

# THE ROUTLEDGE HISTORY OF EMOTIONS IN EUROPE

1100–1700

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## EMOTIONS AND SEXUALITY

Regulation and homoerotic transgressions

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### Regulation and homoerotic transgressions

*Umberto Grassi*

In this chapter, I will analyse the way in which focusing on same-sex attraction can shed new light on how we conceive love and desire in the late medieval and early modern period. Firstly, I will re-examine the extensive historiographical debate on the social and cultural history of homoeroticism in late medieval and early modern Europe through the lens of emotions. This perspective allows us to go beyond some of the conundrums in which historians of homosexuality working ‘from below’ have sometimes found themselves tangled. I will then analyse the diverse and often overlooked emotional lexicon contained in the judicial reports of trials against sodomites. From this vantage point, we can have a glimpse not only into what people felt for each other, but also into the way in which unconventional desires affected their self-perception and their positioning within society.

In a diachronic perspective, I will examine how social control of sexual behaviours changed through time. The ways in which homoerotic feelings were perceived by common people and religious and civic institutions were indeed related to broader understandings of love and affection within the family. Conversely, I suggest that, by reflecting on transgressive affects, we can also see the history of marital love in the late Middle Ages and early modern period from a different perspective. Finally, I will point out how the increasing rigidity of sexual morality in the post-Reformation period stimulated forms of resistance from below. From then on, questioning the narrow-mindedness of Catholic and Protestant ‘emotional regimes’ played a crucial role in the broader political critique of the hypocrisy of institutionalized religions.

#### **Writing history from below: emotions and the limits of criminal sources**

When we look away from the learned elites, we find that we do not have many alternatives in exploring sexual transgressions other than to inspect criminal sources. In this first section, I will give an overview of the methodological problems discussed in the past by historians of transgressive sexualities working on these documents. I will point out how even before the history of emotion established itself as an autonomous field of research, the history of lesbianism had already brought about a decisive change in approach, placing love and affection at centre stage. However, as we will see, the recent debates on emotions in history may provide

historians with a clearer theoretical framework to re-interpret homosexual desire in a historical perspective.

The legal punishment of the religious sin of sodomy, dating back to the Justinian Code (sixth century CE),<sup>1</sup> resulted in extensive prosecutions that started from the late Middle Ages and intensified at the beginning of the early modern period.<sup>2</sup> As a result of this unprecedented attention, thousands of depositions, interrogations, confessions and convictions have been preserved in historical archives across Europe. From the early 1980s onwards, historians have produced a wealth of studies on same-sex desire and practices using these sources, reconstructing the social and cultural history of the (mostly male) sodomitic sociability that flourished at this time.<sup>3</sup>

These sources raise many methodological problems. They cannot be read as mere testimony of the events they recount; rather, historians must read between the lines in order to decipher their multi-layered meanings. In a report of a trial, the complex legal and theological background of the judges overlaps with the cultural milieu of defendants and witnesses, who often belonged to lower social ranks. Although strongly related, the moral values of prosecutor and prosecuted sometimes expressed radically different cultural horizons.<sup>4</sup>

Historians of homosexuality working on criminal sources have sometimes been excessively influenced by repressive discourses. In the past especially, their studies have often reflected the major preoccupation of the judges: that is, finding evidence of the way in which sexual acts were consummated, so as to determine the mitigating or aggravating circumstances that accompanied them. Not all forms of nonprocreative sex were deemed equally serious offences. Only anal penetration with ejaculation in the 'improper vessel' constituted 'perfect sodomy'.<sup>5</sup> In the case of female same-sex intercourse, that which came under scrutiny was either the possible use of a dildo or medical proof that one of the partners was the bearer of an 'abnormally' enlarged clitoris, which would have allowed an actual penetrative act.<sup>6</sup>

As far as sexual mores were concerned, common people were constantly forced in their daily life experiences to negotiate their sexual desires with the moral injunctions imposed by religious and secular authorities. Both women and men, however, worked out their own creative and strategic defences, original adaptations and adjustments. Sometimes they even decided to overtly question the limitations imposed on their sexual conduct by the current moral codes. In these cases, the defendants failed to match the judges' expectations, refusing to fit into the categories in which the legal discourse wanted to frame them. In other cases, witnesses and suspects provided the judges with information that was apparently irrelevant in the economy of the judicial proceedings but is now precious for historians. Through these cases, we can take a fresh look at the everyday life of people which took place in crowded streets, between the market stalls, in the wharves of commercial ports, or in the alleys of a busy neighbourhood.

Ignoring the discrepancies between the views of prosecuted and prosecutor distorts our perception of past sexual lives. While the reports often render, without any kind of emotional involvement, a rough depiction of serial acts that were committed, this hypersexualized and mechanical representation likely reflects the exclusive interest of the prosecutors in the material circumstances in which the acts were performed. We ought to take into account the fact that it was far more likely for abusive and violent sexual intercourse to attract the attention of the public officers. The same can be

hypothesized for false accusations, intercourse consummated in public spaces, and commercial sex. In all likelihood, a wide range of emotional and relational experiences did not leave any traces in the archives because magistrates were not as interested in them as they were in the acts committed.

For these reasons, female homoeroticism was largely disregarded. Although criminal law did not ignore it,<sup>7</sup> the number of trials prosecuting female-to-female sexual intercourse is markedly lower in comparison to the charges of male homosexual transgression.<sup>8</sup> This gap has raised many methodological issues, not the least of which is the question of how to write the history of female homosexuality when the proof of actual sexual intercourse is so scarce. It is worth pointing out that this question partially reproduces the dilemma that tormented (male) theologians, moralists and jurists between the Middle Ages and the early modern period. As we have already mentioned, without penetration, sex was either inconceivable or a matter of minor interest. It is therefore legitimate and historically productive to investigate to what extent this 'invisibility' might have opened up spaces of freedom and autonomy to same-sex-attracted women. Where were opportunities of proximity available to them? What possibilities did they have of avoiding marriage? What was their emotional lexicon? Were they able to resist gendered social expectations? What circumstances could have allowed them to make a life together?<sup>9</sup> From the works of Adrienne Rich and Lilian Faderman onwards, the theme of friendship has played a central role in the history of lesbianism,<sup>10</sup> in particular with reference to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>11</sup> This historiography has sometimes been criticized for offering an excessively idealized and desexualized image of lesbian desire.<sup>12</sup> Valerie Traub has pointed out that the spectre of sapphic love and tribadism has haunted the literary imagery of female friendships since early modern times, thus calling into question the idea that, before the nineteenth-century medicalization of homosexual desire, same-sex-attracted women could express their feelings without arousing excessive suspicion.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, faith in the universality and 'naturalness' of female bonding and solidarity has been questioned in light of the successive development of feminist discourses, now attentive to race and class issues in their analyses.<sup>14</sup>

The history of lesbianism has thus been the testing ground for a shift in focus from acts to feelings in the historiography of homosexual desire. Indeed, the focus on homoerotic friendships has deeply transformed the approach of historians to male homoeroticism. In *The Friend* (2003), Alan Bray explicitly expresses his dissatisfaction with the obsessive need for scholars working in this field to 'prove' the occurrence of actual sexual intercourse. Bray points out the great extent to which past societies recognized a noble social function in homoerotic friendships. Marriage obviously constituted the basic unit of society, ensuring the biological reproduction of the species and the transmission of religious, moral and civil values. Nevertheless, although the importance of spousal affection was not disregarded, spiritual commonality, reciprocal recognition and intellectual exchange were believed to be a prerogative of the cultural codes governing same-sex friendships, until the eighteenth century.<sup>15</sup>

As has been acutely noted, the image of the good and noble friend was constructed in opposition to its negative reversal, the sodomite. By warning women and men who were cultivating same-sex friendship not to indulge in excessive physical demonstrations of love and affection, the manuals and handbooks that detailed such codes

of conduct point to the fact that the boundaries dividing ‘proper’ and ‘improper’ same-sex unions were perceived to be dangerously porous at that time.<sup>16</sup>

As I will show in the following sections, in the attempt to integrate emotional, intellectual and relational experiences into their narratives, historians of female and male homosexualities may profit in manifold ways from the new methodological perspectives opened up by the recent debate on emotions in history. Thanks to these theoretical insights, we can have a glimpse into what people felt about their acts and desires, and how these feelings affected their social performances and self-perceptions.

### **Cultures of male sexual transgressions: emotions as social practices**

I will start by pointing out the extent to which reflecting on emotions can change our approach to late medieval and early modern urban male homoerotic sociability. For a long time, the analysis of homoerotic gatherings in European cities has been used as a case in point to show that, in the past, sodomy was just an act and ‘the sodomite’ was not perceived as an individual characterized by specific identity-making traits.<sup>17</sup> Monique Scheer’s reflections on emotions as social practices provide us with powerful theoretical tools to revise this interpretation.<sup>18</sup> It allows us to question the supposed neutrality of these performances for the self-perception of those who engaged in homosexual acts, while reframing in more general terms the problem of identity-making processes in the late medieval and early modern period.

In whichever context it has been studied, male homoerotic sociability demonstrates many common features across late medieval and early modern Western Europe. Same-sex-attracted men were forced to hide themselves in order to negotiate their sexual relationships. Taverns, inns, fencing schools, pastry shops, communal spaces such as covered walkways, small alleys, public bathrooms and steam rooms, markets, wharves, secluded gardens and dark areas along the city walls, parks and open fields in the countryside: these and other similar spaces often constituted the backdrop against which a lively clandestine sociability was staged.<sup>19</sup>

Speaking openly could have led those involved in these transgressive networks to a judicial proceeding or, in the worst-case scenario, to the death penalty. The use of coded language thus facilitated the acts of enticing partners and negotiating sexual intercourse. We may assume that learning this encrypted idiom, like iterating specific gestures and habits, contributed to the reinforcement of a sense of belonging to a proscribed community. This language, made up of bodily communication as well, constituted an unwritten common heritage that had to be transmitted in order to preserve its effectiveness. We can hypothesize that the systematic repetition of similar rituals of seduction, the search for cruising areas, reciprocal recognition amongst regulars, eye contact and the codification of a bodily language, the acknowledgment of certain particular sartorial details,<sup>20</sup> and, last but not least, the shared fear of prosecution, were all factors that played a role in the construction of the subjects’ sense of self, even in the absence of a conscious reappropriation of the meaning of the actions performed.

Monique Scheer’s methodological reflections can provide historians with a solid ground on which to articulate a more precise understanding of what these ritualized performances may have meant to the individuals involved in them. Inspired by Pierre

Bourdieu, Scheer has investigated the role played by social practices in shaping and interiorizing emotional codes. Through repetition, practices forge perceptions and reinforce automatic responses as well as unconscious emotional reactions. Multiple formal and informal social institutions use rituals to facilitate the internalization of their systems of values. This process may raise multiple conflicts. Within complex societies, people grow up under the influence of not only their families but also numerous religious, educational, political and/or military institutions, as well as a handful of other more or less formalized associations conveying the most disparate sets of beliefs and principles. Every life trajectory is made up of the intersections and overlaps of these often-conflicting group identities. Although resulting from predetermined factors (depending on what is on offer in any given society), individuals are nevertheless the unique and unpredictable result of these multiple interactions.<sup>21</sup>

The act of taking part in urban homosexual male sociability was thus likely to influence the self-perception of those who became involved in it; in fact, this sociability was probably one of the many tiles that made up the multifaceted mosaic that constituted their sense of self. Between the Middle Ages and the early modern period, identity was determined primarily by the position one occupied in more or less formalized groups and associations. People could be gathered together on the basis of their social rank, neighbourhood, job, parish, military company, cultural, religious and ethnic background and – within the same religious confessions – specific forms of devotion and piety. In all likelihood, belonging to the proscribed sodomitic networks led to something much more than a mere repetition of meaningless acts: it was one of the elements constituting a complex social identity.

### **The love that dared speak its name**

In a minority of cases, judicial documents sometimes went far beyond the cold-blooded report of mere serial acts committed without any kind of emotional involvement. In some inquisitorial cases from the Spanish city of Valencia, defendants and witnesses qualified male-to-male homoerotic experiences with locutions like ‘falling in love’, ‘speaking in loving terms’, ‘requesting love’, ‘making merry and love’.<sup>22</sup>

A concept like love, however, needs to be handled with methodological awareness. For the learned elites, love was not merely an emotion. It was rather a sophisticated philosophical concept, implying a distinction between noble and gentle love, that can be related to the classical notions of *agape* and *caritas*, and passionate love, *eros* or *passio*, which, for its part, could be either earthly or divine.<sup>23</sup>

As we have sketched out above, this complex ideal of love was related to friendship and, via this medium, it had a complicated relationship with homoeroticism. When we look at judiciary sources, however, the vocabulary used to express same-sex love and affection is often modelled on the prototype of heterosexual spousal relationships, which occupied a rather different position in the premodern economy of affection and desire. For instance, two young Valencian bakery servants named Nofre Masquero and Salvador Villalobos (aged fifteen and sixteen respectively) found themselves caught in the mesh of Inquisitorial justice when their masters heard them addressing each other as husband and wife while allegedly having sex in the bed they used to share.<sup>24</sup>

If people engaging in homosexual acts often borrowed the emotional vocabulary of familial affection available at that time, what did this mean for them? The ideal of

spousal romantic love we are used to in today's Western societies has its own historical genealogy and cannot be uncritically projected unto the past.<sup>25</sup> The concept of marrying *for love* is strictly related to the construction of discourses on individual rights and personal freedom. That factors other than love played an equally relevant role in orienting the choice of a partner for life, led historians to draw the conclusion, for a long time, that premodern marriages were 'low affect' social constructions. Moreover, the profoundly unbalanced distribution of power between spouses in patriarchal societies has been viewed as incompatible with our modern understanding of love.<sup>26</sup>

While the ideal of romantic love that sounds familiar to us sprang up in eighteenth-century aristocratic and bourgeois environments, in the last decades historical research has shown how expressions of love and affection were not alien to late medieval and early modern familial interactions, although conveyed by different expressive codes.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, scholars have recently questioned the idea that the unprecedented modern emphasis on spousal love has reduced power inequalities between women and men, suggesting that this process has instead been a vehicle to confirm patriarchal values.<sup>28</sup>

By shaping their utterance of love and affection on the model of the heterosexual spousal relationship, same-sex lovers tended sometimes to reproduce the gender imbalance attached to it, reiterating stereotypical binaries. Some late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Florentine sources refer to homosexual intercourse as 'knowing' a male partner 'ut feminam' (like a woman). At other times, the Florentine informers reported that someone was keeping a boy to use him 'like a woman'.<sup>29</sup> The homoerotic relationship was often 'heterosexualized', with a supposed 'passive partner' identified as being the 'woman' in the pair. 'To use a man as if he were a woman' was a popular way to refer to homosexual intercourse, as was the expression that two men had slept together 'like husband and wife'.<sup>30</sup>

In these instances, one should not assume that the subjects were consciously subverting the gender norms established at that time. Social assumptions turned the passive subjects into symbolic females, without implying that they perceived themselves as such. Nevertheless, other cases clearly testify that gender subversion was sometimes actively pursued by same-sex-attracted persons. In a trial held by the Inquisition of Valencia in 1572, a witness reported that a friar named Pedro Pizarro was known in his community for his feminine manners, which earned him the nickname of 'La Pizarra'.<sup>31</sup> As testified by many studies, cross-dressing and the use of female nicknames were common features of Western European and colonial urban sodomitic cultures.<sup>32</sup> The transgression of gender norms, however, was severely rejected by society. There are scattered references in the sources to the derogatory use of the term 'maricón' to label passive sodomites, an expression that, according to seventeenth-century dictionaries, alluded to effeminate men.<sup>33</sup>

Other documents associated the term 'love' with its embodied expression in the carnal union between same-sex partners. A Valencian case from 1601 stands out for the complexity of the emotional lexicon employed by the notaries who transcribed the interrogations. Witness Miguel Marin denounced Luis Coxet and Gaspar Emça, two 'Moriscos' (Muslims recently converted to Christianity) who had reportedly had sex in the same room in which he was sleeping after a dinner at a mutual friend's house. The somewhat voyeuristic description of their sexual intercourse abounds with expressions of tenderness, love and affection. Marin reported to the judges that

he heard the couple ‘making merry and love’. In the semi-darkness of the room, he saw and heard their ‘bare flesh and legs’, movements, strokes and breaths, which clearly showed, in his opinion, that they were having a ‘carnal union’. Caressing Luis’s face, Gaspar allegedly whispered some words in ‘algaravio’: this was the term that ‘old Christians’ used to describe the language spoken by recently converted Muslims, which was incomprehensible to them, but which Marin nevertheless understood well enough to know that the words meant ‘handsome and good man’.<sup>34</sup> It seems that the witness forged the accusation motivated by anti-Islamic prejudices.<sup>35</sup> Yet what it is relevant here is not the adherence of the documents to a supposed ‘reality’ that exists beyond the narrative, but the terminology with which homosexual intercourse was able to be described and conceived of at that time.

Recent research has opened up the range of emotions associated with family life. By pointing out the complex interactions between power and love in heterosexual relationships, historians have explored the role played by anger, jealousy and violence within the household.<sup>36</sup> Negative feelings constituted a part of the emotional code embedded in passionate homoerotic attachments, and these relational dynamics deserve a closer look. Luiz Mott has studied a collection of letters preserved in the Portuguese archives of *Torre do Tombo*. These epistles are perhaps the most powerful early modern criminal sources that bear witness to homosexual love. They were written in 1664 by Francisco Correa Netto, a sacristan of Silves Cathedral, in southern Portugal, and are addressed to lutenist and guitarist Manuel Viegas. It is clear that Francisco, who sometimes adopted the female nickname of Francisquinha, was madly in love with him. Manuel, despite his relationships with women, apparently made some promises to the churchman, perhaps moved by the generous gifts he had made him. Francisco’s letters contain a wide range of emotive expressions, ranging from hope to despair, from unconditional adoration to violent hatred. More than once, Francisco referred to himself using the motto ‘he who loves the most, merits it least’ (‘quem mais ama menos merece’).<sup>37</sup>

Following a number of testimonies against them, Inés de Santa Cruz and Catalina Ledesma were put on trial for sodomy in Salamanca in 1603. The couple managed to escape the death penalty twice, getting away with only minor convictions. In this case it is not easy to assess whether the accusations had a factual basis or whether they were merely slanderous stories made up by neighbours and acquaintances out of malevolence and resentment. Nevertheless, the record of the trial, which runs to over a hundred pages, evokes the way in which a female-to-female sexual relationship could take shape in the minds of the numerous witnesses, mostly women, whose accounts were heard by the judges. Inés and Catalina allegedly addressed each other as ‘my love’ and ‘my life’. In the many fights overheard by their neighbours, they sometimes insulted one another with the term ‘somética’, a Spanish word that can be translated as ‘female sodomite’. They were believed to have engaged in sexual relations using a dildo made of cane reeds, an opinion that led them to be known in the local community by the sobriquet ‘las cañitas’ (‘the little cane girls’).<sup>38</sup>

In the anti-sodomitic rhetoric of that time, homosexual acts were deemed to be a monstrous and anti-social deformation of the purposes of nature. The fact that premodern people living in long-term relationships whose goal was not procreation chose to adopt the vocabulary available at that time to express love between grooms and brides also tells us something about how feelings and affections



within the family were viewed. Seeing the love between married women and men refracted in the mirror of same-sex couples suggests that, even at that time, this love could be viewed, beyond its social function, as an interiorized bond that involved deep affective dynamics. Conversely, this unconventional perspective highlights how people living in proscribed relationships tended, more or less consciously, to model their experiences following the dominant patterns that, at that time, shaped familial interactions.

### **Social control in the late Middle Ages and the early modern period**

In the second part of this chapter I will focus on the way in which institutions dealt with transgressive sexualities in late medieval and early modern Europe. As William Reddy has pointed out, any political system that aims for stability must establish what he defines as an ‘emotional regime’; that is, ‘a set of normative emotions and the official rituals, practices, and emotives that express and inculcate them’. ‘Emotives’, in Reddy’s definition, are speech acts provided with a performative quality. The more rigid the emotional regime, the less likely is the political system to survive resistance coming from a society unable to fit into the models promoted and reinforced by the authorities.<sup>39</sup>

Reddy’s theoretical framework effectively points out how shaping emotions plays a central role in the governance of political communities. It shows its limits, however, in the rigidity of its explanatory value and in its dyadic interpretation of ‘top’ and ‘bottom’ interactions within a given society. While retaining the focus on norms, practices and rituals, in the following pages I will not try to reduce complex processes to a single-sided explanation of historical change based on the conflicts between emotional regimes and the antagonistic opposition of ‘emotional refuges’. Neither will I reconstruct the history of the progressive demonization of homosexual practices in Western Christian tradition (a history that has already been written by several outstanding scholars).<sup>40</sup> I will rather focus on the rich historiography on the control of sexual transgressions to understand why some expressions of homoerotic desire were partially accepted in late medieval and early modern societies. In doing so, I will highlight the tensions between religious beliefs and social practices, pointing out how the regulation of emotions was the result of a multi-centred negotiation between diverse powers and social actors. In this context, systems of beliefs were strongly influenced by economic and social structures that limited and constrained the choices available to both rulers and ruled.

The abundance of criminal sources focusing on sexual crimes is a consequence of the increasing attention that was paid to sexual morality by secular and religious institutions between the late Middle Ages and the early modern period. This is not the place to reconstruct a detailed history of the diverse religious and civic criminal courts that dealt with sodomy in early modern Europe; instead, I would like to focus on the reasons that led these institutions to increase their level of activity at this historical juncture.

The Italian situation stands out amongst the others, in part due to the quantity and quality of the historical research that has been carried out in its archives. In the Italian peninsula, a territory politically fragmented in a multiplicity of small territorial states, historians have thus far investigated the activities of three major

magistracies that were exclusively devoted to the control of sodomy in Venice, Florence and Lucca. Their archives constitute one of the major sources for the history of past homosexualities.<sup>41</sup> What has come to light, thanks to this research, is that the increased surveillance of sexual transgressions occurred hand in hand with some forms of (conditioned) social tolerance. In fact, the intense scrutiny of sexual mores partly reflected the will to come to terms with deeply rooted social habits, in spite of the religious interdictions.

Religion played a crucial role in reinforcing the cohesion of social and political communities. Political authorities cooperated with religious institutions to bolster people's sense of belonging to the social body by emphasizing a set of shared values and beliefs. Complex public ceremonies and liturgical celebrations punctuated the passing of days, weeks and months, embedding the perception of time in the everyday lives of the people. Moreover, public rituals enabled authorities to depict an ideal order with which they encouraged the community to identify. In such celebrations, each person was assigned a place according to the position they occupied within the social hierarchy. Ranks, professional guilds, military companies and brotherhoods were some of the pieces that composed this complex jigsaw. Moreover, by cultivating devotion to saints and patrons, and through other forms of local piety, the community was integrated within a wider horizon, gaining an otherworldly protection.<sup>42</sup>

Understanding this osmosis between religious and secular spheres is the key to comprehending the contradictory coexistence between the widespread and minute control of sodomy and the relatively tolerant attitude towards it. In urban settings, the wide involvement of lay associations in the spiritual and civic life of the city created the appropriate conditions for a relatively flexible approach to religious beliefs. Religion was deeply rooted in the governing of the most trivial aspects of everyday life within the community. It responded to the needs of a complex society with ease, alternating severe proclamations, terrifying references to Hell's eternal sufferings, and acceptance of human frailty. Within the framework of a negative anthropology that considered human beings indelibly marked by original sin, pastoral activity favoured a mediation between tolerance and repression that took into account not only the potential social impact of 'sinful' behaviours, but also the consequences of their being controlled.<sup>43</sup> This approach is clearly attested by the public management of prostitution. Confining prostitutes to assigned districts reduced their visibility and favoured their reclusion for public health reasons in case of plague epidemics. Moreover, by taxing the sex industry, public institutions gained an additional, and substantial, source of income.<sup>44</sup>

Many factors justified a tolerant approach towards sexual transgressions. At that time, urban communities were overflowing with a male population that could not access marriage for a long period of their adult lives. This was mainly due to the specific demographic pattern of these communities, which was in turn a result of economic structures. For the ruling classes, marriage was a key part of their networking strategies, creating bonds between families that facilitated political and economic interactions. Moreover, due to the increasing value of dowries, it often took a long time for households to accumulate the money needed to chase their ambitions. Many girls were in fact destined for a life of seclusion in cloisters. Conversely, to preserve the integrity of familial assets, the system of inheritance – based on primogeniture – excluded many male heirs from the right to marriage. Among people of lower rank there were also substantive reasons for postponing the

age of marriage. Artisans, for example, had to wait for their apprenticeship to be concluded, and the training could take a long time, while peasants often did not have the means to start a new family.<sup>45</sup>

Many erotic and sexual tensions were therefore not able to be expressed within the only frame that, at that time, was believed to be legitimate: marriage. This circumstance generated tensions that religious and secular authorities were forced to handle with tact and circumspection. While control was highly recommended, repression could have led to unpredictable consequences. Holiness was believed to be the major way to attract God's blessings and prosperity, but the pursuit of holiness had to take into account the material needs of the people.

Moreover, older men managed to snag a large portion of the women available on the marriage market. The risk of a potentially disruptive generational conflict was constantly present. Local institutions tried to channel these energies not only by promoting diverse forms of juvenile association, but also by tolerating the fact that some of their manifestations were marked by anti-social attitudes. Besides these semi-institutionalized gatherings, other informal groups conveyed even more radical practices such as gambling, roughhousing, fighting and mimicking blasphemous religious rites, some going so far as to commit homicides and gang rapes.<sup>46</sup>

As for sodomy, this transgression was apparently among those that society was inclined to remit, although only under certain circumstances. As noted by Michael J. Rocke in his studies on Renaissance Florence, what made this behaviour partially acceptable was that it contributed to the reinforcement of the hierarchical bonds that cemented male sociability. Sodomy was part of the initiation rites to adulthood. Sodomitic intercourse often reflected the dominion of an older partner over a younger one. In this frame, active and passive roles (tops and bottoms) were meant to mirror the social positions of the partners.<sup>47</sup> If it was not to be encouraged, sodomy, when expressed in this form (and we have seen that it was not always the case), was at least worth tolerating; homoerotic bonds strengthened the perception of a hierarchically ordered society.

### **Silencing the unmentionable vice**

The mediating approach that shaped late medieval and early modern anti-sodomitic policies disappeared during the sixteenth century when, with the explosion of the Protestant Reformation, the unity of Western Christianity was definitively lost.<sup>48</sup> Conflicts in the religious and political sphere brought about significant changes in the way in which emotions were shaped, encouraged and repressed by spiritual leaders and, subsequently, by civic and religious institutions. Martin Luther questioned the principle of ecclesiastic celibacy, denouncing it for hypocrisy. Sexual misconduct was a consistent part of the accusations Lutherans made against Roman Catholicism, with celibacy deemed to be one of its major causes. This attack against sexual abstinence represents a major shift in the history of Christianity. For centuries celibacy had symbolized the superiority of the clergy over lay people. So, to understand what this shift meant, we need to look back at the long-term history of celibacy in the wider context of Christian theories about passions and affects.

In his groundbreaking work *From Passions to Emotions* (2003), Thomas Dixon reconstructed the genesis of the concept of 'emotions' as a psychological category.<sup>49</sup> As he

pointed out, before the eighteenth century, there was nothing comparable to such a wide-ranging ‘umbrella-term’, and several different psychological phenomena we now label as ‘emotions’, although related, had their own epistemological status.

One of the most common terms used to describe passions in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament was *epithumiai*, translated in the Latin of the Vulgate as *concupiscentiae* or *desideria*. In later Christian writings, we also find terms like *motus*, *affectus*, *passiones animae*. In Dixon’s interpretation, this rich vocabulary made room for a more nuanced approach to the emotional life of human beings than the post-eighteenth-century dichotomy between emotions and rationality. Movements of the soul were not just passively perceived by the subject. They were also a result of the orientation of the will. Good will produced good emotional habits, while perverted desires were the consequence of an ill-oriented *voluntas*. Rather than being opposed to rationality, emotional reactions were part of what we would call today ‘cognitive processes’. Being the result of mental procedures, positive affects were to be encouraged in order to sustain the psychological and spiritual growth of the believer. Other passions were instead to be controlled, suppressed or re-channelled, through working on the goals the subject voluntarily chose to pursue in her or his life.<sup>50</sup>

If we take a closer look at sexual desire, however, we cannot help noticing that relatively few canonical Christian thinkers recognized a positive role for this unsuppressible component of psychological life. The Christian theological approach to sexual desire has been largely determined by the works of Augustine of Hippo (354–430). Augustine never suggested to eradicate feelings and passions in order to achieve spiritual realization.<sup>51</sup> He distinguished a *concupiscentia bona* (spiritual desire leading to God) from a *concupiscentia naturalis* (a proclivity towards wellbeing and happiness, which included the desire to marry and have children), but located the *concupiscentia carnalis* outside the realm of nature as a by-product of the corruption of the will resulting from Original Sin.<sup>52</sup> Sexual desire per se was a symbol of the decayed state in which humanity found itself after the Fall from Grace. Even within wedlock, sex without the purpose of procreation was a sin,<sup>53</sup> and abstinence was recommended as a superior choice for married couples.<sup>54</sup>

Sexual desire thus represented an anomaly in Christian theories of emotions.<sup>55</sup> We ought not think, however, that Luther’s stance against ecclesiastic celibacy was inspired by a radically innovative consideration of sexual pleasure. Although he used this trope to question the superiority of the clergy, Luther was an Augustinian friar and his pastoral activity was strongly influenced by the teachings of the bishop of Hippo. What changed in his view of sexual desire was not the belief that it was sinful, but the fact that he thought it was not possible to expect a humanity indelibly stained by Original Sin to rise above its decayed condition.<sup>56</sup> Despite reaffirming the tradition, the revolution he brought about within Christianity had some positive repercussions on the status of marital couples and on the role that sex was believed to play in reinforcing their affective bonds. Although marriage ceased to be a sacrament, in line with the process of dogmatic and liturgical simplification promoted by the Reformers, Luther re-evaluated the role of marriage as the foundation of civil society and the most effective remedy for human concupiscence. In spite of some differences, mostly related to the value that should be accorded to marital sex, this shift occurred consistently across all of the major Reformed confessions.

Conversely, in Catholic Europe, the church strongly reasserted the sacramental nature of marriage as a response to the polemical stances taken by Protestants. Even though this major difference cannot be underplayed, historians have also highlighted many common features between Catholic and Protestant approaches to marriage.<sup>57</sup> Within Christianity generally, moral theology and pastoral practice began to devote more attention to the condition of married couples, increasingly celebrating their charismatic dignity within the Christian community. Both the Reformed and Roman churches fought against traditional beliefs and rites, in an attempt to standardize the procedures that led engaged couples to achieve the spousal state.<sup>58</sup>

Both Catholics and Protestants maintained the patriarchal assumption of the previous Christian tradition about the inferior status of women. At the same time, chastity and virginity continued to be assigned a major role in Christian morality, and for lay people that meant that sex was allowed only within marriage. While Luther, Huldrych Zwingli and John Calvin all questioned the cult of Mary, they nonetheless reaffirmed the doctrine of the Mother of Christ's perpetual virginity, even though it contradicted their approach to scripture.<sup>59</sup>

Nevertheless, this re-evaluation of marriage (and of sex within marriage) brought about a significant shift in the way that Christian authorities all over Europe regulated the wide range of emotional bonds that took place out of wedlock. Protestant and Catholic authorities progressively abandoned their proclivity to turn a blind eye to relationships between unmarried women and men, even those that had been relatively well tolerated in the past. During this process, the proscription of extra- or pre-marital sexual activity also became more cogent. This shift was implemented not only through campaigns to re-educate the populace, but also, in the Protestant world, through the foundation of specific Marriage Courts that controlled a vast range of (mis)behaviours related (but not exclusively) to marital status.<sup>60</sup> In Catholic and Protestant countries prostitution was subjected to an increasing level of control, and an unprecedented moral stigma became paired with more coercive attitudes towards those who transgressed the line dividing 'prostitutes' and 'honest women'.<sup>61</sup>

This emphasis on marriage had serious repercussions for how Christian society dealt with homosexual attraction. If in the past some room was left for negotiation, from then on civic and religious institutions took a more radical stance against unproductive sexuality. These changing patterns did not always result in an increase in judiciary prosecutions.<sup>62</sup> Rather, those involved now tended to keep silent. Up to this time, priests, preachers and confessors had addressed sexual themes using an explicit and coarse language, often reflecting the content and style of the manuals attached to their training. This expressive code was progressively emended. Particularly in the Catholic world, after the Council of Trent, preachers and authors of devotional manuals were strongly warned against accidentally enticing people to sin with their words. Keeping people ignorant by generically alluding to lust was encouraged as a more cautious way to prevent them from indulging in sexual temptations.<sup>63</sup> Historians have noted that, in this respect, Catholic and Protestant countries adopted similar strategies.<sup>64</sup> They have also pointed out, however, the extent to which sexual discourses in Catholic countries, although silenced in the public sphere, were excited by the increasing emphasis on the practice of sacramental confession, and the simultaneous and thus related proliferation of manuals for confessors and texts of moral theology.<sup>65</sup>

This increasing emphasis on the control of a vast range of emotional experiences that for a long time had been allowed to express themselves outside the prescriptive boundaries of marriage stimulated forms of resistance from below. Although it is sometimes difficult to deduce the ways in which people were able to manage the internal conflict created by their desires and the moral codes proscribing them,<sup>66</sup> in a few trials of the Spanish Inquisition, the defendants openly questioned the legal and theological frame in which homosexual practices were encoded. In some of these cases, they were charged for defending the idea that unproductive intercourse was 'natural'. A singer from Toledo named Alonso de Ribera was jailed in Saragossa in 1559 for the charge of sodomy. He allegedly stated that two men who had sex with each other were not committing a sin against nature ('tener un hombre parte con otro no era pecado contra natura'). Luca Daniel, who was born in Palermo, was forced to abjure his beliefs because he reportedly declared to a girl who refused to have anal sex with him that the latter was not a sin, but rather an act worth performing on the altars of Rome itself.<sup>67</sup> A ship's boy stated that sodomy should not be forbidden because it was allowed by Nature ('la naturaleza lo permitía').<sup>68</sup> A Franciscan friar who was brought before the judges in 1591 publicly asked forgiveness for having allegedly held the heretical opinion that sexual intercourse 'against nature' was not sinful, nor was having sex with boys. He reportedly suggested that these behaviours were included in the injunction to 'increase and multiply' that God himself addressed to Adam and Eve. It was likely due to the aggravating circumstance of blasphemy that his punishment was particularly severe when compared to similar cases, eventually resulting in five years' imprisonment.<sup>69</sup>

From the sixteenth century on, the critique of Christian sexual prescriptions regulating sexuality played a relevant role in radical philosophical and political thinking, and was used in an unprecedented way as a tool to question the authority of the churches and, in a broader sense, of institutionalized religions. These elitist intellectual attitudes had their counterpart in an increasing popular opposition to the narrow-minded approach of the Christian confessions towards sexual pleasure. These forms of confrontation can be interpreted as a long-term underground stream of resistance against – as well as an attempt to fix – the 'anomaly' represented by sexual desire within the wider frame of Christian 'emotional regimes'.<sup>70</sup>

Merging the study of sexuality and emotions opens up manifold opportunities for historical research. In this chapter, I have highlighted only a few possibilities, in the hope that further studies will be carried out in the future. From the perspective of the history of sexuality, working on emotions has revealed how homosexual love is a topic worth studying beyond the cultures of learned elites. A focused analysis of emotional terms like 'falling in love' and 'speaking in loving terms' in judicial records proves that homosexual relationships could go far beyond the mere repetition of emotionless sexual acts, although that should not encourage a return to the sterile and now-outdated debate on 'acts' and 'identities'. Furthermore, how the sense of self was constructed through affiliation to groups of belonging is better understood when we focus on the relations between practices and emotions. Homoerotic subcultures had their own rituals and jargons that played a role in shaping the self-perception and social identity of those involved in them.

Conversely, reflecting on transgressive sexuality sheds new light on our broader understanding of premodern emotions, how they were regulated, encouraged or

repressed. In interpreting homoerotic love, I have shifted the attention from the vocabulary of friendship to that of familial relationships. This shift allows us to understand the extent to which, in popular environments, proscribed and normative sexualities were inextricably entangled, and provides at the same time further proof that family itself was not necessarily a ‘low-emotion’ social institution at that time. Finally, we have seen how the re-evaluation of marriage that occurred after the Reformation and affected both the Protestant and Catholic world also impacted the way in which society and institutions dealt with sexual transgressions, putting any form of non-marital relationship and unproductive sexual intercourse outside the spectrum of social acceptability. This change, however, planted the seed of a reactive discourse that co-opted sexual transgressions within a broader critique of the hypocrisies and fallacies of revealed religions and society on the whole. I suggest that this historical turn needs to be contextualized in the long-term perspective of Christian understandings and regulation of emotions. As long as sexual abstinence and marital status were radically opposed, more room was left for negotiations with emotional and sexual experiences that took place out of wedlock. The more marriage was dignified, and along with that some positive role recognized for marital sex, the less other expressions of desire and affection could any longer be accepted by society.

### Acknowledgements

This chapter synthesizes some of the conclusions drawn by the author in a forthcoming monograph: U. Grassi, *Sodomia e omosessualità. Persecuzioni, affetti, pratiche sociali (V–XVIII sec.)*, Rome: Carocci, 2019. The chapter has been written as part of the Marie Skłodowska Curie Action Project SPACES, n. 795514 (University of Verona/University of Maryland) funded by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, and in cooperation (without funding) with the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, University of Western Australia.

### Notes

- 1 The collection of legal treatises issued by order of Justinian (*Corpus Iuris Civilis*), however, was the result of a long gestation. Religious injunctions and criminal regulation had already started to conflate in earlier Roman law. See E. Cantarella, *Bisexuality in the Ancient World*, trans. C. O’Cuilleain, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992, pp. 142–5; 173–86. On the Justinian codes see D. Masini, ‘Il diritto penale nelle Novelle di Giustiniano’, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Padova, 2008. Although methodologically questionable, John Boswell’s pioneering work is still a landmark: J. Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1980. For an updated introduction to ancient times up to early Christianity see T.K. Hubbard (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Sexualities*, Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014.
- 2 Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, Homosexuality*; M. Goodich, *The Unmentionable Vice: Homosexuality in the Later Medieval Period*, Santa Barbara, CA: Ross-Erikson, 1979.
- 3 See note 20 below.
- 4 Carlo Ginzburg’s reflections on this subject are still enlightening: C. Ginzburg, ‘The inquisitor as an anthropologist’, in C. Ginzburg, *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method*, trans. J. and A.C. Tedeschi, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989, pp. 156–64.

- 5 Among others see J.J. Alves Dias, 'Prohibited sex in Portugal in the sixteenth century: an approach', in H. Johnson and F.A. Dutra (eds), *Pelo Vaso Traseiro. Sodomy and Sodomites in Luso-Brazilian History*, Tucson, AZ: Fenestra Books, 2007, pp. 49–61.
- 6 F. Alfieri, 'Impossibili unioni di uguali. L'amore fra donne nel discorso teologico e giuridico (secoli XVI–XVIII)', *Dimensioni e problemi della ricerca storica* 2, 2012, 105–25; V. Traub, 'The (in)significance of "lesbian" desire', in J. Goldberg (ed.), *Queering the Renaissance*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994, pp. 61–83.
- 7 L. Crompton, 'The myth of lesbian impunity: capital laws from 1270 to 1791', *Journal of Homosexuality* 6:1–2, 1981, 11–25.
- 8 J.M. Bennett, *History Matters: Patriarchy and the Challenge of Feminism*, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006, pp. 108–27; H. Puff, 'Female sodomy: the trial of Katherina Hetzeldorfer (1477)', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 30:1, 2000, 41–61.
- 9 Bennett, *History Matters*. See also: H. Puff, 'Same sex possibilities', in J.M. Bennett and R.M. Karras (eds), *Women and Gender in Medieval Europe*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 379–95.
- 10 A. Rich, 'Compulsory heterosexuality and lesbian existence', *Signs* 5:4, 1980, 631–60; L. Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love between Women from the Renaissance to the Present*, New York: Morrow, 1981.
- 11 M. Vicinus, *Intimate Friends: Women Who Loved Women, 1778–1928*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004.
- 12 E. Donoghue, *Passions between Women: British Lesbian Culture 1668–1801*, New York: Harper Collins, 1993.
- 13 V. Traub, *The Renaissance of Lesbianism in Early Modern England*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- 14 For an overview of this historiography see M. Vicinus, 'The history of lesbian history', *Feminist Studies* 38:3, 2012, 566–96.
- 15 A. Bray, *The Friend*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003; H. Puff, 'After the history of (male) homosexuality', in S. Spector, H. Puff and D. Herzog (eds), *After the History of Sexuality: German Genealogies with and beyond Foucault*, New York: Berghahn Press, 2012.
- 16 H. Puff, *Sodomy in Reformation Germany and Switzerland: 1440–1600*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003, pp. 70–1.
- 17 A well-established historiographic interpretation has opposed a premodern paradigm, in which sodomy was simply considered a forbidden act, to a new model that has emerged since the nineteenth-century medicalization of homosexual behaviours. Homosexuality (a term coined in 1869) would at that point have become an identity. This strong thesis was inspired by Michel Foucault's reflections in *The Will to Knowledge*, the first volume of his *History of Sexuality*. Foucault described the way in which new sciences such as sexology, psychology and psychoanalysis contributed to the creation of the idea of 'sexual identity' as a fundamental category for constituting and understanding the 'self'. In this context, sodomy, previously 'a category of forbidden acts', became an identity, tantamount to a kind of 'interior androgyny, a hermaphroditism of the soul' (M. Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge*, trans. R. Hurley, London: Penguin, 1998, p. 43; the original French text, *La Volonté de Savoir*, was first published in 1976). Foucault himself partially reconsidered his positions (C. Dinshaw, 'Touching on the past', in M. Kuefler (ed.), *The Boswell Thesis: Essays on Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2006, pp. 57–73; see also D. Eribon, *Réflexions sur la question gay*, Paris: Fayard, 1999). Historians have largely revised this thesis (see, for instance, Spector, Puff and Herzog, *After the History of Sexuality*). The focus on emotions reinforces the notion that long before the medical creation of sexual identities, the expression of homosexual desire went well beyond the mechanical reiteration of sexual acts.
- 18 M. Scheer, 'Are emotions a kind of practice (and is that what makes them have a history)?: A Bourdieuan approach to understanding emotions', *History and Theory* 51, 2012, 192–220.
- 19 B.-U. Hergemöller, *Sodom and Gomorrah: On the Everyday Reality and Persecution of Homosexuals in the Middle Ages*, trans. J. Phillips, London: Free Associations Books, 2001, pp. 39–65. For a comparative perspective: K. Gerard and G. Hekma (eds), *The Pursuit of Sodomy: Male Homosexuality in Renaissance and Enlightenment Europe*, New York: Harrington Park Press,



1989. On Florence: M.J. Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships. Homosexuality and Male Culture in Renaissance Florence*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. On Venice: G. Ruggiero, *The Boundaries of Eros: Sex Crime and Sexuality in Renaissance Venice*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1985; and G. Martini, *Il vizio nefando nella Venezia del Seicento. Aspetti sociali e repressione di giustizia*, Rome: Jouvence, 1988. On Spain: R. Carrasco, *Inquisición y represión sexual en Valencia. Historia de los sodomitas (1565–1785)*, Barcelona: Laertes, 1985; F. Garza Carvajal, *Butterflies Will Burn: Prosecuting Sodomites in Early Modern Spain and Mexico*, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2003; T.A. Mantecón Movellan, 'Los mocitos de Galindo: sexualidad contra natura, culturas proscritas y control social en la temprana edad moderna', in T.A. Mantecón Movellan (ed.), *Bajtín y la historia de la cultura popular*, Santander: Ediciones de la Universidad de Cantabria, 2008, pp. 209–40; C. Berco, *Sexual Hierarchies, Public Status: Men, Sodomy and Society in Spain's Golden Age*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007. On Germany, besides the aforementioned Hergemöller, see M.R. Boes, 'On trials for sodomy in early modern Germany', in T. Betteridge (ed.), *Sodomy in Early Modern Europe*, Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2001, pp. 27–45. On Switzerland: Puff, *Sodomy*, and W. Naphy, 'Sodomy in early modern Geneva: various definitions, diverse verdicts', in Betteridge, *Sodomy in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 94–111.
- 20 On dress codes see P. de León, *Grandeza y miseria en Andalucía. Testimonio de una encrucijada histórica (1578–1616)*, ed. P. Herrera Puga, Granada: Facultad de Teología, 1981, p. 435; in the colonial world: F. Molina, 'Los sodomitas virreinales: entre sujeto jurídicos y especie', *Anuario de Estudios Americanos* 67:1, 2010, 23–52 (p. 44).
- 21 Scheer, 'Are emotions a kind of practice'.
- 22 'Enamorarse', 'decir amores', 'requerir amores', 'haciéndose fiestas y amores'. Carrasco, *Inquisición y represión sexual*, p. 102.
- 23 D. Kambasković, 'Love', in S. Broomhall (ed.), *Early Modern Emotions: An Introduction*, London: Routledge, 2017, pp. 53–6.
- 24 'Mujer mía – Marido mío – Estáte quieto y ensancha las piernas – Sí esté bien [. . .] ya está dentro'. AHN, Inq., lib. 940, fol. 307<sup>r</sup> sq. (1633), cited in Carrasco, *Inquisición y represión sexual*, p. 101.
- 25 M. Daumas, 'Cœurs vaillants et cœurs tendres: l'amitié et l'amour à l'époque moderne', in G. Vigarello (ed.), *Histoire des émotions. 1. De l'Antiquité aux Lumières*, Paris: Seuil, 2016, pp. 333–50 (pp. 345–50).
- 26 K. Barclay, 'Marriage', in Broomhall, *Early Modern Emotions*, pp. 217–19 (p. 218).
- 27 S. Ozment, *Ancestors: The Loving Family in Old Europe*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001. The founders of the historiographical thesis that familial affection is a modern construct are: P. Ariès, *L'Enfant et la vie familiale sous l'Ancien Régime*, Paris: Plon, 1960; and L. Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500–1800*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977.
- 28 B. Taylor, 'Feminists versus gallants: manners and morals in Enlightenment Britain', in S. Knott and B. Taylor (eds), *Women, Gender and Enlightenment*, Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave, 2005, pp. 30–52.
- 29 Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, p. 108.
- 30 'tantas caricias i puterías como si el fuera una doncella'. AHN, Inq., leg. 840, n° 50, 1625; *ibid.*, leg. 844, n° 3, 1572; *ibid.*, leg. 550, n° 17, cited in Carrasco, *Inquisición y represión sexual*, pp. 107–8.
- 31 'tiene ordinaria costumbre de hablar muy afeminadamente e imitar las cosas de mujeres e así le tienen puesto por nombre la Pizarra'. AHN, Inq., leg. 844, n° 3, 1572, cited in Carrasco, *Inquisición y represión sexual*, p. 135.
- 32 Garza Carvajal, *Butterflies Will Burn*; S. Gruzinski, 'The ashes of desire: homosexuality in mid-seventeenth-century New Spain', in P. Sigal (ed.), *Infamous Desire: Male Homosexuality in Colonial Latin America*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003, pp. 197–214.
- 33 de León, *Grandeza y miseria en Andalucía*, pp. 435–7; Garza Carvajal, *Butterflies Will Burn*, pp. 68–71.
- 34 AHN, Inq., leg. 550, exp. 17 (fols not numbered).
- 35 Luis Coxet defended himself by reporting that the accuser had told another witness, 'how I crave to send two Moriscos to the stake' ('Que deseo tengo de hazer quemar dos moriscos').

- AHN, Inquisición, leg. 550, exp. 17, defense of Luis Coxet. Sexuality played a crucial role in conflictual relationships between faiths in the Mediterranean area. From a normative perspective, it was used to reinforce boundaries, but sexual transgressions often facilitated cultural crossings. See D. Nirenberg, 'Religious and sexual boundaries in the medieval Crown of Aragon', in M.D. Meyerson and E.D. English (eds), *Christians, Muslims, and Jews in Medieval and Early Modern Spain: Interaction and Cultural Change*, Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1999, pp. 141–60; D. Nirenberg, 'Conversion, sex, and segregation: Jews and Christians in medieval Spain', *American Historical Review* 107, 2002, 1065–93. See also S. Barton, *Conquerors, Brides, and Concubines: Interfaith Relations and Social Power in Medieval Iberia*, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015; R.J. Zorghi, *Pluralism in the Middle Ages: Hybrid Identities, Conversion, and Mixed Marriages in Medieval Iberia*, London: Routledge, 2012; S.F. Kruger, 'Conversion and medieval sexual, religious and racial categories', in K. Lochrie, P. McKracken and J. Schultz (eds), *Constructing Medieval Sexuality*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1997, pp. 158–78. On the early modern period: E. Dursteler, *Renegade Women: Gender, Identity, and Boundaries in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011. For a specific focus on homosexuality: U. Grassi and G. Marocchi (eds), *Le trasgressioni della carne. Il desiderio omosessuale nel mondo islamico e cristiano, secc. XII–XX*, Rome: Viella, 2015.
- 36 Barclay, 'Marriage', pp. 218–19. See also K. Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power: Marriage and Patriarchy in Scotland, 1650–1850*, Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2011.
- 37 L. Mott and A. Assunção, 'Love's labors lost: five letters from a seventeenth-century Portuguese sodomite', in Gerard and Hekma, *The Pursuit of Sodomy*, pp. 91–101. Another collection of letters studied by Mott is just as interesting for the study of emotions: L. Mott, 'My pretty boy: love letters from a sodomite friar, Lisbon (1690)', in Johnson and Dutra, *Pelo Vaso Traseiro*, pp. 231–61.
- 38 S. Velasco, 'How to spot a lesbian in the early modern Spanish world', in E.L. MacCallum and M. Tuhkanen (eds), *The Cambridge History of Gay and Lesbian Literature*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014, pp. 179–96 (pp. 184–6).
- 39 W.M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- 40 See D.S. Bailey, *Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition*, London: Longmans, 1955; G.W. Olsen, *Of Sodomites, Effeminate, Hermaphrodites, and Androgynes: Sodomy in the Age of Peter Damian*, Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2011; M.D. Jordan, *The Invention of Sodomy in Christian Theology*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1997; and Goodich, *The Unmentionable Vice*.
- 41 On Florence: Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*. On Venice: Ruggiero, *Boundaries of Eros*; Martini, *Il vizio nefando*. On Lucca: U. Grassi, *L'Offizio sopra l'Onestà. Il controllo della sodomia nella Lucca del Cinquecento*, Milan: Mimesis, 2014.
- 42 O. Niccoli, *La vita religiosa nell'Italia moderna. Secoli XV–XVIII*, Rome: Carocci, 2008, pp. 42–5. On the social meaning of religion between the late Middle Ages and the early modern period see J. Bossy, *Christianity in the West, 1400–1700*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985. On rituals in urban public life see R.C. Trexler, *Church and the Community 1200–1600*, Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1987; R.C. Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*, New York: Cornell University Press, 1980; on brotherhoods: N. Terpstra, A. Prosperi and S. Pastore (eds), *Faith's Boundaries: Laity and Clergy in Early Modern Confraternities*, Turnhout: Brepols, 2013.
- 43 This paragraph draws upon Grassi, *Offizio*, pp. 65–73.
- 44 J. Rossiaud, *Medieval Prostitution*, trans. L.G. Cochrane, New York: Blackwell, 1988; see also M. Berengo, *L'Europa delle città. Il volto della società urbana europea tra medioevo ed età moderna*, Turin: Einaudi, 1999, pp. 638–45; R.C. Trexler, 'La Prostitution florentine au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle. Patronages et clientèle', *Annales, E.S.C.* 36, 1981, 983–1015.
- 45 D. Lombardi, *Storia del matrimonio. Dal medioevo a oggi*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2008, pp. 57–71; D. Herlihy and C. Klapisch-Zuber, *I toscani e le loro famiglie. Uno studio del catasto fiorentino del 1427* (1978), trans. M. Bensi, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1988, pp. 533–67.
- 46 E. Crouzet-Pavan, *Un fiore del male. I giovani nelle società urbane italiane (secoli XIV–XV)*, in G. Levi and J.-C. Schmitt (eds), *Storia dei Giovani*, vol. 1: *Dall'antichità all'età moderna*, Rome:

- Laterza, 1994, pp. 211–77. On the relation between citizenship, age/gender and dynamics of exclusion/inclusion in urban societies see also E. Canepari, ‘Civic identity, “juvenile” status and gender in sixteenth-century Italian towns’, in D. Simonton (ed.), *The Routledge History Handbook of Gender and the Urban Experience*, London: Routledge, 2017, pp. 182–94.
- 47 Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, pp. 148–91.
- 48 On the Protestant world see: D. MacCulloch, *Reformation: Europe’s House Divided 1490–1700*, London: Allen Lane, 2003; and U. Rublack, *Reformation Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. On Catholic Europe see: R.P.-C. Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal, 1540–1770*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- 49 T. Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions: The Creation of a Secular Psychological Category*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- 50 *Ibid.*, pp. 1–25.
- 51 R. Sorabji, ‘Augustine on lust and will’, in R. Sorabji (ed.), *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002, pp. 400–18.
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- 53 Augustine, *De bono coniugali*, 5.5. In Lamberigts, ‘A critical evaluation’, p. 181.
- 54 Lamberigts, ‘A critical evaluation’, p. 185.
- 55 *Ibid.*, pp. 176–77. See U. Grassi, ‘Il frutto proibito. Eresia, peccato originale ed emozioni nell’Italia moderna’, in F. Alfieri and V. Lagoia (eds), ‘*Infami macchie*. Sessualità maschili e indisciplinazione fra XVII e XVIII secolo’, Roma: Viella, 2018, pp. 51–86.
- 56 M. Wiesner-Hanks, *Christianity and Sexuality in the Early Modern World: Regulating Desire, Reforming Practice*, London: Routledge, 2000, pp. 62–3.
- 57 I use the adjective ‘Protestant’ to refer to the Protestant confessions that were eventually recognized as state religions.
- 58 Wiesner-Hanks, *Christianity and Sexuality*, pp. 60–140; D. Lombardi, *Storia del matrimonio. Dal medioevo a oggi*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 2008, pp. 83–171.
- 59 MacCulloch, *Reformation*, p. 613.
- 60 Wiesner-Hanks, *Christianity and Sexuality*, pp. 67–72.
- 61 *Ibid.*, pp. 86–87, 124–6. This also occurred in England: MacCulloch, *Reformation*, pp. 634–5.
- 62 Death penalty rates increased in Spain and Portugal: Carrasco, *Inquisición y represión sexual*; L. Mott, ‘*Justitia et misericordia*: the Portuguese Inquisition and the repression of the nefarious sin of sodomy’, in Johnson and Dutra, *Pelo Vaso Traseiro*, pp. 63–104. In Italy the number of trials quantitatively decreased, but qualitatively the crime was treated overall more harshly. On the situation in Venice: Martini, *Il vizio nefando*, p. 56; on Lucca: Grassi, *Offizio*, pp. 153–73; in Florence severe legislation was approved but apparently not enforced: Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships*, pp. 233–5.
- 63 R. Canosa, *La restaurazione sessuale. Per una storia della sessualità tra Cinquecento e Settecento*, Milan: Feltrinelli, 1993, p. 117.
- 64 On the Protestant world see Puff, *Sodomy*, pp. 75–104.
- 65 This process of internalization and its deep consequences are analysed by Foucault in *The Will to Knowledge*. On the role of confession in post-Tridentine Catholicism see A. Prosperi, *Tribunali della coscienza. Inquisitori, vescovi e missionari*, Turin: Einaudi, 1996.
- 66 See A. Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*, London: Gay Men’s Press, 1982, pp. 63–80.
- 67 AHN, Inq., Sicilia, libro 898, fols 415<sup>v</sup>–416<sup>r</sup>, 426<sup>v</sup>.
- 68 AHN, Inq., Sicilia, libro 899, fol. 227<sup>r</sup>.
- 69 AHN, Inq., Sicilia, libro 898, fol. [no. illegible] and fol. 523<sup>v</sup>.
- 70 P. Cryle and L. O’Connell (eds), *Libertine Enlightenment: Sex, Liberty, and Licence in the Eighteenth Century*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004; R. Darnton, ‘Sex for thought’, in K.M. Phillips and B. Reay (eds), *Sexualities in History: A Reader*, New York: Routledge, 2002, pp. 203–21; L. Hunt (ed.), *The Invention of Pornography: Obscenity and the Origin of Modernity, 1500–1800*, New York: Zone, 1993.