those like the Russian literary scholar Mikhail Bakhtin, a large portion of the festival’s mockeries are modes of popular resistance to the powers that be. Carnival, writes Bakhtin, gives voice to the “chorus of the laughing people.” Its laughter satirizes every sort of elite and official pretension, every kind of rule of those on “high” over people and things that are “low.”² This laughter amounts to a politics of resistance exercised in the name of a “low,” commonplace humanity, a reactive response to efforts like that of the Roman Catholic Church to urge Lenten ascetic practices upon Christian believers as preparation for the church’s most important occasion, the celebration of Easter. Those who see Carnival very largely as protest against any and all rule-based counsel and coercion accordingly tend to point to church and also state regulatory measures as the source of the festival’s political aspects.

A third point of view about this issue has been called a pressure-valve idea. To paraphrase a passage in a long pastoral letter circulated among Catholic clergy by the Parisian faculty of theology in 1445, people are like barrels; once a year they need to empty out their vapors or they may explode. Once exuded, however, this idea presumes that political resentments will subside. People’s need for abusive hilarity will end in a return to the status quo.³ So this position regards the political overtones to mockeries in Carnival as outbursts with only transitory consequences. It is like the first position, except that it grants to Carnival activity something close to the creation of political programs, even explosively powerful ones, which nevertheless have only limited or indeed no lasting influence on the ways that political regimes, whether religious or secular in orientation, govern a society.

The limitations of these ideas of Carnival and politics are easily seen. For most of us at the conference in Paris where I originally presented this article in February 2015, Carnival study requires more than an analysis of performance elements and their outcomes. The processes that generate and organize a Carnival are as important to its character as are its staging and the staging’s effects on audiences and onlookers. Planners and organizers, those who participate informally and opportunistically no less than those rehearsing their roles, casual onlookers as well as ardent community supporters, and last but not least those who look on from afar or later hear about a Carnival happening while remaining resolutely outside the events’ excitement in critical or aesthetic detachment: all these elements and not just the performance itself constitute the meaning of any one or any group of Carnivals. Most of these elements, like many Carnival performances, have political ingredients, such as legalisms and policing concerns, just as do the leadership rivalries that emerge in organizing such events. And they exude indeed, like wine

barrels, a variety of political residues that endure beyond the immediacy of performance to affect the Carnivals of ensuing years and the influences that a given Carnival has on others nearby.

The political aspects of Carnival are thus much broader than those envisioned in the points of view sketched earlier. Politics swirls both inside and around Carnival proceedings; it does not simply arise from whether political programs are present or absent, whether they are successful or not, or whether they are directly or only metaphorically expressed. Carnival poses arguments about society, about how people can, should, and would like to live together. It is a mocking set of arguments, derisively, aggressively, and yet also joyously expressed. Expressive freedom is its essence, right up to and occasionally beyond the boundaries of sanity. Yet society never dissolves on Mardi Gras; carnivalesque craziness explores the dimensions, the elasticity of social controls and not their utter absence.

As a consequence, one must conclude that the qualities of a community always matter—or rather the qualities of *communities* matter—for any agglomeration larger than a hamlet is a community of communities at the same time as it is a community of individuals. But which such communities matter in the case of the political dimensions of Carnival? That is a question that should be answered by trying to scale and weigh the communities and their interaction case by case and epoch by epoch, something admittedly difficult to do for events and places in medieval centuries. Nevertheless, in the following pages I will use such a communally-focused and historicizing approach to such scaling and weighing, primarily by looking at early Carnival history in Rome.

Carnival at the Testaccio

Carnivals were celebrated in Rome over a longer period, one can reasonably conclude on the basis of presently known sources, than in any other place in Christendom. It lasted more than seven hundred years, seemingly without interdiction or interruption by more than a half-dozen years, from at least the early twelfth to the late nineteenth century, and it owed this duration largely to a decision by the top hierarchy in the western European church. For centuries this hierarchy not only permitted pursuit of Carnival's sensuous indulgences in their capital but on at least one documented occasion also honored it with the pope's own presence.

What motivated for such a long time official tolerance of Carnival frivolity during the days just before edible and sexual abstinence was enjoined upon Christians for the six-week Lenten period before Easter? It was a matter of politics. For reasons of local strategy, the popes collaborated with Rome's secular leaders to regulate parades and rituals that were often attacked by segments of clergy and laity as a denigration if not denial of Christian religiosity. The high point of Carnival's lavish public entertainments in Rome was reached in the first half of the sixteenth century when its most popular spectacle looked something like this (fig. 1):

4. The hill's name derives from Latin words expressing the sense of broken clay jars. It is located in the southwest corner of the city, at a spot not far from the Lateran palace of the popes but distant from the eventual center of habitation in late medieval centuries. According to twentieth-century archaeologists, the broken amphorae composing the hill were heaped up there, circa 100–250 CE, where ships coming up the Tiber River discharged their produce for the then one million inhabitants of the city and broke many of these containers.

5. Van Cleve may well have viewed once or more than once the undated scene that he designed (see lower left-hand corner of the print) during the undated length of his residence in Rome and Italy.

It is of course possible that his younger colleague Philippe Galle, who engraved it (see lower right-hand corner), changed van Cleve's lost drawing in some ways. Galle was born in 1537 and began business in 1557 at Antwerp where van Cleve had worked since about 1551. This makes plausible a date for this undated print in the late 1550s, when at least one other print of the 1545 scene, varying in particulars from Galle's work, was apparently produced because it includes the date 1558 on it (see figure 5, discussed later in this study). Given the generally faithful engraving practices of printmakers at Antwerp in van Cleve and Galle's time, there is no reason to suppose that Galle changed van Cleve's design significantly. That is why, in secondary literature about this print, scholars sometimes refer to it simply as van Cleve's work. The dating of the engraving remains an enigma. Different art historians, museums,

Figure 1: Philippe Galle, "Mons Testaceus," circa 1557. Engraving of drawing by Hendrick van Cleve. London, British Museum, No. 1950,0306.2.10.

Where is the Carnival here? What does this sunlit, vineyard- and church-sprinkled scene have to do with "putting away [or leaving behind, lifting off] fleshliness [or fleshly things, meat]"—that is, with *carnem-levare*, the etymological root of the word Carnival? "Testaccio Mountain," a small, fifty-meter-high hill in the southwest corner of Rome near the Tiber, is shown here as the site of a brutal food game.⁴ The two pikemen in the center, like those striding with sword and shield toward a bounding bull on the right, are on the hunt for a last meaty meal before Lent. Bulls rush down the steep incline on the right to be slain by swordsmen. Two bulls are attached to carts for reasons later to be explained. Men and women enjoying some special status observe the scene from two pavilions while horsemen stationed between the pavilions may be waiting their turn to take part in the action. Pleasure-seekers in the left and right foreground drink wine from barrels and sit to eat beneath tents or mount an elevated structure at left to sit at ease with friends. Also significant in both compositional and symbolic terms is the man riding a dromedary in the very center of the arena; the designer of the print, Hendrick van Cleve, who is said to have visited Rome in the 1540s, has given this apparently inappropriate presence extra prominence by placing a rearing horse and rider before it.⁵

The presence of a camel in the midst of a cattle-slaughtering contest is just barely believable because the popes, like some other medieval monarchs, received exotic animals from time to time as gifts, and some popes seem to have maintained menageries.⁶ But its central placement in Philippe Galle's engraving of van Cleve's drawing is not believable. It is there because the print includes several other themes besides that of the pursuit of choice meat—the bullocks—for one last time before Lent. The Carnival day is a vacation day. Here are casual throngs who eat and

and auction houses have dated it from the 1550s to the 1580s.

What is certain is that Galle issued this print at some time as one of a set of thirty-eight engravings, all attributed to van Cleve's designs, titled *Ruinarum varii prospectus Ruriumque aliquot Delineationes*. The significance of this inclusion of the Testaccio print in this larger and possibly later-published series is discussed in the section titled "The Popes' Reformed Carnival" of this article.

6. A number of popes are recorded as having menageries, especially during the Avignon residence of popes (1308–78). Pope John XXII (1316–34) kept not only a camel but also a bear, a lion, stags, and a wildcat. See David Rollason, *The Power of Place: Rulers and Their Palaces, Landscapes, Cities, and Holy Places* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016), 108.

7. The Carnival-game text together with the other four festivities is printed in Louis Duchesne and Paul Fabre, *Liber censuum de l'église romaine* (Paris: Albert Fontemoing, 1910), 2:171–73. This edition supplies an "i" within a parenthesis to give *carnelevar* in the title of the Carnival-game manuscript a passive infinitive form. For a useful commentary on the five late-winter festivities and a complete translation of them into Italian, see Tomasso di Carpegna Falconieri, "Gioco e liturgia nella Roma medioevale: Dal liber polipticus del canonico Benedetto," *Ludica* 3 (1997): 51–64. This is Benedict's text, which is parsed phrase by phrase in the following paragraphs of my text, as well as recalled in the second section of this study:

"De ludo carnelevar(i). In dominica

drink and saunter about. And on such a pleasurable occasion it is well also to have spectacles that amaze the eye. The camel and rearing horseman are used by the engraver to symbolize the role of spectacle in this Roman festivity. That theme of exhibition and spectacle is also implied by the presence of two pavilions in the foreground, a presence that raises other questions.

Some officials, some organizing groups, must have been in charge of all this. Who collected together and led the bulls up to the tents shown in Galle's engraving on top of the hill? Who collected the carcasses? Who got the food after the slaughter and in what proportions? Does the camel belong to the popes or to one of the so-called barons who had over the preceding two centuries come to dominate Roman secular affairs? Who are the people in the pavilions, and why are there two pavilions, not one? All of these questions of organization and disposition have political as well as logistic, economic, and social-status dimensions. Most of them cannot be answered with precision; most have not even been raised in the extensive scholarship about Rome's Carnival and the Testaccio game. But reasonable conjectures about some of the questions can be made if we shift attention backward to a sprinkling of sources datable before the 1540s, the probable time when van Cleve designed this scene, back to the 1140s, the probable decade during which a canon of St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome wrote a document that includes a paragraph titled "About the Carnival Game" (*De ludo Carnelevar*).

Canon Benedict was asked by a cardinal close to the then pope, Innocent II, to compile a list of festive days at which the pope was honored or officiated in person. This list included, in addition to the liturgical ceremonies celebrated throughout the year, descriptions of five late-winter festivities, one of them being the Carnival-game paragraph, which is very brief, the equivalent of only a dozen octavo-sized lines in length.⁷ These dozen lines are, so far as we know at present, the earliest authenticated account of any group-ritual activity taking place at Carnival time anywhere in western Europe.⁸

After the midday meal on the "Sunday of putting away fleshly things" (*in dominica dimissionis carni*), Rome's militia of cavalry and foot soldiers comes forth, wrote Benedict, and they drink with each other (*bibunt inter se*). Then the foot soldiers go to the Testaccio, where they await the other ritual participants, he continued, always using the present tense to indicate that he claimed to describe a repeated procedure, not a single past occurrence. Meanwhile the prefect, an officer appointed by the pope who supervised the city's civic business, went with the cavalymen to fetch the pope at the Lateran, escorting him to the Testaccio. There they "do a game with the pope looking on" (*faciunt ludum in conspectu pontificis*).

Why is the pope present at this gathering on the eve of Lent? According to Benedict, it was "so that no quarrel might arise between them" (*ut nulla lis inter eos oriatur*). Between whom? Benedict did not say whether it might be between the two groups of the militia, foot soldiers and cavalymen, or between factions in the two groups, or between disruptive fellows scattered among them all. What is implied by Benedict's wording, however, is that quarrels will not arise between them because the pope is there. His sovereign presence, given its spiritual authority, would keep peace among them.

The *ludus* (game or play) that the pope and soldiers witness is extraordinary because of its historical echo. It involves a threefold killing of animals, such as was performed in ancient pagan

dimissionis carniū surgunt equites et pedites post prandium, bibunt inter se. Postea pedites depositis scutis eunt Testacium; prefectus cum equitibus vadit Lateranum. Domnus papa descendit de palatio et equitat cum prefecto et equitibus usque Testacium, ut sicut ibi habuit civitas principium, sic ibi in illo die delectatio nostris corporis habeat finem. Faciunt ludum in conspectu pontificis, ut nulla lis inter eos oriatur. Occidunt ursum, occiditur diabolus, id est temptator nostre carnis. Occiduntur juvenci, occiditur supebia nostre delectacionis. Occiditur gallus, occiditur luxuria lumborum nostrorum, ut deinceps caste et sobrie vivamus in agone anime, ut ad Pascha mereamur digne corpus Domini suscipere.”

8. Many Venetian writers about that city’s Carnival cite a fourteenth-century document claiming that Venice’s Carnival began in 1094 as a consequence of a war with the Patriarch of Aquileia. But recent scholarship discounts this story. Although Venice’s Carnival, like Rome’s, lapsed in the nineteenth century, it was reborn, unlike Rome’s, in the twentieth century. It is certainly possible that Venice’s Carnival began in the eleventh century, but trustworthy documentation is lacking. Rome’s Carnival perhaps began even earlier for reasons briefly mentioned in this article, but no firm documentation for it has emerged before that of Canon Benedict.

9. “Ludus” in both medieval and modern times was used sometimes to mean a game and sometimes to mean a play, drama, or representation. Context usually makes it possible to know which aspect is meant. Thinking about this ludus as a moralizing

Rome, although never in connection with the springtime celebration of the Roman Lupercalia, a festivity sometimes seen as an ancestor of Carnival. In the *suovetaurilia* performed in pre-Christian times, a male pig or boar, a ram, and a bull were sacrificed as parts of a purification ritual. In this Christian case taking place many centuries after the abolition of pagan sacrifice, a bear, some bullocks, and a rooster are the animals “killed” (*occidunt*), not sacrificed (*sacrificiunt*). Benedict assigned negative and vicious, not sacredly purifying, meanings to each: With the bear, the “devil, temptor of our flesh,” is killed; with the bullocks the “prideful delight that we take,” presumably in carnivorous eating (*superbia nostre delectacionis*); with the rooster or cock, the “lustfulness of our loins.” The description ends with admonishment and reassurance. If we kill our vicious tendencies analogously to the way deathly blows are dealt in this so-called ludus, we will carry on our lives “purely and soberly in spiritual struggle” (*caste et sobrie vivamus in agone anime*) and will thus merit receiving the body of our Lord during Easter services.

If such a series of executions did take place, is it any wonder that Benedict painted over this strikingly bloody way of putting away fleshliness with a moralizing patina? No ludus as a “game” like that engraved by Galle, apparently in the 1550s, is given any verbal space.⁹ But although Benedict wrote about this ludus only as a morality play, some of his words hint at something else, and the context of his words confirms that something.

Note first some curiosities in the grammar. The words for bear and cock are singular, but the word for bullocks (that is, young steers, *juvenci*) is plural. The verb forms that Benedict used are also different for the three slaughters. “They kill a bear”: *Occidunt* is a plural form in the present tense. Is that because this fearsome beast always puts up a fight that demands plural executioners, or is it because, as happened across western Europe in more recent times, the words “they kill a bear” masked already a bear-baiting sport? “A cock is killed.” The verb form shifts from active to passive tense, leaving to the imagination—or to matter-of-fact acquaintance with cockfighting customs among Benedict’s readers—about how the cock died. This same passive rather than active tense is used for the *juvenci*. “The bullocks are killed” (*occiduntur juvenci*)—killed how? By whom? Could it have been that they were already pursued and cut down in rivalrous sport like those seen in the Testaccio game in Galle’s engraving four hundred years later?

Moralizing rhetoric replaces whatever festive tonalities the slaughters had at which a pope was present. It also pulls attention away from political overtones that can be at least suspected, although not confirmed, when one considers the context of Benedict’s words. Pope Innocent II spent most of his papacy (1130–43) in exile from Rome and the Vatican area. The anti-popes, Anacletus II and Victor IV, held the Vatican and St. Peter’s Cathedral there from 1130 to 1138, so that Innocent could not officiate in the Western Christian church’s most holy site, but remained in the south of the city at the Lateran cathedral and palace, when not forced entirely out of the city by raging noble factions and their Norman and German allies. After Innocent died in September 1143 the very cardinal who had requested Benedict’s compilation was elected pope, taking the name Celestine II, only to die within a year. Meanwhile, however, a fraction of the cavalrymen group that, according to Benedict’s grammar, regularly conducted the pope to the Testaccio, mobilized artisans and other Roman citizens to remove from power the prefect, the pope’s chief civil officer. They proceeded to institute a new governing body that they called, not surprisingly,

depiction does not, however, make it any easier to imagine the actual order in which these three executions would have been carried out. Benedict made reference to the most spectacular and presumably the most difficult of them first. A massively muscular bear, rearing up on its plantigrade hind feet to attack or defend itself usually astonishes its witnesses; it is threateningly wonderful even on nothing more than present-day television programs photographing scenes of bear habitat. To follow this killing with a series of bullock executions seems anticlimactic, and to end it all by cutting off the head of a chicken is ridiculous. Did the slaughters actually take place simultaneously or in a different order from the rhetorical order that Benedict described?

10. How and exactly when the papally appointed prefect was removed is not clear. I follow the recent richly contextualized history of the Roman commune revolution by Jean-Claude Maire Vigueur, *L'autre Rome: Une histoire des Romains à l'époque des communes (XII^e-XIV^e siècle)* (Paris: Tallandier, 2010).

11. It also surged through French and Flemish towns and cities as is emphasized in the classic account of this European-wide movement by Charles Petit-Dutaillis, *Les communes françaises* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1947). The factionalism of the communes in Italian towns, and above all in Rome, was complicated by the German emperors' sporadic invasions. See Ludovico Gatto, *Storia di Roma nel Medioevo* (Rome: Newton Compton, 1999); and Jean-Claude Maire Vigueur, *Cavalliers et citoyens: Guerre, conflits,*

the Senate, chief organ of the pre-Christian Roman Republic, and moved civic administration from areas under the pope's aegis at or near his Lateran palace to the old center of the Republic, the Campidoglio or Capitoline hill.

The exact date of the insurrection sometime in 1143 or perhaps in early 1144 is still debated.¹⁰ Its import and inspiration, however, are clear: it was part of a commune movement surging through Italian towns and cities during the twelfth century.¹¹ Although Benedict wrote this account in language asserting the timeless customary character of the Carnival ludus, it is probable that he composed his list of ceremonies and festivities at a very uncustomary moment between 1138 and 1143, the period after Innocent II returned from exile and tried to reorder affairs in the city, but a period also when civic discontent was growing in such proportions that a fundamental disruption occurred in 1143 or 1144.

"The pope leaves his palace and rides with the prefect and the cavalry to the Testaccio," while the foot soldiers arrive there separately. Cavalrymen in twelfth-century Rome were the city's local aristocrats, with wealth enough to purchase a large warhorse and with time enough to train themselves and their horses in regular cavalry maneuvers and military engagements. Nothing could be more normal than for the pope to identify his own prestige with some two hundred aristocratic families furnishing cavalrymen, because it was from these that the popes themselves had for centuries been selected. But before this familiar moment of social difference was enacted on Carnival-Sunday morning, men of modest means in the city, serving as unpaid foot soldiers, had engaged in the socially leveling custom of exchanging drinks with the cavalrymen. Whatever the character of verbal exchanges may have usually been at this point, it is certain that after 1140 these Carnival-Sunday conversations included much anti-papal talk and that the pope was informed about it. When the pope came to the Testaccio "so that no quarrel might arise" he did not come just to be seen as a person above politics, just to be understood as a moral counselor urging Lenten abstinence. He was there to hold down discontent, in customary sociopolitical alliance with aristocratic cohorts of his own kind.

Rome's commune revolution worked because an anti-papal contingent of noblemen developed wide support among both craftsmen and also professionals like lawyers and notaries. By the end of the fourteenth or early fifteenth century, each of thirteen *riioni* or neighborhoods had acquired the right to bring a bull and an uncertain number of "players" (*jocatori*) in the bull-chasing game to the Testaccio in what seems to have become a formal parade. As will be shown in the section titled "Rome's Communal Carnival" of this study, the Testaccio game, far from serving as one of the popes' ceremonial showpieces, developed new aspects by the 1360s that indicate that it had become the commune's chief festivity.

By the mid-twelfth century, the pope's power was no longer primarily derived from alliance with local social factions and their armed forces. As a consequence of the so-called Gregorian Revolution in the eleventh century, the papacy began creating an effective international bureaucracy, which invented techniques of monetary exchange and instrumentalized ideological fervency to support an increasingly legalistic version of its rights and powers. The papacy commanded funds, lawyers, and ideology, but it did not command armies. Its main power to command continued to lie in symbolic representations and in a near monopoly of the means to broadcast those representations. Until the development of printing, communicative power

et société dans l'Italie communale (Paris: Presses de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences sociales, 2003). Nonetheless, the Roman commune flourished for over two hundred years before foundering in the late fourteenth century. This is the main theme of Maire Vigueur's lengthy synthesis, *L'autre Rome*.

12. My emphasis on the time-specific political discussion of Benedict's report is not shared by most scholars. Moreover, some believe (like Anna Esposito, "Der römische Karneval im Mittelalter und Renaissance," in *Fastnacht/Karneval im europäischen Vergleich*, ed. Michael Matheus [Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1999], 11–30) that Benedict's statements do not at all reflect Carnival practices going on in his lifetime but instead apply to a period before the papal and clerical reforms led by Pope Gregory VII (1073–85).

depended mostly on learned Latin disquisitions on the one hand and on the rhetorical skills of priests and monks on the other, orating from pulpits week in and week out.

Canon Benedict's dutiful report tells us how clerical ideologists would have liked the days of "putting away fleshliness" to be customarily understood. Its political context allows us to suspect some non-customary overtones to its admonitions. But it tells us nothing about how a ludus involving a three-part killing of animals was actually staged. It offers no insight into the ambiance of the staging—such things as drinking and eating usages or "plays" of other kinds like dicing and betting and parades and races and swordplay—that may well have been going on during these same days in an increasingly prosperous city full of growing droves of pious but also sight-seeking visitors. Who else was at the Testaccio besides the militias? Was there even a camel as well as rooster, bear, and bullocks?

Such are some of the social and operational conundrums as well as the probable politics dimly glimpsed but tellingly avoided in Benedict's report.¹² Is there another way of uncovering what is not said and not even implied by the words' political context but is nonetheless implicated in the narration? Consider for example the symbolic resonances in Benedict's time of the three animals allegedly executed at the Testaccio. Why were bear, cock, and bullocks chosen there to exemplify the significance of Lenten preparation for Christian believers?

The Wild Outside the Tame

Even if Benedict's report had been less clerically conceived, it would not have thrown light on the reasons for choosing the three particular beasts apparently killed in a ritual way on this Carnival Sunday. To explain their choice requires consideration of a different level of meaning, that of conventionalized symbolic associations between physical and nonphysical reality. Unlike persons living since the seventeenth century in a gathering cultural atmosphere that separates physical from nonphysical, natural from preternatural phenomena, medieval Christians understood these two realms as interspersed, nowhere separated by sharp lines. The miraculous and the ordinary occurred side by side, allowing for no permanently drawn sensory or theoretical differentia.

The avoidance of clearly drawn perceptual and conceptual lines separating natural from supernatural phenomena lent special force to ideological pronouncements emitted by authorities in Christianity's western European capital. But of course a clerical and theological monopoly of symbolic codes and conventions was not possible either in Benedict's time or before and afterward. Daily habits and images flowing from the persistence of pre-Christian languages, gestures, and occupations constantly refurbished what the church denounced as superstitions. However assiduously Christian thinkers and preachers sought to cover and co-opt pagan persistence in accordance with papal and conciliar fiat, their attempts were always frustrated and their admonishments blunted by the inertia of habitual behavior.

How do these general points affect the particular question of why bear, cock, and bullocks had been chosen for execution when Benedict wrote about the Testaccio "game"? The selection was without doubt endorsed at that time by the papal party, for it is the pope in Benedict's report who rides with the chief men of the city to take an honored place somewhere near that

13. In this section I rely largely on the work of Michel Pastoureau, which concerns the animal symbolism in bestiaries. Michel Pastoureau, *The Bear: History of a Fallen King* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011) (originally published in French in 2007); and Michel Pastoureau, *Bestiaires du Moyen Age* (Paris: Seuil, 2011).

14. Imitations of animals in masking and costuming ways attracted the ire of early Christian apologists from Tertullian to Caesar of Arles and Pope Gelasius I. But after the fifth century, the denunciations became for some centuries little more than rote repetitions of earlier churchly pronouncements. Only after 1000 does evidence of popular enterprise in the imitation of animals arise in the array of environments listed in the text. Michael Camille devoted passing attention to all those heterogeneous spaces (Michael Camille, *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992]). Jean Wirth explored only margins of manuscripts but did so, together with the five collaborators to his book, with superb exactitude and insight (Jean Wirth, ed., *Les marges à drolleries des manuscrits gothiques 1250–1350* [Geneva: Droz, 2008]).

15. Paul Aebischer cites these documents from Imola, Ravenna, Mantua, and Padua. Aebischer's essay investigates linguistic, not festive, meanings of the Latin terms used for Carnival in Italian medieval cartularies and cites the Carnival-hen usage only in passing. Paul Aebischer, "Les dénominations du Carnaval d'après les chartes italiennes du Moyen Age,"

small hill. But since Benedict used the present tense throughout his description to indicate the occasion's customary quality, it is possible that selection of these animals was made long before he wrote and was made by other festive organizers than the papal party. We cannot therefore be certain that the animals' qualities emphasized by Benedict were those that led to their original selection or their continued use. There is therefore all the more reason to inquire about their commonly accepted symbolic qualities, which as one might guess stretch far beyond those emphasized by Benedict with a view to Lent.

Animal behavior and the animal world have always fascinated human observers, and talking about them as well as cataloging their peculiarities have been given honored literary and encyclopedic status in the West ever since Aesop and Aristotle. Animal tales and lore became parts of new compendia from the ninth century and led to a spate of twelfth- and thirteenth-century manuscripts called "bestiaries" by modern scholars. The symbolic materials cited in the following paragraphs come largely from recent study of these entertaining, often illustrated miscellanies of animal lore.¹³ Bestiary descriptions are of course mere scattered signs of the richer manifolds in people's imaginations. From the eleventh century onward, play by festive maskers with the characteristics of animals can be documented. Animal imitations were irresistible, because they joined in varying proportions something queer, something dreadful, and something amazing to humanly analogous expressiveness. Their contorted limbs protruded from the undersides of cathedral choir seats and jutted from corbels and church-column capitals, wove themselves into tapestries, and decorated the sides and base of biblical texts in books of devotion.¹⁴ Their fearful yet attractive heterogeneity, as these animal shapes wormed their way into the side aisles of orthodoxy, has an affinity with what was happening to Carnival itself as an occasion developing both more attractive and more questionable qualities.

Carnem-levare, as a phrase connoting temporary termination of meat consumption, had no doubt been regarded with some recalcitrance by lukewarm Christians from the very beginning of Lenten practice in early Christian centuries. But by the twelfth century, the recalcitrance had turned into conduct that was nothing less than an inversion of asceticism. Lent's restrictions could now be faced, it seems, only by first augmenting the consumption of meat. Records of four towns in central and northern Italy include customary payments dated between 1138 and 1180 as "a hen at Carnalevari," "a hen in Carnevale," and so on. At least in these parts of Italy the date called Carnival signified gearing up for customary feasting as a prelude to Lenten fasting.¹⁵ How likely is it that this was also the case a little further south at Rome? The plural form of bullocks (*juvenci*) in Benedict's account of the 1140s could then be said to indicate that feasting usages at Carnival time had reached Roman quarters well before that date and were being expressed in various ways alongside the anti-feasting ritual described by Benedict.

Consider first, however, before turning to the question of the bullocks, the symbolic associations of the cock, associations indicating the wide-ranging and conflicting fields of semantic meaning that animals had for medieval Christians. The cock, wrote Benedict, symbolizes *luxuria*, the "lust" of "our loins." Indeed, the cock, sovereign of the barnyard, was said to crow after copulating with one of the hens. His strutting promiscuity had been vilified by Christian writers from the fifth century onward. This trait was, however, coupled with a reputation for combative bravery that had made cockfight competitions at Carnival a commonplace in London and no doubt other parts of Europe by Benedict's time.¹⁶ If there were amateurs of such competitions among the

in *Mélanges de philologie romane offerts à M. Karl Michaelsson* (Gothenburg: Bergendahls, 1952), 4–6.

16. William Fitzstephen in his *Vita Sancti Thomae* (circa 1173) described these cockfights during his own boyhood in London, which must have been in the 1130s or 1140s: “Each year upon the day called Carnival ... boys from the schools bring fighting-cocks to their master and the whole forenoon is given up to boyish sport, for they have a holiday in the schools that they may watch their cocks do battle.” I quote here the translation from F. M. Stenton, *Norman London, An Essay with a Translation of William Fitz Stephen’s Description and a Map of London under Henry II* (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1934), 30; Stenton’s small book comments on this and other festive features of London’s Carnival and also Lenten seasons recounted by Fitzstephen. The Latin text reads thus: “Praeterea quotannis die quae dicitur Carnilevaria, ut a ludis puerorum Londinae incipiamus (omnes enim pueri fuimus), scholarum singuli pueri suos apportant magistro suo gallos gallinaceos pugnaces, et totum illud antemeridianum datur ludo puerorum vacantium spectare in scholis suorum pugnas gallorum.” The Latin version is from James Craigie Robertson, *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury* (London: Longman, 1877), 9.

17. *Bobacterius* is derived from the Latin adjective *boarius*, “bovine,” which in turn comes from the noun *bos*, “bovine animal.” Maire Vigueur treats the rising power of the *bovattieri* in the commune movement in

militias assembled before the pope, denouncing a rooster as a symbol of lust must have seemed a one-sided and unwelcome complaint.

Beef eating was fine eating; the bullocks symbolized not only sinful alimentary enjoyment but also wealth, the possession of animals occupying the pinnacle of the Roman food chain. (The Latin word for money was *pecunia*, from *pecus*, “cattle herd.”) The richest men in twelfth-century Rome belonged to the *ars bobacteriorum*, the company or guild of cattlemen, colloquially referred to as “*bovattieri*,” and these *bovattieri* often possessed large estates in the Roman hinterland. They were, however, not nobles like the men serving as cavalrymen (*milites*). Like members of the big-business guild (*mercatores*) and men in a variety of professional occupations, the *bovattieri* joined in large part the artisanal guilds in supporting the soon-founded commune.¹⁷ As far as we can tell, given the absence of detailed commune records, most senators, councilors, and judges who eventually served the commune came from this mixture of cattlemen, merchants, and professionals.¹⁸ Thus the presence of a considerable number of bullocks-for-slaughter assembled at the Testaccio carried not only socioeconomic but also some popular-appealing, appetizing overtones for those attending Benedict’s *ludus*, overtones scarcely reducible to the cleric’s moral point of view.

Like those of the cock and young bulls, the bear’s symbolism encompassed differently weighted dimensions for clergy and laity. For the laity in most parts of Europe the man-sized brown bear had for centuries been a menacing reality in the thick forests just outside villages and towns. In the case of twelfth-century Rome, such forests had long since been brought under surveillance and no reports of nearby bear populations are reported by historians of that area. But where then did the players at the Testaccio get such an animal year after year if, as Benedict asserted, its execution was part of an annual ritual?

However the Romans may have acquired them, this large beast’s physical reality came adorned with political status. He was seen as the king of the animals from early medieval times to the twelfth or thirteenth century. But this long period of imaginary rulership was also a period of gathering misfortune. By 1200, estimates Michel Pastoureau in his significantly titled book *The Bear: History of a Fallen King*, the bear’s throne was being taken over by a longtime symbolic rival, the lion.¹⁹

This usurpation had two main causes. The first was geophysical. The bear’s hulking form was known to be in the woods, not far away. The lion in western Europe, aside from a few prestigious cases in monarchical menageries, existed almost only in mental images given perceptible form in churchly supervised or royally financed sculptures and manuscript illuminations. These images derived largely from passages in the Bible and its commentaries about them by a long line of Christian writers, as well as from some passages in pre-Christian books preserved and cited in medieval times. The bear, on the other hand, was an animal lurking in the woods, the undisputed master of ever-present forests. Its presence in people’s mental vocabulary was thus primarily derived from physical realities that provoked stories and myths attached to local places, some of which were also magnified in literary forms. Pastoureau notes how the killing of a bear in face-to-face combat is reported in varied sagas and chronicles, as a heroic feat that marked a man for royal dominance.²⁰ The lion’s presence in European mentalities was built not from such local and physical elements but from generalized literary and iconographic representations.

L'autre Rome. For his assessment of the group's political sentiments, see *L'autre Rome*, 119.

18. Wholesale looting followed the invasion of Rome by Emperor Charles V's troops in 1527. The archives of city government on the Capitol were burned. Papal records stored in the Vatican, where the commander of the emperor's troops took up residence, were not burned. The consequence has been an almost unavoidably distorted understanding of the city's communal history before 1527. Some notarial records that were in private hands survived and have recently received historiographical attention. The first chapter of Maire Vigueur's *L'autre Rome* summarizes the 1527 disaster and its consequences for the papacy-oriented manner in which the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries in Rome have been traditionally interpreted.

19. Pastoreau traces this gradual takeover during the years 1000–1250. He also writes trenchantly that the bear's majesty terminated at the beginning of the thirteenth century. See Pastoreau, *The Bear*, 135–55, 171. However one estimates the evidence that Pastoreau educes for the terms and dating of this symbolic change, the reader of his book will be fascinated by the marvelously motley array of iconography included in this book to illustrate this theme, iconography covering best the period 1100–1500.

20. *Ibid.*, 38–42.

21. See *ibid.*, 48, for this linguistic point; I have added to his list of etymons the old Anglo-Saxon *bera-*, from whence English "bear" derives. Pastoreau points to the

The difference between those two modes of presence was particularly strong in northern Europe. Places and people in Germanic areas echoed the bear's prowess and high status in the bear etymons of their name: *ber-*, *bera-*, *bar-*, *born-*, *bjorn-*, etc. The acid denouncer of animal images in monastic churches, the Cisterians' cherished twelfth-century leader, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, bore the name of this animal king in the root of his name.²¹ "How it would delight me," writes a Tegernsee monk to his abbot in a poem from the first decade of the eleventh century, to "make masks with roguish hands" in the guise of "wolf or bear or ... fox." Such sentiments seem to prove the futility of the injunction to his clerics made by Archbishop Hincmar of Rheims centuries earlier: no cleric, he had commanded in a capitulary of 852, shall allow "games [*joca*] with a bear or with acrobats" to be performed in clerical presence.²² If clerics were already witnessing such performances in the 850s, it may well be that the centuries-long practice had begun of training bears to perform here and there for the amusement of casual crowds. "Do not concern yourself with jumping bears," wrote Alcuin to a young teacher in Charlemagne's palace school at Aachen (circa 801).²³ In northerly regions of Europe, the bear was such a physical actuality that it apparently led to captures for entertaining purposes as well as engendering all kinds of animal tales, masking games, and allusions to the bear's power and prowess.

Locally anchored awareness of the bear's power over things in the forested realm where he roamed was both a superiority and a liability. While his regally absolute power seemed to have undivided meaning when people imagined the bear's actions in his own wild empire, this same power could not avoid engendering divided feelings when regarded from the standpoint of tamed and ordered human precincts. He might bring in abundance; one might be able to take over and use some of his power (there were some stories of bears who brought fertility to barren women). But he also brought in danger (there were more stories about bears who carried off women and children to kill them or keep them in his lair). He might become prey to groups of hunters or be captured and tormented in bear-baiting sport or be made to perform ridiculous antics for the public. The lion, too remote in imagined habitat to stimulate such stories, retained a symbolic dimension that stayed nobly beyond such ignoble practices and physically beyond concerted action against him.²⁴

The second cause of the lion's eventual displacement of the bear from kingship of the animals was jointly theological and physical. The bear, unlike the lion, has an unsettling resemblance to humans. Menaced or surprised in the wild, he rears upright on plantigrade paws and fixes large brown eyes on anything approaching him, just as an unwary human might do. There was also thought to be a particular sexual dimension to this resemblance. On the basis of a mistaken commentary by the ancient encyclopedist Pliny the Elder, bears were even thought by some learned men during medieval centuries to copulate face to face, as humans do. This supposed resemblance fed the tales just mentioned of bears seizing women to live with them in caves and of bear-human families raising half-wild offspring. All this was most disquieting to theologians. What strange force might be hidden behind this human semblance and wild sexuality? Were these tales not proof that nature-oriented religions in parts of northern Europe, long combatted by the church, were secretly sustained by some supernatural force? What force could it be, if not that of the arch-deceiver, the devil, master of all illusions, impelling men to abandon their spiritual nature for the attractions of the material world?

root of St. Bernard's name on
page 49.

22. I translate in my text only a part of the also incomplete version of Poem 33 by Froumund of Tegernsee given in Max Manitius, *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters: Zweiter Teil* (Munich: Beck, 1923), 524, inverting in translation the order of the Latin verses: "Si lupus aut ursus vel vellem fingere vulpem, Si larvas facerem furciferis manibus ... Undique currentes cum trepidis pedibus, Gauderet [sic] mihi qui propior visurus adesset, Ridiculus cunctos concuteret pueros." Hincmar's capitulary, addressed to clerics of his diocese, is published in Jacques-Paul Migne, *Patrologiae cursus completus latinae* (repr.; Turnhout: Brepols, 1969), 125:776: "Nec turpia joca cum urso vel tornatricibus ante se facere permittat." Manitius publishes enough of Froumund's poem to show that the subject is a schoolmaster's enterprise in motivating cloister-school students to learn their lessons. That is, the subject is not a customary festivity with masking practices. But masking practices they are, nevertheless, creating a joyous uproar in the cloister school. Hincmar's text, which also alludes to other proto-Carnavalesque details, has elicited frequent comment. But the commentaries reach no convincing conclusions about the historical meaning and context of his injunctions.

23. Alcuin, "Alcuini Sive Albini Epistolae," in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Epistolae Karolini aevi*, ed. Ernst L. Dümmler (Berlin: Weidmann, 1895), 3:392.

24. In this paragraph as well as in the preceding and following ones, I often yield to anthropomorphic

The bear, then, is an embodiment of the devil. Indeed, as St. Augustine was recorded as saying in a sermon dated about 415, both the bear and the lion are figurations of the devil. In another part of the same sermon, labeled however as an "appendix" to it in the collection of St. Augustine's works cited by Pastoureau, this revered "doctor of the church" reiterated: "The bear represents the typical form of the devil; the bear is the devil" (*Ursus typum diaboli praefigurat; ursus est diabolus*).²⁵

For St. Augustine the bear and the lion were equally malevolent figures of evil. This theologian after all lived in North Africa where both bears and lions roamed the wilderness. But this was not the case in Europe. Given the lion's physical absence, it is not surprising that the symbolic paths of the lion and the bear began to diverge in medieval Europe. The overly present and threatening bear became ever more clearly a self-evident image of the devil, a sort of king in the demonic underworld. Monarchy over animals in the everyday world was meanwhile reassigned to the other traditional figure of power, the remotely majestic lion. The notion of an innately sinful nature inhabiting the bear developed from century to century in more and more ways, moving from the theological utterances of influential commentators like Rhabanus Maurus (d. 856) to less well-known authorities associating the bear with capital sins, from narratives of dreams in which the bear-as-devil frightens the dreamer to a diverse range of iconographic material.²⁶

In the light of Pastoureau's material, it seems clear that the association between the bear and the devil had become commonplace enough in Benedict's time so that he could refer to it as a self-evident epithet. Its ready acceptance depended on the theological affirmation mentioned earlier, that no unwavering line could or should be drawn contrasting natural with supernatural truths. The theological is the physical. When the pope in the Carnival ritual described by Benedict presides over execution of a bear, "this temptor of our flesh," he accomplishes a political task essential to his office. He reveals no less than the ecclesiastical reason for the entire *ludus carnelevari* by making the act of execution a metaphor for the supremacy of spiritual power over the might of the devil to encourage fleshly inclinations.... And such devilish might, did it perhaps also stand before the pope in the form of the city's army? Would this army with its temporal might soon try again to batter the walls of the Holy See, the papal stronghold of God's power on earth, as princely forces had so recently done to this very Pope Innocent II, sending him into prolonged exile?

If this was a schema playing in the back of clerics' heads as they watched the three-part slaughter initiated with the execution of a theologically endorsed image of the devil, if this game with all its animalistic intensities was indeed carried on in this fashion for years before and after Benedict's writing, then it must be concluded that any political intentions included in Benedict's moralizing construction were a failure. The successful commune revolt meant that the Testaccio games would be organized by city authorities, not the papacy. They would be in charge of deciding what animals would be executed and whether bears would be among them. In fact, there is no mention of bears ever again at the Testaccio after their appearance in Benedict's document.

By investigating in this second section some of the symbolic properties of the three kinds of animal executed at the Testaccio, the contexts of what was taking place there, outlined in the first section, have widened. A first such widening is obvious: part of the consciousness of everyone

and patriarchal habits by calling either or both lion and bear "he" or "him," not "it." It is an instance perhaps of the dimension of the bear discussed in the text's following paragraph. It may be noted in passing that in *The Bear*, Pastoureau alludes to "bear mas-sacres" in Charlemagne's time without particular examples of them and directs attention only to two secondary sources on more general religious topics. With respect to bear captures for entertainment in these early centuries, Pastoureau offers only a generalizing summary without source reference. See Pastoureau, *The Bear*, 90–91, 255n2.

25. Pastoureau attributes great influence to this formulation (*The Bear*, 281n25). He cites St. Augustine's words about the image of the devil in both bear and lion (*The Bear*, 281n20): "In istis duabus bestiis idem diabolus figuratus est."

26. Ibid., 121–28, 132–34.

27. By sometime in the twelfth century, a bear could be depicted face to face with a bare-headed and bare-legged peasant or artisan in a short tunic: such is the case in a mosaic at Casale Monferrato in northern Italy, in the cathedral of Sant' Evasio. Piercarlo Grimaldi, reproducing the scene in a drawing, suggests that the mosaic must record some use of the bear to do a dance. See Piercarlo Grimaldi, "Bestie, santi, divinità," in *Bestie, santi, divinità: Maschere animali dall' Europa tradizionale*, ed. Piercarlo Grimaldi (Turin: Museo nazionale della montagna, 2003), 11–18.

28. Bruno Brunelli cites texts from Latin and Italian chronicles

at the occasion was the difference in dwelling space of cock and bullocks compared to that of the bear. Cock and bullocks were domesticated parts of people's everyday worlds. But the bear, whether chained and led to the slaughter, as seems to have been the case here, or chained, starved, and beaten into standing on hind legs to perform a clumsy dance, was an alien being in the city.²⁷ This animal more easily acquired its no less supernatural than locally physical reputation because it was a being that exerted its power beyond civilization in areas precariously traveled and only fragmentarily understood.

The second widening of contexts, probably less conscious in people as they watched what went on at the Testaccio but no less universally shared than the dualism of wild and tame, was the semantic indication that all three kinds of animal evoked not only multiple strands of meaning but also a number of contradictory qualities. But so far as a present-day inquirer can tell, these multiple strands and their frequent contradictions were not discussed and brought polemically to bear on their object. As presented to the reader by Pastoureau, each animal seems to float in a slowly evolving viscous fluid of anomalous and strange inheritances. Christian and non-Christian, anecdotal and theological, highly abstract and intensely sensory, the congeries of meanings seem to have enriched every local encounter in a cacophony of linguistic habits, iconic clichés, and, not least of all, both festive and everyday occasions where, like Froumund the monk in Bavarian Tegernsee, one could mask for a moment as bear or wolf or fox and cavort about, and then go back to a monk's daily routines.

Although every locality and every Carnival occasion in it had its special accents, there was a shared dimension of festive forms alongside earlier simple food usages that had emerged by the twelfth century. This cultural community was as wide as Europe; and one of its edges was exploration of the wild in the tame.

The Wild in the Tame

The bear as king of animals personified the threats in forested hills and mountains. But as such a sovereign, he ruled territory filled with resources indispensable to townspeople, wood for stoves, fodder for domestic animals, exotic plants for their medicinal qualities, and game for larders. The bear personified abundance as well as danger. And so he led the imagination sympathetically to hybrid beings, not only demonic in character but also humanoid, to something indeed like a savage cousin: the wildman.

The wildman as a figure in Carnival and in other festivities with occasional carnivalesque features had two major medieval forms, as a giant and as a devilish prankster. At Padua in 1208 at Pentecost, for example, a "game was performed with a wildman (*homo selvaticus*)" and a few years later in 1224 a "game (*ludus*)" was played again at Padua in the same suburban meadow "with giants (*cum gigantibus*)."²⁸ Whether or not the modern editor of these Latin chronicles is correct in assuming that these giants of 1224 were attired like the wildmen of 1208, it is certain that the wildman's attributed might, a trait connecting the figure indirectly to the bear, has often led manuscript illustrators and finally also Carnival organizers at Nuremberg to portray him as a giant.

written at the time in which the events of 1208 and 1224 are mentioned. But no descriptions of the costuming or behavior of wildman or giant are included in the chronicles according to Brunelli. See Bruno Brunelli, *I teatri di Padova dalle origini alla fine del secolo XIX* (Padua: A. Drahi, 1921), 10–11.

29. Some eighty manuscripts with paintings of Nuremberg Carnival paraders are extant, supposedly recording events from 1449 to 1539. While imitating each other's selection of parades, they vary in details. No manuscript can be surely dated from earlier than the 1550s. The best guide to these manuscripts remains Hans Ulrich Roller, *Der Nürnberger Schembartlauf: Studien zum Fest- und Maskenwesen des späten Mittelalters* (Tübingen: Tübinger Vereinigung für Volkskunde, 1965). For recent reassessment of Roller's work and some of the Schembart manuscripts, see Samuel Kinser, "Presentation and Representation: Carnival at Nuremberg, 1450–1550," *Representations* 13 (1986): 1–41; and Samuel Kinser, "Locality, Spectacle, State Politics: Comparative Study of Carnival Traditions in Renaissance Nuremberg and Modern Trinidad," in *Public Performance: Studies in the Carnivalesque and Ritualesque*, ed. Jack Santino (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2017), 16–48.

30. For a reproduction of this giant woman from one of the Schembart manuscripts, see Samuel Kinser, "Why Is Carnival So Wild?" in *Carnival and the Carnivalesque: The Fool, the Reformer, the Wildman, and Others in Early Modern Theatre*, ed. Konrad Eisenbichler and Wim N.

Figure 2: Anonymous, Wildman in Schembart Parade in Nuremberg, ms. dated circa 1655 depicting parade figure in 1518. Painting. Facsimile reproduction of this ms. in Karl Drescher, *Das Nürnbergsche Schonbartbuch* (Weimar: Gesellschaft der Bibliophilen, 1908), 207.

The giant shown here (fig. 2) as a wildman in a Carnival parade is a man-handling thief, having uprooted a tree with a peasant clinging to its branches, presumably with the intention of carrying him to his lair for dire purposes.²⁹ The male giant had an even more vicious mate, apparently paraded in the Nuremberg Carnival of 1518, an outsized wildwoman cradling a kidnapped child on one arm and clutching the doll-sized mother in her other hand.³⁰

The behavior sometimes accompanying such frightening depictions had long been denounced by city authorities. The mayor and council of Nuremberg decreed in 1469 that "no one, man or woman ... shall reverse their clothing ... or disguise their visage." And further: "So no one, neither the wildmen nor others, shall run after people to [have them] give money, sizing them up, or using force...." Worst of all, the ordinance emphasized, "in the last Carnival some people in skits and rhymes used light-headed, licentious, immodest, and impolite words and gestures." Anyone behaving in this "undisciplined" and "impolite" manner was to be fined the large sum of three gulden.³¹ Similar ordinances multiplied in towns across Germany in the later fifteenth century. Ordinances by such local bodies were signs of the times, which were something like a golden age for civic self-government. Towns burgeoning with commerce found themselves relatively free from interference in their local affairs by princes, by bishops, and even by the emperor, the only superior to which, for example, the "free city of Nuremberg" acknowledged legal allegiance.

As in Rome, Florence, Antwerp, London, or Rouen, artisanal groups in Nuremberg had some legally ordained political power in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries along with merchants

M. Hüsken (Amsterdam: Rodopi,
1999), 65.

31. Joseph Baader, *Nürnberger
Polizeiordnungen aus dem
dreizehnten bis zum fünfzehnten
Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Literar-
ischer Verein, 1861), 92–93.

and professional classes. But, as was also the case in other European communes, real political power in Nuremberg remained strongly oligarchic, concentrated in the hands of merchant dynasties who in turn found ways to establish connections with older noble families living in or near the cities. On Carnival day in Nuremberg, the parade in the early fifteenth century began with a dance by the butchers' guild. Within a few years, however, the butchers' guild's festive appearance with its collective dance was displaced by a more individualistic parade of rich young patricians who compacted with the butchers to lead them in to the large central square—and in effect to steal the show with their long pikes and a green bouquet with a small gunpowder charge concealed in it to emit flashes and pops.

These rich youths initiated the ever more spectacular “Schembartlauf” or “Schempartlauf.” The word's suffix, *lauf*, means a “run”; the preceding elements of the noun are less clear. *Schem-* seems to be related to *Scheme*, shadow or phantom; *-bart* or *-part*, a disputed etymon, may be related to Old German *-ard* or *-hart*, a suffix expressing excess or intensity and surviving in English words like drunk-ard and brag-gart. Whatever the signification of the appellation's elements, which suggest running about in a phantom or even devilish manner, the Schembart players were probably always better behaved than the rambunctious wildmen, as befitted their patrician pedigree. At first in the 1440s and '50s, the Schembart paraders apparently carried pouches full of fish, which they threw at people (Lent is coming!). But they soon moved in orderly fashion with their pikes and green bouquets, and in the 1470s they supplemented their own scintillating appearance in the Schembart Run with their most spectacular invention, the “Hell.” Such was the name given to a huge sled pulled across the central square with castles or elephants or giants modeled on top. The Hells changed their theme each year and were the high point in parades in which wildmen and wildwomen sometimes also ambled along.

This model of hell is not the hell of Canon Benedict's time, a hell of yawning mysteries with haunting connections to real beastly danger. This Hell is a mockery of people's frightened, fervent, or wandering imaginations: here on the sleds appeared a basilisk, a child-eating ogre, a windmill, a fountain of youth. One can speculate that at some more or less conscious level their purpose was not to throw people into momentary panic like the wildmen denounced in 1469 but instead to confirm that in a well-managed city like Nuremberg everyday conditions had moved away from the precariousness of bygone days toward urban safety and civility. Old myths are presented at an aestheticizing distance, backed up by the Schembart runners with their expensive suits and their leaders (two different ones each year) represented in the manuscripts waving their green bouquet signs of coming spring and wearing cherub-like smiling face masks. The family connections of these leaders are always presented in the manuscripts alongside their parading outfits as small coats of arms.

The shifting politics underlying these new-model parades are easily revealed by relating them to an urban norm, that of civility. Civility, the code and manner of living in a *civitas*, a shared commonwealth, had two contrasting accents in ancient and medieval writers, which have remained characteristic of the term to the present-day. In one direction civility implies community; everyone living together should expect to share in the rights and benefits accruing to that collectivity. In a second direction civility implies greater or less skill in exercising respectful conduct toward all members of a community. Civility in this direction implies hierarchy, a higher

32. The sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has used a concept of distinction similar to mine in this passage, indicating the relation of "distinction" to concepts like status and propriety that are regularly employed by sociologists. Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984) (originally published in French in 1979).

33. These are the German words from the edict of 1469 quoted in English on an earlier page here: "So sol auch nyemands, weder dy wilden mendlein oder anndere die lewt umb einich gelt inen ze geben anlauffen, schatzen oder notigen" (Baader, *Nürnberg Polizeiordnungen*, 92–93). *Schatzen* means literally to assess or estimate; I paraphrase this action in my phrase "sizing them up."

34. The culminating part of the 1469 ordinance in which these words appear (third and second paragraphs from the end in *ibid.*, 93–94) rehearses the words "impolite" (*unzimlich*) four times and "undisciplined" (*unzüchtig*) twice, and adds an admonition using the same words in affirmative form as the expected way to behave (*alent haben erbercklich züchtigelich und zimlich halten*). The beginning of these remarkable reiterations of hierarchical civility, quoted in part on an earlier page, reads in German as follows: "Nachdem zu verganngnen vasnachten etlich personen spil- und reymensweise vil leichtvertiger, üppiger, unkewscher und unzimliches wort und geperde ... bey tag und nacht wider und für geprauch haben, das dann süntlich ergerlich und schennflich und vor erbern lewten

regard for some rather than others based on their realization of civil codes and manners. One side or tendency of civility emphasizes equality and its corollary, a collective readiness to struggle for its preservation or restoration. The other tendency emphasizes sociable propriety and its corollary, the collective readiness to struggle for preservation or restoration of the orderly distinctions between people that provide support for such propriety.³² The contrast between civilized and wild or "savage" behavior moves back and forth between the two tendencies. Carnival "wildmen" may function as radical equalizers, as they apparently did at Nuremberg in the 1460s, running after people, sizing them up and forcing them to give money.³³ Or they may be seen, as the oligarchs in the city council saw them at that time, as uncouth disturbers of the peace, "undisciplined," "impolite," a scandal for "honorable people" and especially for "maidens and women."³⁴

The consequence for Carnival of this perennial division in the idea of civility is that its doubleness encourages representational play. Who can say whether the Nuremberg wildman marching in the middle of pikemen Schembart runners in 1539 (fig. 3) is an ally of the smart upper-class marchers or their antic critics, showing how easy it is to invade their marketplace and infiltrate a militia's parade? The Hell vehicle being tugged across the square is a "Ship of Fools." But who are the chief fools here?

Figure 3: Anonymous, Schembart Parade in Nuremberg Carnival with Ship of Fools, ms. dated circa 1670 depicting 1539 parade. Painting. Kiel, Germany. Kiel University Library, Ms. KB 395, p. 189.

Is one of these chief fools the Protestant parson Osiander standing amid demonic figures and clowns at the foot of the mast with a backgammon board, and is another one a similarly black-robed figure—a priest or monk?—holding two sticks as if making a compass measurement on a round blue object (fig. 4)?

und zuvoran vor junckfrauen und
frauen zu handlen und ze üben
unzimlich ist" (ibid., 93).

35. I discuss some of Hans Sachs's works about Carnival in "Why Is Carnival So Wild?", 68–71. I also discuss the 1539 scene and its consequences in "Locality, Spectacle, State Politics," 31–34. It may be that this loss of public permission is what led Schembart participants or their descendants to order hand-painted manuscripts for over a century (circa 1550s–circa 1680s) in which this scene and others were painted in slightly differing versions.

No iconographical analysis of differences in these nearly eighty versions has been made. Such analysis would surely substantiate or disqualify my hypothesis about the sticks and blue object in the masthead masker's hands, accoutrements that might be not measuring instruments but parts of a strangely shaped musical instrument. With an exception that appears at the end of this article, I leave aside further examination of the interacting symbolisms of wildman and bear in Carnival scenes, an interaction continuing to the present in the Carnivals of northern Italy and Pyrenean France and Germany. For some illustration and examination of this ongoing history, see Samuel Kinser, "Once More the Festive Bears: Enduring Themes and Shifting Semes," in *Sentieri della memoria: Studi offerti a Piercarlo Grimaldi*, ed. Davide Porporato and Gianpaolo Fasino (Bra, Italy: Slow Food Editore, 2015), 465–82.

36. See note 18. As will be seen in this section, some statutes

Figure 4: Vignette of masthead on Ship of Fools in the Schembart Parade shown in figure 3.

If the black-robed figure in the masthead represents a Roman Church cleric, is he gesturing to assert the extent of the church's worldwide rule (in other paintings of this Schembart scene, the object held by a black-robed figure is clearly a world orb)? Next to this somber figure in the masthead stands a shaggy devil-bear-goat figure shaking keys like an indulgence-seller, keys that would free souls from purgatory according to Roman Church orthodoxy of the time.

–Or are the fools in this scene only the maskers in foolscap and clownish multicolored costumes, running among devils? No, surely in this scene all are pulled into the Hell's theme. Everyone is some sort of fool for participating in it. Everyone is part of the game going on and therefore everyone induces some reflection about the foolishness of everyone else. The scene mirrors, consciously or unconsciously, a communal reality in which a number of differences—social, religious, and other—are in simultaneous motion within an interacting whole.

Why is it, however, that no non-Carnival players are shown in this scene, no councilmen and no bystanders and onlookers except possibly a few persons peering from shop windows in the background? The absence of these two groups, elite politicians and non-elite folk, turns the viewer's attention away from social class differences toward an amusing show of shared cultural representations. Bringing the wild and wild actions into the tame not by force and threatening moralism like the pope in the 1140s but in carnivalesque jollity, the Schembart parade organizers in 1539 also blunted the fierceness of contemporary religious controversy. Protestant agitation had been polarizing opinions in the city for twenty years.

The invisible mayor and councilmen, guardians of civil order, were not amused at this scoffing evenhandedness that placed religious leaders among running fools and grimacing, gesticulating devils. The Schembart Run was promptly forbidden by mayor and council after this reprehensible representation. But Carnival was not forbidden. Poems, engravings, and playscripts continued to flow, above all those of the shoemaker poet Hans Sachs. We can be fairly certain that less carefully costumed wildmen ran about in the back streets, and properly dressed citizens surely continued to complain to town councilmen about impolite words and gestures.³⁵

concerning Carnival survived.

37. Beatrice Premoli has published these brief chronicle references to the Carnival at the Testaccio and also all the relevant 1363 statutes. See Beatrice Premoli, *Ludus carnelevarii: Il Carnevale a Roma dal secolo XII al secolo XVI* (Rome: Guido Guidotti, 1981), 4–8. The word *palio* for the award to the winner of a race among horses became a synonym for the race itself in thirteenth-century Italy and was used thereafter for other kinds of races, as we will see. A well-documented account of the *palio* that developed at Siena, a horse race still conducted today, is that of Alan Dundes and Alessandro Falassi, *La Terra in Piazza: Interpreting the Siena Palio* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

38. Premoli prints the statutes of 1363 concerning the Carnival festivities in *Ludus carnelevarii*, 6–8. Those in question here are Statutes 79 and 75. The number of the city's chancellors is not stated in Statute 75 nor are their functions explained there. Statute 75 also declares that the new garments as well as all other Carnival expenses sponsored by the commune government are to be paid by means of a large sum exacted on Roman Jews.

39. SPQR was familiar to Romans because it was inscribed on many ancient monuments extant in fourteenth-century Rome. Its anti-aristocratic and anticlerical side had been reactivated in the proclamations of Cola and his followers in 1347 and the following years.

40. Statute 79 (see note 38, which like this note refers to Premoli's

Rome's Communal Carnival

Carnival's history in Rome, from the time of Canon Benedict's early 1140s document to that of Galle's engraving in the 1550s (fig. 1), will forever remain fragmentary and questionable. First, literacy was small and record keeping was largely in the hands of clerics in a city that had only about twenty thousand people living in it at most times during the centuries preceding and immediately following Benedict's assertions. Second, nearly all the commune's state records for the period from the 1140s to the early fifteenth century were burned by marauding soldiers in 1527.³⁶ That long period was, however, one during which commune authorities successfully frustrated attempts by popes and papal allies to regain the monopoly of political institutions that they had enjoyed between the seventh and early twelfth centuries. This was true especially during the periods of the "Avignon Papacy" (1308–78) when popes resided in southern France and of the "Great Schism" (1378–1417) when two major papal parties divided clerical allegiances across Western Christendom.

The high point of the Roman commune's relative independence not only from papal but also from a variety of secular authorities, both international (German, French, and Norman most prominently) and local (the great "baron" factions, especially those led by the Colonna and Orsini families), came in the mid-fourteenth century during the insurrection of Cola di Rienzo, who proudly proclaimed the revival of the ancient Roman Republic (1347–54). No one has yet ascertained what circumstances led to the survival of some statutes with information about Carnival during this very period; the statutes are commonly dated to 1363, less than a decade after Cola's assassination. They include eleven edicts about what was then for the first time called in several surviving chronicles not just the "festival of the bull" (1320) or the "festival of the Palio" (1256, a race for a prize of costly fabric called "*palio*") but also the "festival of the Agone and Testaccio."³⁷

Only one activity is specified in the 1363 statutes as taking place at the Agone. Two of four knightly contests called "running at the ring" were to take place there while another two were to occur at the Testaccio. While the Testaccio hill is located in the far southwest corner of medieval Rome, the Agone—later called the Piazza Navona—was near the ancient center of the city, not far from the Pantheon. What connected these two places becomes clear from some of the other statutes. They specify annual purchase of new garments for the commune's chief officer, a single senator, and new furnishings for his horse as well as for the chancellors of the city government.³⁸ Obviously these accoutrements were specified in order to enhance the dignity and importance of these officers when they appeared in public during the Carnival. Although the statutes say nothing about a public parade, it can be assumed that the officers did take part in such a piece of publicity, either marching in order from the commune's seat of government on the Capitoline hill to the Agone or at least appearing there, thus giving the festivities an official face. It was the face of the commune. Officially and unofficially during these prosperous days of commune government, the emblem of the ancient Roman government was also refurbished and proclaimed around town: SPQR, "Senatus Populusque Romanus." Its words combine succinctly aristocratic and democratic, hieratic and egalitarian sentiments.³⁹ Like the appearance at the Agone of commune officials in resplendent clothing, the emblem affirms the new central character of the city's government, thus paralleling the appearance at the Testaccio of the pope

edition of the statutes).

41. Joannes Cavallino, *Polistoria de virtutibus et dotibus romanorum*, ed. Marc Laureys (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 2012), 188.

After speaking of the location of Testaccio hill, Cavallino begins his reference to the ludus there with the comment that every year, while Rome's *civitas* governed "in peace" (is this a reference to quieted social factions, which were in fact about to erupt with Cola's revolution?) this "greatest game" or "grandest festivity" (*ludus maximus*) was celebrated: "ubi hodie singulis annis quibus in pace Roma civitas gubernatur ludus maximus celebratur a populo et iuventute Romana equestri." Cavallino then continued with the words translated in my text: "Et ex alto montis eiusdem [Testatie] emittuntur quadriga seu currus rotarum cum tauris agrestibus et aliis silvestribus animalibus praecipitantibus dictas quadrigas et rotas curruum a ruo dictas."

42. Premoli prints a bronze plaque still extant recording this practice in *Ludus carnelevarii*.

4. For further material, see Raimondo Guarino, "Carnevale e festa civica nei ludi di Testaccio," *Roma moderna e contemporanea* 20 (2012): 480–81. For a well-documented discussion of the Roman imperialist strategies implicit in this *jocatori* practice, see Andrea Sommerlechner, "Die Ludi Agonis et Testatie—Das Fest der Kommune Rom in Mittelalter," *Römische Historische Mitteilungen* 41 (1999): 362, 367.

43. See Premoli, *Ludus carnelevarii*, 7: Statute 78. Maire Vigueur works out this supposed route of the race from words in an anonymous manuscript written to describe the Testaccio of 1545,

in Canon Benedict's time, whose arrival in escort by the cavalry had affirmed that the city was under the aegis of the Roman Church.

The statutes specify three other elements only fragmentarily recorded previously. First, six "four-wheeled" conveyances were to be constructed and covered with red cloth. Inside each of them were to be placed the "usual" animals, two pigs and two bullocks.⁴⁰ Pigs at the Testaccio, a presence so evidently suitable to Carnival indulgences with their succulent flesh, had already been mentioned by implication, I would suggest, in a book called *Polistoria*, written about twenty years earlier (circa 1345–47) by the Roman canon Joannes Cavallino. This cleric lauded what he called Rome's "grandest festivity" (*ludus maximus*) celebrated every year in Rome at the Testaccio: "From the top of the same [Testaccio] hill quadrigas or wheeled carts containing wild bulls and other woodland animals are released, spilling them out of the said quadrigas and tumbling wheeled carts."⁴¹ I interpret "woodland animals" in this citation as referring to either half-domesticated pigs, raised in adjacent woodlands, or perhaps to entirely wild boars. But perhaps some other game were also caught and inserted in these wagons. The adjective modifying bulls is *agrestis*: it can apply simply to rurally grazing animals but occasionally in some classical authors the word seems to carry a nuance of wild, aggressive behavior.

Galle's engraving (fig. 1) shows how the sixteenth-century Testaccio ludus had apparently changed from those described in Cavallino and the statutes of 1363, for it shows only uncovered two-wheeled carts drawn by bulls—some of them very large with developed horns—who are thus pulling the carts instead of being inside them. There are also no signs of other animals in or around the carts, which also do not seem to have wheels broken or dislodged by a precipitous descent.

A second element about the Testaccio game that is more fully explained in the 1363 statutes than in fragmentary earlier materials concerns the *jocatori* (players), each is to be paid four florins for their participation in the Testaccio festival. How many players there are is not specified, nor whether they represent the different parts of the city, called *riioni* (Roman dialect form of Italian word for "regions"; the word refers to politically designated neighborhoods or wards). These players may also have come from small towns conquered by Roman armies over the course of two centuries since Canon Benedict's time. One of the ways that the commune government used to weld these territories to Roman interests and identity had long been to require conquered territories to send such athletically capable men to participate in the Testaccio game.⁴²

A third new element featured in the statutes defines in greater detail the horse races mentioned only tersely in earlier documents. Three palios—that is, lengths of fine cloth—were to be obtained each year made of gold and silk. They were to be awarded to the winners in the "usual" races. The three races were reserved for different horse owners: one was reserved for horses belonging to "Romans," a second for those of "foreigners," and a third for those of *jumentarii* (stablemen). These qualifiers are explained by the medievalist Jean-Claude Maire Vigueur thus: the first race is among horse owners who are Roman citizens, the second among residents of Rome's conquered hinterlands, and the third among the *jumentarii*, men who handled heavy-bodied horses normally used to draw carts and other heavy objects. These horses would do especially well, Maire Vigueur explains, in racing up the steep incline of the adjacent Aventine hill at the end of a race beginning in the meadow at the foot of the Testaccio.⁴³

the occasion probably depicted in figure 1. Of course there is a danger in reading backward almost two hundred years from 1545 to statutes dated in the 1360s.

A study of the terrain, however, makes Maire Vigueur's speculation plausible. There is flatness at the foot of the Testaccio hill, the distance leading to the Aventine hill is about five hundred yards, and one of the statutes of 1363 about the Carnival game prohibits plowing or planting crops on or around the Testaccio, that is, in space that may well have been reserved for Carnival races. See *ibid.*, Statute 85, on the prohibition of plowing and sowing.

44. *Ibid.*, Statute 80.

45. The words quoted in the translation in this paragraph are from a chronicle by Adam of Usk whose other features, along with these words, are cited in the Latin text in note 48. Adam saw Rome's Carnival in 1405. I am supposing that when he saw *caporioni* lining up at the Agone, each of them with his own contingent of competitors, he saw a custom that had been around for some time, and perhaps even from the 1360s when the writers of the 1363 statutes emphasized that the Agone and Testaccio games should be solemnly celebrated (*ibid.*, 7, Statute 79, line 1: "*ipsi ludi ... debeant solepniter celebrare*"). Perhaps then well before 1405 there had been instituted a "solemn"—but certainly festive—march from the Capitoline to the Agone with officials and competitors. By 1425 such a march seems to have even included the bullocks, as we will see.

46. See Benedict's Latin text in note 7 for his words about the Testaccio hill as the beginning of

Still another of the statutes specified wages for the "lion's guard" on the Capitoline and insisted that the guard take care in feeding the lion! Here is the new occupant of the bear's throne located on the hilltop seat of commune government. This lion was no doubt supposed to represent the government's collective force and belligerence and its noble superiority. It was not there simply as part of some rich senator's prestigious menagerie. Mention of the lion's guard in a list that specified the salaries for banner-bearers, stablemen, bell ringers, and Capitoline guards, all of them participating somehow in the Agone-Testaccio festival, suggests that the lion may have been taken along on parade to these two festival sites, or perhaps some special event involving exhibition of the lion took place during the Carnival days on the Capitol itself.⁴⁴

During the high point of communal control of the city in the fourteenth century, the Testaccio together with side activities at the Piazza Agone made it collectively "the grandest festivity" of the city, as Cavallino wrote in 1345. Its civility broadened in both the egalitarian and hierarchic sense, if that term can be made to include the militarism that not only helped maintain sporadic self-defense but also helped create and preserve Roman domination of governments and resources in nearby towns. There was nothing distinctive about this imperialistic behavior; such was the endeavor among nearly all contemporary Italian city-states.

Among the new egalitarian elements in the Carnival was, it seems, the fact that the Romans assembled at the Agone together with the captains of each region who were colloquially called *caporioni*. The *caporioni* must have marched, each of them from their own rione, to this arena for the ring-running sport, each with their own contingent of competitors, including the *jocatori*, who would eventually be participating in the bull and pig hunts at the Testaccio.⁴⁵ Elite elements in the statutes are more obvious. Running at the ring requires skills of horsemanship achieved only by men of leisure. Swift horses were owned almost only by the rich, so winning two of the three horse races was also automatically bestowed on the upper class (one of these two was reserved for subdued but nonetheless no doubt rich upper-class residents of nearby communities dubbed "foreigners"). Only the third race was reserved for horses commanded by or perhaps even owned by the working-class *jumentarii*. The richly woven cloth rewarded to winners also pointed upward in terms of status distinctions, as did of course the new clothes for officers of this communal government.

At least as important as changing and supplementing one or another of the ambivalent features of Rome's way of "leaving aside fleshliness" was the geographical realignment of the festivity. The Carnival in Benedict's time moved first from some unspecified place of assembly, where cavalrymen and infantrymen exchanged drinks, toward the Lateran palace of the popes in the southeast corner of the city and they then went, cavalrymen and pope, to the Testaccio in the southwest corner. The communal Carnival participants, on the other hand, moved not from east to west but generally from north to south. Processions moved first slightly northwestward from the Capitoline hill to the ancient Stadium Domitiani (present-day Piazza Navona) for the Agone festivity. The Agone was near the most densely populated area of Rome in the fourteenth century. Parades then moved southward past the foot of the Capitoline and finally on south to the Testaccio.

In social terms the route in Benedict's time moved from an eccentric area of ancient Rome, an area chiefly populated by papal dependents, to an even more eccentric and more sparsely

Rome's civic existence ("ibi habuit civitas principium").

47. Guarino makes this point about geographical reorientation ("Carnevale e festa civica nei ludi di Testaccio," 480) and refers to Alain Boureau's similar reasoning in *La papesse Jeanne* (Paris: Aubier, 1988), 96–97. The particular symbolist mode of interpreting the reorientation in the text is mine.

populated area to the west. The symbolism of this route was far more important than its social actuality. It moved from the original site of Christian governance in the city (the Lateran palace was ordered built by Constantine in 314 or 315 to house the bishop of Rome) downward in prestige and backward in time to a site that Benedict called the origin of Rome, rehearsing what appears to have been contemporary mythic history.⁴⁶ That is, it moved from what appeared to clerically minded contemporaries of Benedict as the center of Christian authority throughout the Western world to a small hill of broken pots, the shrunken remains of pagan empire.

The route chosen by the more secular-minded leaders of the commune, on the other hand, moved past reemerging monuments of ancient grandeur. It went up north and back down south, thus passing not once but twice, on the way to and from the Agone, the site of the new capital of the commune government of Rome, the Capitoline hill that symbolized ancient Rome's dominion of the entire Mediterranean-centered known world. The commune's festive route fostered dreams of outward-reaching visible power. The Lateran's festive route, in contrast, had served like every ceremonialized pathway of the popes to refurbish inwardly held belief in the meaning of Rome's transfer from pagan to Christian hands, in the victory always and everywhere of godly over human power.⁴⁷

The commune's reorientation of the route to the Testaccio, no less than the augmented festive activities occurring in and around that place, must have slowly brought about some change in the ideologies surrounding and supporting the Testaccio "game." It was no longer chiefly about slaying animals in Lenten preparation or about killing them for one last big feast. It was now primarily about entertaining spectacle.

In the eyes of a foreign cleric who had come to Rome seeking preferment in 1404 and saw the Carnival in 1405, this changing atmosphere of the festival had dubious consequences. The Welshman Adam of Usk included the following eyewitness report in his chronicle. The report shows that the regulations of 1363 were still being followed in almost every regard. But here we have for the first time some account of how Carnival participants behaved at the Testaccio as well as on the days just before and after the events.

Around Quinquagesima Sunday [Canon Benedict's "putting away fleshliness Sunday"] the Romans assemble with the caporioni, at the Agone games, drawn up in armed bodies.... Three large silver rings are fastened to a rope high off the ground, and they charge their horses at them trying to run their lances through the rings and thus win them. The senator, two conservators, and seven regents of the city are present at this civic game, attended by much pomp, with the block and ax used for beheading the seditious borne before them. During this same festival [ludus] Romans indulge, like the sons of Belial and Belfagor, in excessive drinking and unrestrained licentiousness.... Then on the Sunday itself, at the Jews' expense, four carts, covered with scarlet cloth and containing eight live boars, are yoked to eight wild bulls and taken to the top of "the mountain of all earth"—so-called because it is made of earth brought from every part of the world, as a sign of universal lordship—and when the carts come down the hill they break up, and the animals are set free, whereupon it all becomes spoil for the Romans to fight over, and then everyone rushes upon the said beasts in unrestrained attack with his own weapon.

Not everyone who fought in the field succeeded in getting a piece of the meat. That had certain consequences for another aspect of fleshliness, a sexual one: "Anybody who fails to bring home a piece of the spoil for his wife is regarded as wretched and senseless, and is not allowed to lie

48. Adam of Usk, *Chronicle of Adam of Usk 1377–1421*, ed. and trans. C. Given-Wilson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 195, 197. Given-Wilson's edition of this chronicle gives the Latin and his English translation on facing pages. Thus the translation in this study, with elisions and emendations by me, can be found on his pages 195 and 197. Given-Wilson's Latin text on pages 194 and 196 follows here and contains no elisions or emendations.

"Romani, circa Dominicam in Quinquagesima, cum capitibus regionum, ad agonem, tanquam fallerata fallanx, conueniunt, et iuxta id beati Pauli dictum, "Omnes quidem currunt," etc., pro brauio fortiter certant. Tres magnos anulos argenteos, ad unam altam cordam ligatos ponunt, et in equis, ut lanceas in eos mittant, currunt, inde huiusmodi anulos habituri. In isto ludo urbis cenator, duo conseruatores, et septem regentes eiusdem in magno apparatu, stipiti et secure pro cecidiosorum decapitatione precedentibus, intersunt. Eodem ludo taberne crapula, sed miserie epula, cum indomita luxuria, ut Belial et Belfagor filii, quam bestialiter discurrent Romani. Deinde in ipsa Dominica, ludeorum expensis, ad quatuor currus, octo apros uiuos continens et scarleto rubio contextos, ad summitatem montis omnis terre, ideo quia ex omni terra mundi in signum uniuersalis dominii illuc allata compositus, octo ponuntur tauri indomiti, et, per descensum montis dissolutis curribus et bestiis liberis, omnia cedunt Romanorum in predam; et tunc quilibet ac si dissoluto impetu dictas bestias inadit suo instrumento. Itaque, si quis aliquid de huiusmodi preda uxori non attulerit, quasi miser et

with her until the feast of St. Pancras [May 12]. And often in this kind of commotion they inflict blows and wounds on the courtiers, because of what they do to their wives and daughters."

Adam of Usk's report also indicates that changes had occurred in the horse races at the Testaccio, changes that eliminated the awards for foreigners and stablemen. The races were now only for the local rich and preeminent.

Following this three cloths are fastened to the points of lances, the first made of gold for the best horses, the second of silver for the second best, and the third of silk for the fastest mares; and whichever rider gets to each of them first carries it away as his prize. And then eventually, [having ceased] the said onslaught on the beasts, they go away in meanspirited procession to their wives, some with little bits of animal, and others with intestines or dung, on the ends of their swords.⁴⁸

The Popes' Reformed Carnival

During the long conciliar and schismatic period of ecclesiastical difficulties for the Roman Church that followed upon the popes' return from Avignon, the Roman high clergy never wavered in its project to destroy the commune's pretension to govern the city, including its management of festivities. But for decades it seems to have been forced to use compromising language even when asserting its supreme authority over the city. Thus when Pope Martin V took the opportunity in 1425 of appointing a new "standard-bearer of the Roman people," he was careful to declare in his bull, *Circumspecta sedis*, that although it was he who appointed this man as standard-bearer, the new occupant of the office governed "in the name both of the Roman Church and of the Roman People." This officer, he agreed, would govern all the "spectacles" presented in the city, including the Agone and Testaccio. In an age without printed pamphlets or broadsheets, the standard-bearer was the chief means of broadcasting, along with architecture, robes and uniforms, and loud shouts, the source and character of public authority. The standard-bearer was also of course in charge of proclaiming the identity of the army in wartime. Here this media manager, as one might call him today, was acknowledged as exerting his authority "in the name" of both church and commune.

In the following lines, this same papal proclamation of 1425 sanctioned a remarkable new custom to be held on the Saturday after the Agone celebration on Friday and before the Testaccio spectacles on Sunday: Saturday would be devoted to "exhibition of the bulls and other solemnities."⁴⁹ There is no reason to suppose that this was anything other than acknowledgment of an already-established custom, just as was suggested with respect to the caporioni's appearance in the Agone festival, first mentioned in 1405. How and when did this new custom come about with its making of Roman Carnival an officially three-day affair? I would suggest that this Saturday exhibition of the bulls to be slaughtered reflects an increased anchoring of Carnival's festivities in the city's varied neighborhoods. Did this increased anchoring occur as a ricochet from new difficulties facing the city after 1350, difficulties in no way acknowledged in the statutes of 1363 but perhaps affecting the very decision to proceed to such a compilation? The city was recovering from the internecine rivalries stirred up by Cola's insurrection in 1347 and from the sickening demographic destructiveness of the Black Death in 1349 and the following years. And in 1378 the pope returned from Avignon along with an array of bureaucrats and office seekers. In such trying circumstances, each local region of the vast but underpopulated

uecours ad sancti Panchardi festum cum ea non coibit. Et sepius in huiusmodi discursu cedes et uulnera, et presertim curtesanis, propter uxores et filias sibi exosis, inferunt. Postea tres pannos, primum aureum pro melioribus, secundum argenteum pro secundis equis, et tertium sericum pro equabus uelocius currentibus, in lancee ponuntur summitate; et si quis huiusmodi eauster prius eos tetigerit, eos pro se in brauium reportat. Et demum a dicto bestiarum incursu, aliqui cum modicis frustis, aliqui cum intestinis et stercorebus, in gladio mucronibus, pomparum cum uilitate transiunt ad uxores.”

49. Premoli prints the bull *Circumspecta sedis* in *Ludus carneleuarii*, 29–30. The elements of this bull translated in my text are introduced by Martin V’s appointment of a Roman nobleman, Pietro de Astalli Domicelli, as the new “generalem Vexilliferum Romani Populi,” giving him the right to exercise the powers of his office including the governance of Carnival’s spectacles in the name of church and state: “tam Romanae Ecclesiae quam Populi Romani nomine, nec non in Spectaculis, sive ludis Agonis, et die Sabati, quo Taurorum spectaculum, et alia solemnia celebrantur, et etiam Testaciae Spectaculo.”

50. No documents support this speculation about the invention of the Saturday exhibition in the middle to late fourteenth century—none except a now generally recognized falsely dated manuscript chronicle (supposedly written in 1372; see Filippo Clementi, *Il Carnevale romano nelle cronache contemporanee* [Città di Castello: R.O.R.E.-Niruf, 1939], 1:50) (volume 1 is a reprint

city probably dropped back toward reliance on its local leaders, and every caporione must have been quick, like any modern ward boss, to realize the value of fostering some festive distraction. So each rione, combining self-reliance with some rivalry and imitation of neighboring regions, probably developed its own way of selecting a prime bull and then showing it around their part of town. Saturday’s exhibition may have been born in this way or perhaps not at all in this manner. However the exhibition came about, one can be sure that the caporione, the captain in each district, along with that district’s best athletic jocatori, played important roles in it.⁵⁰

Such exhibitions could not preserve the commune government’s control of Carnival. The popes’ power over Rome’s internal affairs increased swiftly and definitively when the conciliarist party’s program for reforms that would diminish papal monarchy foundered at the Council of Basel in fractional bickering. By the mid-fifteenth century, popes were more monarchically sovereign in Rome than ever before. In 1469 Pope Paul II could thus issue new regulations of Carnival in which secular authorities had no say.⁵¹

The collapse of secular jurisdiction had two causes. On the one hand, it was a consequence of the way the commune had moved to make the festival an official showplace rather than a time of desultory pastimes prefacing Lenten fasting. Officializing the tradition, giving it more and more well-ordered parts, ensured its confiscation by perspicacious clerics as part of their return to ultimate power in city politics.

On the other hand, the cause of collapse was the slow rise to power of a new hybrid class of elites in the city, a class of rich men with both extended manorial property in Rome’s hinterland and ample business and marital connections with the older but sharply reduced class, the “barons,” emanating from the once numerous equestrian army of *milites*. This new aristocracy, saluted in both notarial archives and papal documents as *nobiles viri*, “noble men,” included not only the still dominant businessmen in the merchant and cattlemen guilds as well as the barons but also the officers of the commune, including the caporioni and the honored players in the Agone and Testaccio games, the jocatori. The commune’s fusion of local patriotism with modest yet deep-rooted proprietorship and locally centered clerical connections was replaced by European-wide visions of the socioeconomic advantages of connections to the cardinalate and the papacy.⁵²

The ascendancy of this new aristocracy together with the sovereignty of popes in city government are reflected in sparse references to the Testaccio game in late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century sources about Carnival. These sources, written for the most part by Italian city-state ambassadors in Rome or by papal secretaries, mention horse races more often than the bullock hunts at the Testaccio. Moreover, when the Testaccio is mentioned it is usually because in the year being discussed “no scandal” or “no quarrel” took place.⁵³ Clearly a movement had begun to diminish the kind of disorder that Adam of Usk reported in 1405, a movement no doubt prompted and promoted by the new aristocrats, the *nobiles viri*, who were beginning to exercise their socioeconomic power to also influence the cultural character of the city.

There is no space here to trace in detail how intermittent papal cooperation with and resistance to these new noblemen, and especially their festive policies and behavior, injected a new spirit into the old festivity from the early fifteenth century onward, a spirit reflecting the new disposition

of the first edition published in 1899) preserved in the archives of a noble Roman family, the Boccapaduli, which was first published in 1762. Premoli reprints chapter 9 of this manuscript as published in 1762, a chapter taken from this supposititious chronicle written by a supposititious Roman notary, Nardo Scocciapile; the chapter describes how someone nicknamed “il Magnifico Mathaleno” organized and participated in the “Festa di testacie” (see Premoli, *Ludus carnelevarii*, 9–13). But neither the notary’s name nor someone called the Magnificent Mathaleno have ever been found elsewhere and the description shows elements of sixteenth-century rather than fourteenth-century Carnival circumstances (see Guarino, “Carnevale e festa civica nei ludi di Testaccio,” 478). In grandiloquent terms, the chapter describes the parade of bulls through each rione on some days before Carnival proper begins. This parading is supervised by each region’s caporione. Then follows an exhibition of bulls on the Capitol on Fat Saturday (*sabato grosso*), after which the bulls are led to the Agone. On Sunday the grandest parade occurs, including triumphal carts (*carri trionfalli*) drawn by *ufali* (meant to be *bufali*, the Italian domesticated species of buffalos) and by horses, and followed by *jocatori*. The full names of the *jocatori* are listed, in each case as the son of so and so. This listing, rione by rione, takes up most of the chapter, so that the account becomes primarily a recital of patrician names. Its indication of Saturday’s proceedings enlarges upon what is specified in Martin V’s bull of 1425, but since the whole document is apparently a fake,

of political power in the city after 1450. We must lurch forward to the clarity provided by verbal and visual materials about the Carnival of 1545, the best documented among several festive extravaganzas financed by the Farnese family’s pope, Paul III (1534–49).

Recall some observations made at the beginning of this study about the Testaccio print by Galle (fig. 1). I suggested that his engraving divides onlookers’ attention among three chief themes: the sportive butchery of animals, leisurely crowds who stroll about and eat and drink, and objects to please and amaze the eye like the unlikely camel shown in the sportive field. Another aspect of the third theme of pleasing spectacles, that of elite order and entertainment, is scarcely emphasized in Galle, but information in verbal accounts about the Carnival of 1545 brings this theme forward emphatically. These accounts place emphasis on the splendid parade of senator, conservators, the selected *jocatori* from the thirteen rioni of the city together with their caporioni, and finally the *confaloniere* (banner-bearer) of “the Illustrious Roman People,” whose banner was inscribed with the “usual” SPQR. This emphasis in verbal accounts on a banner-bearer with a commune-glorifying flag is absent from Galle’s engraving. The absence suggests that verbal accounts of the occasion were directed to different patrons from those who would probably be attracted to Galle’s print, a matter that cannot be pursued here. Two other engravings of this Carnival game do indeed show the SPQR flag, one of which will be studied below. But another piece of verbal evidence about the cultivation of spectacle in the 1545 Testaccio should first be cited.

At a time just before or just after the killing of bulls and pigs there rode into the arena in 1545 six horsemen clothed “like ancient [Roman] soldiers.” The anonymous author described with delight their apparel as well as the ornaments of their “most beautiful horses,” so that “to all the people the things that those six horsemen did on those horses seemed a miracle, and especially what they did before the beautiful ladies.”⁵⁴ It seems certain that here the author described the maneuvers that are quite distinctively shown in a painting now housed in the Museo del Palazzo Venezia.⁵⁵ There the horsemen are placed before two pavilions between which flies a banner showing Pope Paul III’s Farnese coat of arms. Both pavilions show seated women, and a woman in the foreground in a long trailing gown seems about to mount stairs to the left pavilion. From verbal sources we learn that Margaret of Austria, illegitimate daughter of Emperor Charles V (1519–56) who was married to Ottavio Farnese, one of the pope’s grandsons, was especially honored at the Testaccio of 1545. This woman in the trailing gown may therefore be Margaret, joining women friends in the pavilion. The placement of the six horsemen before the two pavilions was surely chosen in order for viewers (and first of all the patron or patrons of this huge painting measuring two by three meters) to identify these six men as including Margaret’s husband Ottavio and his older brother, Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, as well as their cousin, Cardinal Santa Fiore.⁵⁶

Between 1363 and 1545 the elements of civility, seen from the hierarchical point of view, have taken an ever more spectacular turn. High-born women, unmentioned before although perhaps present in past Carnivals, are now placed so as to be seen as well as to see. Humanistically inspired ancient Roman costuming glitters on men riding by the pavilions, men whose clerical standing and Farnese parentage may have astonished and worried at least a few reflective observers. There was good reason for worry. The year 1545 is a date one generation after Martin

one cannot use it to affirm that an exhibition of bulls took place not simply in the streets but on the Capitol before the parade to the Agone occurred, whether in 1372 as the fake document claims or in 1425.

51. Premoli prints the most pertinent of these statutes, some of which are discussed in the section titled "Fractions" below.

Premoli, *Ludus carnevarii*, 40–41.

52. Sommerlechner, Maire Vigueur, and especially Guarino emphasize the emergence of this hybrid class. This emergence of a Roman hybrid class has obvious connections to what is sometimes called by historians studying later fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italian history a process of re-feudalization. Sommerlechner, "Die Ludi Agonis et Testatie -Das Fest der Kommune Rom in Mittelalter," 362–67; Maire Vigueur, *L'autre Rome*, 350–64; and Guarino, "Carnevale e festa civica nei ludi di Testaccio," 483–84.

53. For these primary sources, increasing in number and length after the year 1500, see Premoli, *Ludus carnevarii*, 41–95, 109–22.

54. Premoli prints one of five known verbal accounts of the Agone and Testaccio of 1545 in *ibid.*, 131–32. The five accounts are briefly mentioned in Fabrizio Cruciani, *Teatro nel Rinascimento, Roma 1450–1550* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1983), 541–42. Cruciani prints one of these accounts on pages 551–60, which is different from that in Premoli, particularly in its description of the Testaccio. Premoli prints the account cited here in my text in *Ludus carnevarii*, 132.

Luther began denouncing papal worldliness with unexpectedly explosive resonance; anticlerical sentiments had been around for a long time but now indeed, as some segments of public opinion were not hesitating to say, a new crystallization of those sentiments was taking form.

The verbal accounts of 1545 also show that elements of popularizing, non-elite civility had broadened and grown more spectacular. Just as the carts or wagons began to roll down the hill, verbal sources report, "thirty-six Mattacini clothed in red rode out with pikes in hand to be the first to assault the bulls."⁵⁷ Mattacini were zanily acting performers presumably invoked here because of their bright red costumes and entertaining maneuvers in provoking the bulls, much like similar picadors do in modern bullfights. There were many people to applaud, some sixty thousand of them if the anonymous verbal report just quoted can be trusted. Did they applaud the Mattacini or rather the Roman-costumed relatives of the pope? Was the standard-bearer of the Roman city government an object of applause or was all such fervor reserved for the most eminent female member of contemporary Roman society, daughter of the pope's most powerful ally in a darkening international political world? Or did these sixty thousand people scream and cry for everyone and everything without distinction and spend most of the time eating to excess, as one report implies?⁵⁸

The Roman-soldier-costumed cardinals on horseback in 1545, relatives of the pope, were not a novelty. Pope Alexander VI's son Cesare Borgia took part in the Sunday Testaccio celebration of 1502, allegedly killing a bull on foot with his bare fist; moreover, this exhibition took place not at the hill in southwest Rome but in the square in front of St. Peter's Cathedral. It was the third consecutive year that the bull slaughter took place there. In 1504 under Pope Julius II, however, this signature Carnival game returned to the Testaccio hill.⁵⁹

In 1539 on the Thursday preceding Ash Wednesday, six years before the great celebration of 1545, Paul III authorized an especially grand parade from the Capitol to the Piazza Navona. It was the usual day and the usual route for the Agone phase of Carnival, the one where officials were especially displayed. But this parade consisted of triumphal wagons such as those used to praise ancient Roman generals returning from conquest; the themes on the wagons advertised nothing but the grandeur and close ties of the pope to his mighty imperial ally Charles V (the marriage of Charles's daughter Margaret of Austria to Ottavio Farnese had taken place just the year before). All this was portrayed in entirely pre-Christian representations of men and animals, and all the placards on the wagons were written in the learned Latin phrases employed in humanistic emblem writing.⁶⁰ Only two cardinals dared publicly protest the worldly pagan character of this parade, growing like a puffy parasite upon festive days whose name etymologically signified "leaving fleshliness behind." One of these cardinals was Gasparo Contarini, a reform-minded prelate receptive to both the doctrinal and practical reasons for disgust with the loose and corrupt practices of the church. The other was Gian-Pietro Carafa, an arch-conservative in ecclesiastical affairs who since 1536 had worked with Contarini on a papal commission to formulate reforms but who would soon move toward repressive rather than reforming policies.

While the religious turmoil convulsing European politics since the 1520s thus touched Roman Carnival at its edges in 1539, just as it did at Nuremberg in that same year, it did not in the short term influence the main course of Carnival at Rome. Consider the following engraving (fig. 5), which seems to represent the Carnival at the Testaccio six years after the controversial parading

55. Cecilia Pericoli Ridolfini studied two paintings of the 1545 Testaccio, both of them at that time in the Museo di Roma. One of the two paintings was on loan and in the 1980s was returned to the Museo del Palazzo Venezia; this is the one described in my text here. Cecilia Pericoli Ridolfini, "I giochi a Testaccio in due dipinti del Museo di Roma," *Bollettino dei Musei comunali di Roma* 23 (1975): 46–63. All reproductions of it that I have found are of very poor quality, and I have not been able to obtain a decent copy for reproduction in this article. The least muddy reproduction in print is in Martine Boiteux, "Chasse aux taureaux et jeux romains de la Renaissance," in *Les jeux à la Renaissance*, ed. Philippe Ariès and Jean-Claude Margolin (Paris: J. Vrin, 1982), plate 2.

56. All six of the horsemen in the Roman-soldier contingent are listed in the two versions of the Testaccio published by Cruciani in *Teatro nel Rinascimento* and Premoli in *Ludus carnelevarii*.

57. Premoli, *Ludus carnelevarii*, 132.

58. The report of "G. N." (Cruciani, *Teatro nel Rinascimento*, 559) states that "Carnival day" terminated in "bagordi e tomulti a furia." The other report, published in Premoli, is the one that records the number of sixty thousand spectators (see the last lines of Premoli, *Ludus carnelevarii*, 132).

59. Boiteux, "Chasse aux taureaux et jeux romains de la Renaissance," 38.

60. Both Premoli and Cruciani have published contemporary accounts of this Agone parade, which seems with its triumphal wagons a remake of the parade

in 1539 just described. This engraving of the Testaccio is attributed to one Johannes Teufel and bears the date 1558 in its lower left-hand corner. It would thus appear to have been engraved at almost the same date as I have calculated to be that of Galle's undated image (fig. 1).

Figure 5. Johannes Teufel [or Theufel], "La Festa di Testaccio fatta in Roma," 1558. Engraving. Hamburg, Germany. Hamburger Kunsthalle, Druckgraphik, Inv. Nr. 3389.

The representations in figures 1 and 5 differ in significant details, but their overall similarity makes it probable that both were influenced by verbal accounts published in 1545 or 1546 and by paintings, one of which, by the miniaturist Giulio Clovio, has been securely dated as having been finished shortly after the Testaccio celebration in 1545.⁶¹ In spite of their general similarity figures 1 and 5 represent very differently the atmosphere pervading the occasion and its framework in the countryside just outside the Aurelian Wall with its bastions, pyramidal monument, and gate labeled Porta Ostiensa on the left side of Teufel's print. Instead of Galle's expansive landscape with sunny sky and vineyard-dotted hillsides, Teufel presents a narrower background of rough hills and ravines beneath a cloudy sky with a cartouche in the sky that names his subject.

Running boys and a clearly indicated masker on a hillock in the left foreground, a large-wheeled carriage and two elegantly gowned ladies in the middle foreground, and the advancing men and cavalry on the right lead the eye toward apprehension of an agitated mid-ground where the Testaccio game is taking place. Quite in contrast to the settled atmosphere that seems to be part of Galle's way of representing the Testaccio, Teufel's print's cluttered and crowded juxtapositions encourage a sense that what is going on has many parts that do not move in the same direction. There is a giant two-wheeled cart at the foot of the hill on the right with a large ill-shaped supine object lying within it and men poking at the object on the outside of the cart. This may well represent a pig cart, an element entirely absent in Galle's print. In the miniature painting by Clovio mentioned above a pig cart in this same position at the bottom of the hill is surrounded by a group of twenty or thirty persons, intensely packed, slashing in seeming frenzy at an object that is not itself visible.

that “il Magnifico Mathaleno” presented to Romans in 1372. See Premoli, *Ludus carnevari*, 120–22; and Cruciani, *Teatro nel Rinascimento*, 548–51. But as suggested in note 50, it seems more likely that the unknown forger of this pseudo-document knew about the 1539 parade and/or other early sixteenth-century Roman restagings of ancient Roman triumphal parades.

61. According to Cruciani, a painting of the Testaccio by Clovio was finished in 1546. It is partially reproduced on the cover of Cruciani’s paperbound book and muddily reproduced in entirety on page 561. Cruciani gives a rapid review of the visual works related to the Testaccio of 1545, but his and other work done on them leave in suspension many questions of attribution, dating, and patronage, not to mention interpretation of their meanings, purposes, and eventual influence, both painterly and cultural. See Cruciani, *Teatro nel Rinascimento*, 543–44. Pending more deeply delving inquiry, it is useful to note now that the three well-established engravings related to this Testaccio scene (by Galle, Teufel, and a Frenchman who allegedly worked in Rome from 1559 to 1578, Etienne Du Pérac) were all made more than a decade after the event by non-Italians, while three renditions in paint were probably made closer in date to the actual event and were probably executed in Rome (see on the paintings not only Pericoli Ridolfini, “I giochi a Testaccio in due dipinti del Museo di Roma,” but also Guarino, “Carnevale e festa civica nei ludi di Testaccio,” 475). I have not discussed Du Pérac’s engraving in this article for a number of reasons, among others

In Galle’s print two bulls run, one bull has fallen, and a fourth bull comes down the hill, attached to a cart. Here two bulls run near the middle of the field and a third charges down the hill unattached to either a two-wheeled cart or four-wheeled wagon. Horsemen, bulls, pig cart, other carts (two more are at the top of the hill), and men on foot all seem to be moving or standing still for different reasons. The atmosphere exuded by these elements indeed resembles something between the tumult to which Adam of Usk referred in 1405 and a flux of lankly disintegrated actions.

New reasons are indicated in Teufel’s print for the attractiveness of the festival at the Testaccio. At the left end of the field are three musicians in a row playing, as far as one can see, a flute, large drum, and shawm. Outside the field on the hillock in the left corner is a lute player. He wears the semblance of a Roman soldier’s costume like those found in verbal texts describing the 1539 parade and 1545 Testaccio. But he has a foolscap on his head and a long-nosed mask on his face. The person sitting next to him wears a long cowed garment. The upper end of the cowl almost seems to be shaped to form a face looking at the lute player while a true face, turned to the right, seems engaged in conversation with a woman further to the right. Is this cowed person also wearing some kind of mask? Whatever one decides about these features, it is certain that music making and masquerade have in this print been added to the Testaccio amalgam.⁶²

The camel shown inside the field in Galle’s print is placed outside the palisade on the left in Teufel’s print with someone not riding but presumably tending to him. No one except a barking dog seems to be paying attention to the antler-bearing deer shown below the camel. The motif of exhibiting exotic animals on leisure-time days and locations is thus not only repeated but also given more figuration than in Galle’s print. Eating and drinking also continue to be represented, as in the group under an improvised canopy, again on the left.

Finally, and seemingly most pertinent to the theme of politics in Carnival, both city government and papal banners are shown in this print, the SPQR flag to the left of the right pavilion and the Farnese coat of arms to the left of the left pavilion. The pavilions are shown in constricted, less elegant form than in Galle’s print. Men in broad-brimmed hats as well as women are vaguely outlined inside these elevated constructions. And there is at least a suggestion of the contingent of the six elegant equestrians, the dukes, princes, and cardinals, who play brilliant roles in the verbal reports but no role at all in the print by Galle. Two cavalymen rear their horses before the left Farnese pavilion, while a third one with plumed hat rides from the right toward the other two. This small reference to elite elements indicates that the composer of the Teufel print seems little interested in status distinctions. He wants us to see it all, and this “all” ends up in a somewhat inchoate set of differences, partly because of a strange insistence on littering the arena as well as the hillocks nearby with small, repetitious tufts of vegetation that distract the eye from the human actions.

The references to sociopolitical distinctions represented by the two banners, the two pavilions, and the cavorting horsemen amount to little compared to the general display of disparate pleasure-seeking in this artwork that is formally centered—but not emphasized—on the careless destruction of animals. The scene seems almost designed to advertise the indifference of both the elites and the general public shown in this depiction to the gathering protests about the Testaccio and the Roman Carnival. Not only had the two cardinals Contarini and Carafa

because it is generally dated by art historians to the 1560s, a time later than the dates attributed to figures 1 and 5 here.

62. The three persons seated on a hillock in the left foreground of Teufel's print are not unique. This cluster of figures is probably a variant based on the paintings of the scene, one of which Teufel may have seen. The Palazzo Bre-schi painting in Rome puts four figures, not three, in this group; a lute player is standing at the left, a little distant from three seated figures. The Palazzo Venezia painting includes five persons in the left foreground; two women and two men are seated closely together, all looking to the right while a bearded lute player sits behind them. The miniature painting of the 1545 Testaccio by Clovio, preserved in the J. P. Morgan Library in New York City and poorly reproduced in Cruciani, *Teatro nel Rinascimento*, 561, does not seem to include any of this group making music and talking.

63. See note 5 above for further reference to this work. In the Harvard University Library copy, the first page of the set, a page dedicated to an Antwerp patrician (the library's call number for this item is M24480.1) states that all the designs in the set are by van Cleve and all the engravings by Galle.

64. The Latin title of this set is sometimes misprinted in second-ary sources. In the unpublished master's thesis by Elise Boutsen it is cited thus in the table of contents: *Regionum rurium fundorumque varii atque amoeni Prospectus*. See Elise Boutsen,

protested the 1539 triumphal parade for its pagan overtones, but they had also, as members of a papally appointed commission, submitted to Paul III in 1538 a sharply worded set of proposals for church reform. The reform list, like the cardinals' reaction to the 1539 Agone, was in effect warning the pope and his entourage that the freedom to do anything during Carnival and other festivities that pleasurable feelings or hierarchical status might inspire had to be terminated. An ecclesiastical convocation occurring in the same year as that of the Carnival discussed here showed that Paul III must have at least half-heard the warning. An international assembly of all Western Christendom's bishops met in January at Trent in northern Italy to consider church reform, only to adjourn almost immediately while settling on a reopening date of March 15. The Carnival of 1545 meanwhile took place during the week of February 10 to February 17, thus occurring between those two dates in January and March, as positions hardened between the reform party and the papal party, the latter group intent on controlling what would happen at the council in a way that preserved all the accumulated rights and traditions of the church against any fundamental reforms, especially those that might imply the right of councils to determine affairs beyond the wishes of popes and their bureaucratic dependents.

After 1545, for as long as the double-minded Paul III was alive (d. 1549), the Testaccio as well as other people-pleasing or pope-glorifying rituals continued. Even the personally ascetic Carafa, who led the papal hierarchy toward Counter-Reformation rigidities as Pope Paul IV from 1555 to 1559, continued during his rule to entertain the College of Cardinals in the Vatican Palace for a last sumptuous banquet on Fat Tuesday evening. But there would be no more large public spectacles glorifying the popes and their families. Testaccio was not explicitly prohibited but was no longer noted in verbal accounts of the old festivity after the 1550s. Grand celebrations of Carnival went on but most sumptuously in the courtyards of ever-larger and more decorated cardinals' palaces. The merry bloodletting at the Testaccio was entirely discontinued, it seems, by the end of the sixteenth century.

Fractions

Carnival is always political, both along its sensorially apprehended surface and in depth. There are always some mocking songs, some wild cries, some caricatural masks of politicians. But then when one looks around, one sees, as in the engravings of 1545, that someone has organized certain reserved spaces, certain pavilions of honor. Who did this organizing? Who are the patrons of these appearances, and indeed of all the parades and performances? One is led by these questions from surface to depths of prescriptive social status, to economic distributions, to political diplomacies and police-implemented repressions, which lead in turn to mindsets, to people's festive proclivities, and to mentally embedded symbolic obsessions.

Such lines of inquiry may come from extended study, or perhaps simply from going to a Carnival again and again. But on the first day of Carnival this occasion does not seem to be about any of that. Carnival is just about having a good time; it is about frivolity and conviviality, and looking around at who is doing what. Teufel's 1558 engraving of the 1545 occasion accents that view of Carnival: lots of people do lots of running and playing, fooling and visiting. That was also what the makers of Nuremberg's Schembart parade images generally expected the patrons of their richly illustrated manuscripts to wish to see: themselves and their festive doings on parade across a big public place.

"Een Benadering tot het oeuvre van Hendrik van Cleve III (ca. 1525-ca. 1590)" (master's thesis, Universiteit Gent, 2015).

65. In addition to the classic work of James S. Ackerman, see two articles by Charles Burroughs that relate this artistic work to socio-historical circumstances in ways similar to the argument that I offer at this point. James S. Ackerman, *The Architecture of Michelangelo* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960); Charles Burroughs, "Michelangelo at the Campidoglio: Artistic Identity, Patronage, and Manufacture," *Artibus et Historiae* 28 (1993): 85–111; and Charles Burroughs, "The Democratic Campidoglio: Ritual, Social Unrest, and a Case of Wizardry," *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 49–50 (2006): 171–87. As I close discussion of the iconographical remnants of Rome's 1545 Testaccio Carnival, mention must be made of its chronological rhyme across the Alps. In a surreal engraving by Melchior Lorsch tentatively dated 1545–46, the pope is shown as a wildman masker with hairy costume and club, like those running through the marketplace of Nuremberg in 1539. Eight verses by Luther are signed and dated 1545 near the top of the print, the fifth of which affirms "the pope is rightly called the wildman." Capped with the pope's jewel-encrusted triple crown, the figure holds a huge key dissolving

This is not the view of Carnival encouraged by Galle's engraving. That print asks spectators to imagine the ambiance more than the action. Look at this scene of miniaturized objects: it offers you a clean and clearly articulated view of the whole. It is equipped with a title written in the internationally understood Latin of the time, and was included at some uncertain date in a set of thirty-eight engravings issued by Galle, titled *Views of Varied Ruins and Some Sketches of Rural Areas*.⁶³ May not those invited to look at this sophisticated production have been an educated elite, who were becoming interested in traveling, people like Michel de Montaigne, who visited Rome in 1581, or the later sixteenth-century Englishmen who began flocking to Venice's Carnival as part of an emergent tour for young gentlemen?

The undated extant copies of *Views of Varied Ruins and Sketches of Rural Areas* are variously ascribed to dates between 1557 and the 1580s. In 1587 Galle published another series, equally based on van Cleve's designs, which was titled *Varied and Charming Views of Rural Regions and Districts*.⁶⁴ The two sets indicate that in the later sixteenth century a market had emerged for visualizations of archaeologically and pastorally intriguing places. So whether the Testaccio scene was first sold as an isolated print or whether it was only engraved to be part of the *Views of Varied Ruins and Sketches of Rural Areas*, its inclusion in that series helps explain the distant view of the game, miniaturizing human and animal figures in and around the playing field so as to bring forward the grandly imposing Roman wall with its adjacent pyramid and the expansive landscape beyond the wall with its churches and vineyards. This view of Carnival was made to suit well-born tourists. It is well to remind ourselves, in any case, that neither Galle's print nor Teufel's should be analyzed as if they documented precisely what happened at the Testaccio in 1545. They were conceived not as journalistic or historical registers but as something like expensive postcards. They seem to have been designed to serve either as mementos or as reminders to be put in travelers' baggage as something of interest to see.

Canon Benedict of St. Peter's Cathedral, of course, wrote about Carnival from entirely different perspectives. I have suggested that short-term political implications, signaled among other things by the pope's appearance at the Testaccio escorted by cavalymen, emerge when one considers the probable date of Benedict's writing in relation to the commune revolution of 1143. The longer-term political meaning of Benedict's way of explaining the animal executions becomes clear by considering a broader framework, the Catholic hierarchy's enduring assertion of papal superiority to all earthly powers, whether local like the emergent commune or national and international like that of emperors and kings. These short-term and long-term contexts had shifted by 1545, although their symbolic representations had not entirely disappeared.

In 1545 the communal government of Rome still flew its SPQR banner adjacent to one of the pavilions of honor, but the banner represented no substantial independence. The civil government's chief officials were no longer elected by guilds or neighborhood wards but were either appointed or subject to papal approval. The chief senators, councilors and "standard-bearer of the Roman people" came without exception from a new composite aristocracy whose most prestigious members remained some twenty-five families called the "barons," who already in the thirteenth century were rising above other noble families. The popes themselves either came from these baronial families or used their new powers of largesse and marital politics to join them.

in flames below. The pope-wild-man serves the devil, lord of hell. For a reproduction and discussion of this print, See Kinser, "Presentation and Representation," 20–22.

66. Boiteux, "Chasse aux taureaux et jeux romains de la Renaissance," 40–41. A general acknowledgment is due here to the extensive work of Boiteux on the themes that I explore in Rome's fourteenth-, fifteenth-, and sixteenth-century Carnivals.

Although my views differ from hers on a number of particulars, it was her two broadly documented articles of 1976 ("Les Juifs dans le Carnaval de la Rome moderne [quinzième-dixhuitième siècles]," *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome* 88 [1976]: 745–87) and 1982 that first surveyed some of the new pathways that many scholars at that time and since then began to pursue. Note the conjuncture of her 1982 article with the richly documented but less thematized work of Premoli, *Ludus carnelevarii* and Cruciani, *Teatro nel Rinascimento*, neither book apparently known to her when she prepared her 1982 article "Chasse aux taureaux et jeux romains de la Renaissance."

67. These six races were already assigned to the same eight days in 1466, date of a large Carnival celebration allegedly financed mainly by Paul II. Two accounts of the 1466 races and the palios awarded in some of them are printed in Premoli, *Ludus carnelevarii*, 31. On the Carnival of 1466, see also Cruciani, *Teatro nel Rinascimento*, 126–31. This makes more certain that the 1469 statute list was the endorsement of an already existing custom.

68. Premoli, *Ludus carnelevarii*, 6,

An even longer-term perspective than one stopping in 1545 allows one to perceive sociocultural transformations barely emergent in the politics of the Carnivals studied here. Between the 1530s and 1580s, the place and the buildings housing civic government on the Capitoline were being remodeled together with the inside of St. Peter's Cathedral on the basis of plans by the same artist, Michelangelo, in the same renaissance-of-antiquity manner of majestically proportioned shapes and decor. Church and state were becoming aesthetic replicas of each other, a congeniality also asserted in the Agone parade of 1539.⁶⁵

—But wait a minute! Having stepped back so far from the show at the Testaccio and its visual representations, let's step back one bit further, beyond the edges of these prints and into the streets and alleys of the city. Martine Boiteux in 1982 drew attention to what was happening in those byways at Carnival time: fights between "strong fellows" (*gagliardi villani*), Swiss or Gascon, in the moats surrounding the Castel Sant'Angelo; battles between orange-throwing chamberlains and squires here and there around the Vatican; more serious confrontations between street toughs from one rione and others; sideshow acrobats and amateur bullfights; boisterous leapers for a strung-up fat goose, running after hedgehogs, pigs, and cats to catch and kill.⁶⁶ These activities all occurred in other parts of Europe as well, and everywhere they provoked actions by public authorities to repress them or at least to channel them. Just as I have suggested that organized parades to the Agone began well before their documented mention in the fifteenth century, so also I would suggest that new races for which money is allotted from papal and city coffers in the 1469 Carnival ordinances of Pope Paul II might represent some channeling of popular outbursts like those just listed, as well as officializing certain sporting customs that had existed informally for a considerable period. Six new races were financed and were assigned to take place over eight days preceding Ash Wednesday.⁶⁷ Where they were run is not specified in the 1469 ordinances, but by the early sixteenth century they were run in the straight, wide, and long Via Lata down the middle of the growing city, today's "Corso," where a much larger number of spectators could be accommodated.

The first race was to take place on the Monday preceding the Agone parade on Friday; it was to be run by the Jews whose community had already been burdened since 1363 and no doubt before that date with underwriting the expenses of the Agone and Testaccio.⁶⁸ This race was followed on Tuesday by one of "Christian boys" and on Wednesday by one of "Christian youth." No races were scheduled for Thursday but on Friday—the day of horse races and a parade of public officials to the Agone in Martin V's bull of 1425—another perhaps victimizing race was run, restricted to "old men in their sixties." Finally on the days after Sunday's Testaccio, two more races were run on Monday and Tuesday, certainly added for the sake of comedy, one for donkeys and one for buffalos on the two days respectively.⁶⁹

The new races pandered to popular sentiments while at the same time, by offering public space and honor in some cases and mirthful denigration in others, papal and city authorities may have hoped to control people's displays of excess. There is no doubt that the explicit reference to Jewish and Christian races had connotations rooted in deep-lying feelings of Christian animosity toward Jews, although it is not clear from the scarce documentation that we have for this period whether the race was already the deeply cruel and humiliating spectacle that is attested from the last decades of the sixteenth century onward.⁷⁰ In 1555 Pope Paul IV consigned the Jewish

first lines of Statute 75: "Item statuimus et ordinamus quod omnis sive tota pecunias Judeorum que per ipsam communitatem Judeorum pro ludis agonis et testatie in camera Urbis actenus solvi consuevit perveniat ad consules bobacteriorum et mercatorum."

69. This is Statute 76, as printed in *ibid.*, 41, not Statute 72, as Boiteux refers to in "Les Juifs dans le Carnaval de la Rome moderne," 750:

"Item additum e. dicto festo ex gratia Sanctissimi domini nostri Pauli papa Secundi q. ex pecuniis camere fiant sex alia bravia unum pro judeis currentibus die lune ante dominicam carnisprivi: aliud pro pueris christianis martis; aliud pro iuvenibus christianis die mercurii sequenti: aliud pro antiquis sexagenariis: die veneris aliud pro asinis die lune carnisprivi aliud pro bufalis die martis carnisprivii."

70. That the new races were intended to produce laughter, whether sardonic and satiric or merely mirthful, seems to be substantiated by certain comments of Platina in his *Lives of the Popes* about the 1466 races (Premoli, *Ludus carnelevarii*, 39): "Correvano i vecchi, correvano i giovani ... correvano i Giudei, e li facevano ben saturare prima perche meno veloci corressero. Correvano ... gl'asini e i bufali con piacere di tutti, che per le risa grandi potevano a pena star le genti in piè."

71. E. Le Roy Ladurie cites an anonymous account of the council meeting (which Le Roy Ladurie proves to be by Judge Guérin) as follows: "On vit Paumier chargé d'une robe de la peau d'un ours venir dans la maison consulaire et prendre un rang et un siège qui ne lui étaient pas dus, et qu'il n'avait accoutumé de prendre aupara-

community to the ghetto. Only in 1668 would Pope Clement IX put an end to the "race of the Jews" but at the cost of an additional contribution to Carnival expenses.

After the Counter-Reformation repression of public spectacles like the Testaccio, Carnival nevertheless continued to be celebrated in Rome, as noted earlier. This was because it was integral to a system that in the course of the sixteenth century married old civic and old papal monarchic traditions to a newly broader Roman aristocracy with connections—economic, aesthetic, religious, and political—to wider worlds than Rome and its hinterlands. The same thing happened for the same conservative-aristocratic reasons in Nuremberg in the later sixteenth century, as was also noted earlier: Carnival continued after the repression of the Schembart parades while the overall sociopolitical situation remained unchanged.

The systems creaked on. But every system, to be a system, must have firm boundaries. As those boundaries over time are sharpened and set off cleanly from adjacent arenas, they tend to fracture at the edges, producing riotous recklessness on the inside and allowing unwanted incursions from the outside. A few minorities, frayed and frazzled by conditions in the system, put on strange clothes and cry out rashly. Wild things, reemerging on the sharpened boundaries, extend their snouts. The snouts are rapped smartly, and the wild things move on, trying to find another weak spot in the defenses of the tame.

Should it surprise us then that some remnants of old symbolic orders popped up from time to time in this bright and polished sixteenth-century world of crafted controls, mass enthusiasms, kowtowing, and indifference? All it took was a larger disintegrating sociocultural context, such as happened again and again in that century of Reformations and Counter-Reformations.

Jean Paumier, a draper of modest means in the town of Romans in eastern central France, walked into council chambers during one of the council's sessions in late January or early February of 1580 (some commentators say that it was Candlemas, also known as "Bear Day," February 2, when bears were said to emerge from hibernation to test the weather). Did Paumier walk across the room with a clumsy gait because, as the single source that we have about this event asserts, he had placed a bear pelt over his body? He walked in and sat down. The council members, who certainly knew him well because he had attended sessions before, watched him sit down in a chair that was not his usual place. About this move the source only states that he was watched as he sat down; it does not say anything about the quality or importance of the new chair that he took. But the source concludes the description of the incident with unmistakably indignant words: this fellow, sitting where he did, took "a rank and a seat that were not his due."⁷¹

With this move in this costume, undertaken at Carnival time in sixteenth-century Romans, Paumier renewed the tradition of wildmen invading the tame. Like the image of a medieval bear, he dared to menace takeover of the town's politics, or at least to act as an ungovernable intruder into an officiality whose workings he therewith put in question. Bear-man that he was, he was doing a devil's work (so Canon Benedict and St. Augustine might say) by unsettling the confident sense of superiority of these city patriarchs. A few days later, as Carnival time in Romans gathered full force in the town and as social fractions sharpened their differences and suspicions, this animal imitator was murdered at the door of his house by a well-instructed mob, a mob probably acting under the instructions of the very man who had recorded the bear-man incident

vant." See E. Le Roy Ladurie, *Le Carnaval de Romans: De la Chan-deleur au mercredi des Cendres: 1579–1580* (Paris: Gallimard, 1979), 198–99.

72. Le Roy Ladurie describes Paumier's murder and recounts at length the reasons for suspecting that Judge Guérin was behind the mob action. The groups taking part in the Carnival games of 1580 at Romans made rich use of animals to symbolize their partisanship: eagle, partridge, hare, rooster, capon, sheep, bear, and donkey. The bear, if Le Roy Ladurie's reading of the sources can be trusted, was not used as an ongoing matrix by any of the contending factions. He provides a summary table of the animal symbols used by what he calls "high" and "low" classes. Neither Carnival politics nor city politics at Romans had only festive dimensions, as Le Roy Ladurie emphasizes. Ibid., 245, 245–53, 220–42, 240. Essential for the situation at Romans were the chaotically worsening politico-economic conditions, rural no less than urban in the Romans area during the 1570s. The chaos stemmed not only but nonetheless predominantly from the political and military upheavals, the so-called Religious Wars, affecting all of France from the 1560s to the end of the century. Le Roy Ladurie's excellent book interweaves the larger contexts with the actions of the social factions disrupting Romans, actions that came to a head in the two weeks of Carnival manifestations in February 1580.

Those weeks ended in many more killings than that of Paumier who had emerged as one of the most prominent opponents of the upper-class oligarchy ruling the town.

and who was the town's leading judicial magistrate.⁷²

However wildness comes in, whatever the final issue of its disorderly entry, it always provokes recognition and reevaluation of long-accepted inequalities. That is not the least considerable among the many effects of politics in Carnival. But such reevaluations and such occasional resurrections of old symbolic modes usually remain futile in political and social terms, and often murderously so, as in the case of Paumier and his adherents. Systems creak on, until they are done in by a mass of changes in which carnivalesque politics often play some small part.

Revolutions are rare. But during those rare moments, as in this carnivalesque moment, it is the functioning of plurally interacting sociabilities that counts. Community-focused sensibilities are what matters, even as the interacting world widens ever more disconcertingly, ever broadening a Carnival's contexts.

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