Love between Peace and Violence: Not a Crisis but a Critique of Fidelity after 1000*

On Easter Sunday of 1027, King Conrad II of Germany arrived at Saint Peter’s basilica in Rome for the pope to consecrate him emperor. Bishops, lay princes and commoners had gathered from north and south of the Alps. As Conrad approached, Aribert, the archbishop of Ravenna made an unexpected gesture. According to a “commemoration” of the event, Aribert “usurped” (invasit) the king’s right hand and held it “without consultation” (inconsulte); in fact, the text emphasizes he held it “with violence” (violenter)\(^1\).

Although the assembly murmured disapproval, the king – allegedly distracted by the hubbub – allowed the Ravennese prelate to lead him into the church.

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* This article stems from a paper delivered in May 2010 for a panel in honor of Stephen D. White at the International Medieval Congress at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, MI, U.S.A. I thank all participants and attendees for their comments on the paper, especially Richard Barton, Tracey Billado, Frederic Cheyette, William Ian Miller, Kate McGrath, Brett Whalen and of course, Stephen D. White. My deepest gratitude as always is to Philippe Buc for his counsel, for sharing his own forthcoming work on violence and for the inducement to publish this piece.

1 Commemoratio superbie Ravennatis episcopi (henceforth: Commemoratio), in: Arnulf von Mailand, Liber gestorum recentium (henceforth: LGR), ed. by C. Zey, in: Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi, LXVII, Hannover 1994, p. 250. Arnulfi gesta archiescoporum Mediolanensium, ed. by L.C. Bethmann, W. Wattenbach, in: Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores (henceforth: MGH SS), VIII, Hannover 1848, p. 12 ff. Interpolated in versions of Beroldus’s royal codification of the Ambrosian rite (early 11\(^{th}\) century), the memorial survives with some alterations in thirteenth-century copies; according to Zey, Giovanni Boffa, the compiler of the thirteenth-century Beroldus “novus” insists on the Commemoratio’s presence in the original liturgical rule. See Commemoratio, pp. 237-239. Arnulf of Milan credits his knowledge of the coronation controversy to a “tome” prepared immediately after the incident: likely the Commemoratio (see LGR 2.5, p. 149). In certain manuscripts of Arnulf’s chronicle, these details are interpolated within a general assertion of Milan’s historical enmity with Ravenna.
But according to the memorial and also the chronicler Arnulf of Milan, the honor of escorting Conrad should have gone to the archbishop of Milan, also named Aribert². Milan’s prelate had good reason to take offence at this slip, be it intentional or otherwise, for he presided over the venerable see of Saint Ambrose, and had previously supported Conrad in his struggle to be crowned King of the Lombards³. Yet according to the Commemoration, Aribert of Milan showed great temperance in the face of the insult, even restraining his outraged fellow bishops – humility that sits oddly with contemporaneous accounts of his rule⁴. When King Conrad realized his mistake, he stopped and insisted on leaving the church so that he might re-enter with the appropriate dignitary – but the archbishop of Milan was now outside⁵. When crowds at the entrance made it impossible to leave, the bishops conferred (in concilium) and with “mutual consent” gave the honor to Milan’s suffragan, Bishop Arderic of Vercelli; Conrad agreed and the ceremony continued⁶. The bishops later assembled a synod, where they condemned the invasion by the Ravennese church and praised the forbearance of the church of Milan. The synod then confirmed: “in all pontifical dealings, [the church of] Ravenna may never put itself above Milan; and if it should presume to keep doing so, it would be subject to canon law, just as anyone deserves when he does not hesitate to rend the peace of the church”⁷. Thus, concludes the memorial, the person who had wanted to invade boldly instead lost shamefully⁸.

More than the event itself, the language used to describe it is remarkable: in the space of a few passages, the memorial invokes usurpation, subverted ritual, a claimed outrage of traditional rights, negotiation of honor and shame, and ultimately, resolution through council and common consent in the shadow of an abstract legal code. Even the partisan bishops become barometers of honor and shame, amici ready to goad or restrain their litigating friend as needed. In short, this is the language of the feud⁹. Historians of the feud have elaborated

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² LGR 2.3-5, pp. 148-149.
⁵ Commemoratio, p. 251.
⁶ Ibidem.
⁷ Commemoratio, p. 252: [...] in omnibus negotiis pontificalisibus Ravennas nullo modo in eternum se Mediolanensi preferat; et si forte presumperit, canonice legi subiaceat, sicut merito debet, qui pacem ecclesie scindere non formidat.
⁸ Ibidem. The imperial liturgical ordo of the Salians also seems to have been changed to match this resolution (H. Wolfram, op.cit., pp. 102-103). See note 1 above.
on the micro-technologies of power activated by such quarrels, the realignment of extant socio-political relationships and the appropriation of social actors as mediators, goaders and commentators. The story of the violent and peaceful Ariberts cooperates with their models. And as with many such occasions for the recalibration of alliances or the restoration of privilege, a hostile act – here violentia – provided the occasion for complaint10.

The only thing missing from this account of violence is an actual fight. Which prompts us to ask: what did violentia mean in the 11th century on occasions when an author chose to use it but no fighting occurred?

Modern historians who describe violence in the Middle Ages usually refer to more sanguinary activities than an elderly priest holding onto his king’s hand. The prevalence of complaints of violence around the year 1000 has conjured up the image of a collapse in law and order, especially in the West Frankish kingdoms: anarchy that demanded reactionary state formation11. Marc Bloch argued that outside invasions in the 9th century and the redundancy of formal judicial institutions during the 10th caused Carolingian authority in Francia to transfer gradually to rulers of “territorial principalities,” whose units of control were called pagi; by the middle of the 11th century, however, social order had returned in a “second feudal age”12. Georges Duby and Jean-Francois Lemarignier suggested a much more dramatic breakdown of order13: after 1000, military force began to organize on a smaller scale, its unit the *castrum*,

of Religion and Power in the Medieval Past, Ithaca 2003, pp. 3-68. In the *Commemoratio* description of the confrontation process, the companions serve as a foil for the character of the plaintiff; the archbishop of Milan showed temperance in the face of his opponent’s sedition by restraining them.


a stronghold that was held nominally by the territorial lord but was eventually taken over by its governor, the castellanus\textsuperscript{14}. Loose and overlapping feudal bonds replaced the personal ties that had previously allowed great nobles to restrain these subordinates\textsuperscript{15}. Historians who pursued this image of millennial rupture described how in the 11\textsuperscript{th} and 12\textsuperscript{th} centuries, castellans began to pursue “banal lordship,” a predatory form of local domination that flourished as the pagus declined\textsuperscript{16}. Thomas Bisson qualified this “mutationist” model: While the period after year 1000 had been one of violence and exploitation perpetrated at the local level, the years after 1100 saw a different and more extreme form of repressive lordship, as juridical authority and administrative institutions appropriated the disparate violence of post-mutation society\textsuperscript{17}.

In response to these assessments of increased violence, exploitation and anarchy in the central Middle Ages, Stephen White, Dominique Barthélémy and others have repeatedly asserted that the “tormented voices” emerging from chronicles and charters describe not an unmediated experience of power but only the concerns that clerical and warrior elites shared with one another: that is to say, lamentations over knightly misconduct comprise strategies in quarrels over land encroachment and ancestral claims on properties and persons\textsuperscript{18}.

\textsuperscript{15} G. Duby, \textit{La société aux XI\textsuperscript{e} et XII\textsuperscript{e} siècles}..., pp. 160-165.
\textsuperscript{17} T. Bisson, \textit{The 'Feudal Revolution'}, “Past and Present” CXLII (1994), pp. 6-42. In a recent overview of twelfth-century lordship, T. Bisson also argues for a distinction between medieval government and the exercise of power. Medieval intellectuals spoke in terms of the divine mandates of rulership, legal systems and political theory but on the ground, lordship expressed itself mainly through force and depredation (idem, \textit{The Crisis of the Twelfth Century: Power, Lordship, and the Origins of European Government}, Princeton 2009). T. Bisson thus reframes and laments the model of lordly power that O. Brunner identified for a slightly later period in Bavaria and Austria: a modular and socially pervasive structure of familial lordship (Herrschaft), a “total political complex” maintained by force (Macht). Unlike T. Bisson’s one-sided model of violence, O. Brunner argues that Macht informed all aspects of rulership: the lord’s repression and the complaints of tenants were equally enacted through warfare. See note 9 above.

Fighting – including fighting talk – made up one of several social processes in a system of constantly rearticulated friendships and political stances; descriptions of violence allowed litigants to access a variety of models of social justice, and adapt them to the political exigencies of specific contestations. Echoing Otto Brunner’s view that the basic unit of a medieval political complex was not the kingdom or the household but ultimately the feud itself, Patrick Geary makes such conflict constitutive, not disruptive, of society around 1000. When applied to Western Europe between 875 and 1200 (the boundaries of predatory lordship invoked by Bisson) dispute resolution models can thus provide an anatomy of the practice of lordship and complaint. White has invoked Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of habitus to suggest also that the fighting classes shared an outlook on feud with their clerical commentators. Political and interpersonal claims overlapped so that they partook of the same affective gestures and presuppositions of honor, shame and loyalty: the vocabulary of feud. We may take these arguments further to note that most texts describing conflict do so during or after attempted resolution, in a manner recognizable to all parties. In short, conflict texts are also consensus texts: part of the conciliation process rather than outside of it.

But the habituation of conflict within medieval society should not obviate the need to determine the contours of violence, and more specifically, the place of violentia among a constellation of fighting words. Sources as diverse as monastic charters, chronicles and chansons de geste, even romances, provide similarly structured accounts of conflict. In these sources, bloodshed, threats and robbery – our modern, normative understanding of violence – play the instigating role in a confrontation that results in negotiation and compromise. Yet significantly, in descriptions of conflicts that have been settled, the actual term violentia appears only infrequently, and sometimes as explicit absence. This suggests meanings for violentia far more technical and exceptional to

19 For influences on these rehabilitations of conflict as process, see G. Simmel, Conflict, transl. by K.H. Wolff, New York 1964 (German orig. 1908 and 1923); S. Roberts, Order and Dispute: An Introduction to Legal Anthropology, New York 1979; M. Gluckman The Peace in the Feud, “Past and Present” VIII (1955), pp. 1-14. Simmel argued that struggle (Kampf) was an integrative force in society, where mutual repulsion and antagonism created essential boundaries and solidarities that were a basis, and not the antithesis, of group unity. S. Roberts and M. Gluckman variously explained how in “face-to-face” African societies, temporary confrontations allowed antagonists to channel their animosity through ritual performance or mediating kinsmen.


21 S. White, Politics of Anger..., p. 152.
the negotiation process than assault or robbery. And the meanings become more accessible when deployed by texts from high ecclesiastical and avowedly polemical milieus. Northern Italy, the locus of the present study presents a backdrop of more formalized institutions than the “stateless” France so amenable to study of the feud. However, as White and Paul Hyams have shown, informal processes often take place alongside formalizing ones, in the “shadow” of law, kingship or priesthood. If anything, the counterpoint of legal fiction and feuding process allow each to become recognizable in terms of the other, exposing the semantic range and political limitations of a term that we now translate quite unthinkingly as “violence”.

Violentia did not spring as easily to lips of accusers as did words like robbery or assault. While the memorial of Conrad’s coronation uses violentia to describe Aribert’s actions, Arnulf of Milan contents himself with usurpation/invasion (invasit). It is a significant omission and consistent with Arnulf’s sparing use of the term. His History of Recent Deeds (ca. 1080) recounts the travails of the Milanese church until 1075, when the clergy and populace defeated a decades-long insurrection called the Pataria – a movement whose very name signified turbulence. Though replete with murders, torture, battles and theft, the narrative exhibits surprising parsimony and particularity in its use of the term violentia. Arnulf uses it to describe the wretched John Philagathos’ usurpation of the Holy See in 997, an act of “violence” that provoked hideous retribution from Otto III. Despite a pact of surrender, Otto beheaded Crescentius the patrician of Rome, had his wife raped and cut out the eyes, nose and ears of the papal pretender, leading him through Rome seated backwards on an ass. Having previously established that Philagathos was


23 LGR 2.3, p. 148.

violent, Arnulf’s only comment on the emperor’s actions is that they made “Rome quiet under Otto’s eyes.”

There is then no shortage of blood in Arnulf’s history, which also traces the rise of the Pataria, a group of knights and priests who defied the authority of Milan’s ruling clergy. Led by a deacon Ariald and a knight Erlembald, the Patarenes embroiled the city in a civil war from 1055 to 1075, in the name of church reform. They insisted that unchaste clergymen be forbidden from performing the sacrament, beat them up and attacked their supporters. Eventually, local mobs routed the movement, and killed and mutilated its leaders. Still not even sieges or attacks with fire and sword on either side will rouse Arnulf to use the “v” word.

It would be simplistic to say that “violence” especially the adverb *violenter* is never used casually or with reference to main force. For example, Arnulf also mentions a “violent invasion” in the purely military sense – but for the most part, he uses the term *vehemens* to describe forceful activity. *Violentia* meanwhile dominates descriptions of the will either undermined or subverted through deception of the senses; this includes elicitation under false pretenses of emotional states such as love or contentment. It reeks of blasphemy and sacrilege, as when the Paterene knight Landulf expelled from the church of Milan those who were singing psalms, or a Roman named Censius attacked Pope Gregory VII during a mass. In both cases force applies, and weapons such as cudgels and even swords are brandished but they are also brandished in instances that do not merit the appellation of violence. *Violentia* applies here because these are offenses to the sacrament.

The sacramental instances of “violence” evoke concerns that Arnulf shared with several contemporaries: of the will impeded, either through trickery or through force – association and friendship mutated into captivity. As with similarly placed clerical sources, *violentia* describes not fighting so much as false oaths and mimicry of sacraments: in other words, the misdirection of inter-subjective bonds. This includes illicit pacts, sedition, and duplication of

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25 LGR 1.11-12, pp. 133-135.

26 Most horrific might be the treatment of Ariald, who before being killed had his eyes gouged out, and his nose, tongue and ears cut off and stuffed down his throat. See LGR 3.18, pp. 193-194. Chroniclers Andrew of Strumi and Landulf Senior also describe the turbulent events. The former applauds the movement and grieves its felled leaders while the latter takes a view similar to Arnulf’s against the Pataria (*Vita Sancti Arialdi auctore Andrea abbate Strumensi*, ed. by F. Baehtgen, MGH SS, XXX/II, Leipzig 1934, pp. 1047-1075; Landulf Senior, *Historia Mediolanensis*, ed. by G. Pertz, MGH SS, VIII, Hannover 1848, pp. 32-100).

27 LGR 2.14 (but associated with attempted usurpation) and LGR 2.7 (when Archbishop Aribert of Milan forced the citizens of Lodi to swear oaths and accept a bishop they did not want).

28 LGR 5.6, p. 224.
sacraments: sometimes all at once. On successive Easters, the Patarene leader Erlembald destroyed the official church chrism, and then substituted an “unknown” one. He and his priest Liprand “usurped” clerical offices and began to baptize the unwary with the false chrism, thus captivating them in the Pataria’s errors – again violentia. In response to this “violence”, the townspeople killed Erlembald, stripping his corpse naked and denying it a proper burial. They then cut off Liprand’s nose and ears. After the retributions, townspeople gathered together, celebrated mass, and according to Arnulf, “they then went home in peace”²⁹. Violentia therefore begat and even demanded a set of aggressive and pain-inflicting activities that constitute a modern, normative understanding of violence; assaults that mimed and therefore exposed violence in this way became a form of peacemaking, ratified by the restoration of sacraments.

The sacraments were bonds first, ceremonies second – and they encompassed the oaths that lords and clients made to one another. Ideally, these bonds relied on love, a reconfiguration of tastes and emotions in concord with one another and with divine will. When they fell short of the ideal, sacraments risked becoming parodies of peace, chains rather than bonds. Defined as subversion of bonds, violence became especially palpable when the deception affected community formation. A priest – like Liprand – may substitute a false chrism for a true one, thus performing a travesty of baptism or ordination. In other cases, a layman masquerading as a cleric or a priest who had bought his ordination with bribes might by his presence alone prevent bread and wine from transforming into the body and blood of Christ. Despite theological arguments to the contrary, this raised fears that although ignorant, a congregation would be damned, having accepted a false Host and entered into illicit community.

Fears of a false sacrament preceded the Middle Ages, appearing dramatically in the 3rd century, when the fledgling church had begun to splinter in response to persecution. While on the one hand Christians apostatized out of fear, on the other courageous confessors of the faith accrued charismatic authority. Bishops quarreled about whether to allow the lapsed new access to the sacraments, even as former apostates solicited letters of integration (libelli pacis) from the confessors themselves. Schismatic congregations offered their own criteria of membership and thus their own sacraments: a false peace³⁰. In alarm, Bishop Cyprian of Carthage warned of infants who had unwittingly taken the schismatic communion, and could only vomit when given the true Host – he called this

²⁹ LGR 4.9-10, pp. 214-217.
“not peace but war”\footnote{31}. A touchstone for eleventh-century papal reformers, Cyprian feared the rise of mirror churches that overtly offered a different community and peace. But while in third-century North Africa these churches had a distinct bricks and mortar existence, in Western Europe during central Middle Ages, the church at least \textit{represented} itself as an organic unity – so mirror churches partook of the same set of signs and ceremonies, often within the same physical collective.

Unbeknownst to priest or worshippers, the same ecclesiastical assembly could contain two implacably opposed communities; even the community of the Last Supper had physically held one member of the devil’s brigade. Around 1130 Hugh of Saint Victor expressed this concern when he wrote that both devil and Christ offered sacraments and by means of those sacraments produced wicked and blessed armies\footnote{32}. The problem was that to the external gaze the means of entry into these bonds looked exactly the same; there was no need for a schismatic church. Whereas the individual appeared to be part of one collective via his or her acceptance of the common insignia of membership, the actual \textit{process} of consumption located his or her loyalties elsewhere – a shadow membership produced by an invisible mirror sacrament.

Among the clergy, fear of mirror sacraments stemmed from an Augustinian understanding of community: people come together through shared emotional and cognitive responses to external stimuli. According to Isidore of Seville’s widely read \textit{Etymologies}, this emotional link distinguished \textit{ecclesia} from \textit{synagoga}, and convocation from simple congregation\footnote{33}. But saints and sinners alike experience emotions. As the signs that activated community formation and also the bonds that maintained it, sacraments became a proving ground for appropriate emotional response. If they were misdirected, binding sensations like love could produce mimic sacraments: pacts rather than peace – shadow communities of conspiracy, heresy and demonic possession\footnote{34}.

These semantic kinships suggest that refined definitions of violence served as a means to discuss appropriate and inappropriate fidelity during the late 11\textsuperscript{th} and early 12\textsuperscript{th} centuries. In the 11\textsuperscript{th} century, resistance to such violence often meant asking subjects to renounce their oaths of loyalty, even monks to

\begin{footnotes}
\item[32] Hugh of Saint Victor, \textit{De sacramentis Christianae fidei}, 1.8.11, in: \textit{Patrologia Latina Cursus Completus} 176, 312B-C.
\item[33] Isidore of Seville, \textit{Etymologiae sive originum}, 8.1-8, ed. by W.M. Lindsay, Oxford 1911 (edition has no page numbers).
\end{footnotes}
break their vows: actions that left the perpetrators open to charges of violentia themselves. Pope Gregory VII, who supported the Pataria, also insisted that Christians reject the rulership of King Henry IV of Germany. His opponents accused Gregory of destroying peace, and compared him to the biblical King Zedekiah, who brought destruction to the Israelites, when he broke his oath of submission to Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. But for the Gregorian reformers, if the church remained peaceful under the supervision of a layman like Henry, then it had acquiesced to captivity under diabolical sacraments.

Violentia became the framework for accusations of illicit sacramental authority and justification for the abrogation of fidelity. In 1098, when a bishop was both autocratic and disobedient, his critics labeled him violent and a false sacrament. Otbert of LiŁge received his bishopric from Henry IV, allegedly against canonical procedure, and began to reform monasteries by replacing abbots who resisted change – not an uncommon practice in Lotharingia. Bereaved monks at Saint Laurence of LiŁge and Saint Hubert of Amdain clamored against Otbert, and their champions responded by invoking violentia and false sacraments. Rupert of Deutz, a monk at Saint Laurence compared Otbert to Judas in a pointed discussion of the false apostle’s inability to consume or administer sacraments. Others went even further and invoked violence outright. In a letter transcribed into the chronicle of Saint Hubert, Pope Urban II laments: “by the violence of the pseudo-bishop Otbert your


37 Written several decades after Gregory’s death, this sermon attributed to him still manages to capture the implacable pontiff’s resistance to misleading peace. Paul of Bernried, *Vita Gregorii papae*, 71, ed. by J.M. Watterich, in: *Pontificum Romanorum vitae*, Leipzig 1862, p. 513: *Satis est, quod hucusque in pace viximus ecclesiae [...]* Videmus pugnam diaboli in apertum prosilire campum, hactenus fusic squaloribus adopertum. The historical study that gets to the heart of these anxieties over captivity is still G. Tellenbach, *Church, State and Society at the Time of the Investiture Contest*, transl. by R.F. Bennett, Oxford 1940.

38 Both upper and lower Lotharingia had a tradition of strong bishops who shaped – some would say dominated – the conduct of monastic reform in the region. Notker of LiŁge had a hand in the tenth-century fortunes of the abbey of Lobbes; Adalbero I of Metz directed the reform of Gorze in tandem with its abbot Einold and cellarer John, while Adalbero III of Metz and Bruno of Toul (later Leo IX) gained reputations as “lovers of peace” for their interference in monastic affairs. For Adalbero III as *pacis amator* and *coenobiarum reparator* see *Gesta episcoporum Mettensium*, 49, ed. by D.G. Waitz, MGH SS, X, Hannover 1852, p. 543.

abbot is expelled; by the violence of the same Otbert a pseudo-abbot [...] is inflicted upon you”\textsuperscript{40}. The word “pseudo” here discloses fears of inversion and of deception of the senses. The monks’ vows of obedience were directed now to a false apostle, and their sacramental bonds had become submission to mammon rather than entry into Christ.

Urban developed the image of sacramental inversion by calling Otbert “a wolf [...] who has entered not by the mouth for your benefit but ascended from another place, so that he may consume, devour and squander”\textsuperscript{41}. This transformed a traditional rebuke – wolf among sheep. Otbert consumed and squandered, as against the Host, that absorbs recipients even as it nourishes them. Instead of entering through the mouth like an authentic sacrament, this bishop had entered from “another place,” most likely the anus and ascended rather than descended – reversal at both the physical and the spiritual level. The pope thus linked the imposition of illicit leadership (invasion) to captivity under a false sacrament, ultimately constitutive of \textit{violentia}. Binding his flock to himself only rather than to the plenitude of Christ, Otbert had in fact become a false sacrament in his own right. Within the same text, a statement attributed to Archbishop Hugh of Lyons makes the sacramental inversion explicit: before other bishops of the region, Hugh apparently accused Otbert of “trying to draw into his body those whom Christ would redeem through his own body,” thus contrasting Christ’s redemptive body with Otbert’s acquisitive one\textsuperscript{42}. When they conflated violence, invasion and inverse sacraments, Otbert’s opponents indicated not ceremonial pollution but exceptions to obedience and community. To counter such \textit{violentia} the pope instructed the monks to rebel, to abrogate their vows of obedience to the monastery and instead attach themselves to a new community that followed the Benedictine Rule and accepted the apostolic authority of the papacy\textsuperscript{43}.

Reformist accusations against “violent” rectors at the end of the 11th century owe a debt to discourse that both preceded and underwrote the Gregorian reform. We receive hints of the interplay between ideas and practice in that bloodless “violence” which allegedly took place at the imperial coronation of 1027. When Aribert of Ravenna grabbed king Conrad’s hand, he acted violently and invasively. But against whom? \textit{Violentia} produced a range of denied claims and outraged persons. If the plaintiff was the bishop of Milan, this complaint of violence was over stolen rights of precedence and (implied) patronage; if it was all the bishops, then the violence was Aribert’s lack of prior consultation.

\textsuperscript{40} \textit{Chronicon Sancti Huberti Andaginensis} (henceforth: CSH), XCII, ed. by W. Wattenbach, L.C. Bethmann, MGH SS, VIII, p. 624.
\textsuperscript{41} Ibidem.
\textsuperscript{42} CSH LI, p. 605.
\textsuperscript{43} CSH XCII, p. 624.
and usurpation of primacy – indicated by the hand-holding. But let us consider the king as a target of violence, since it was his hand that the archbishop held violently.

Conrad did not initially resist Aribert of Ravenna’s grasp, so he was not being physically forced. However, coercion did take place at a more fundamental level. The memorial tells us that the king had “lost himself” in the occasion and that it took a while for him to regain his sensibilities. These senses provided the necessary emotional base for the production of true fidelity, and their importance was exemplified by the fundamental associative ceremonial act: the Eucharist. The sacramental bond is actuated by love of Christ and community, a transformative experience that enables the recipient to delight in the consumption of flesh and blood. Even Christ’s disciples were unable to grasp the mystery of His body and blood when He first described what they would have to eat: they recoiled and he said, “Does it shock you? This is a hard saying.” Only in a proper reception of signs was incorporation possible in the communal body of the Church. Those who ate without understanding ate to their destruction. In the non-systematic sacramentology of the early 11th century, they may even be consuming something else. Misdirection of senses distorted will and understanding and thus captivated the participant in diabolical community, his or her fidelity conferred not to Christ but solely upon mammon.

Since King Conrad was literally unwitting and unknowing of the intervention in his ritual of coronation, he had subjected himself to an entirely different process. While the change in precedence might not endanger the coronation itself, it disturbed the traditional relationship between crown and Italian sees, and the concord among the bishops, thus sowing jealousy and deforming the peace of the occasion. In effect, like the deluded congregants

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44 Commemoratio, p. 251.
46 Intense scrutiny of emotional access to the divine corpus began a little after the period of the Commemoratio, and Peter Damian might be considered the forerunner of these speculations. Nonetheless, they were embedded in Augustinian notions of the sacrament and his and Gregory the Great’s insistence on the relationship between the senses, recognition and community. These attitudes had endured, especially in monastic circles, and undergirded the Radbertian orthodoxy of sacramental transformation so dear to eleventh-century clergymen. For a brief discussion of eleventh-century concerns about the integrity of sacraments, see U.R. Blumenthal, *The Investiture Controversy: Church and Monarchy from the Ninth to the Twelfth Century*, transl. by the author, Philadelphia 1988, pp. 75-76. Around 1090, in his refutation of Berengar of Tour’s sacramental heresy, Guitmund of Aversa took time to dispel some of these fears, and insisted that Christ’s body could not be so weak that a sinner’s presence could taint it or cause it to disappear from the ceremony (Guitmund, *De corporis et sanguinis Christi veritate*, ed. by L. Orabona, Naples 1995, 1493A).
of unworthy priests, Conrad would be undertaking his vows in bad faith – a false sacrament, regardless of whether he knew this or not. His misguided amity would thus attenuate the desired bond between ruler and subject, limiting it to a political association, doomed to eventual dissipation like all purely political friendships.

But all violence in our sources takes place after the fact, and thus sows the seeds of its own defeat. By exposing Aribert’s action as violent, the *Commemoratio* tags it to Conrad’s lack of intention, thus allowing him a way out. Helpfully, Conrad recognizes the deception before the actual ceremony, and refuses to proceed under a compromised intention, thus saving himself from violence. Thus Aribert’s violence while enacted, stops short of entrapment, and becomes intransitive, inherent only to him. Remembered in this way, in a consensus text, a shared victimhood binds Conrad to the snubbed archbishop of Milan and the other Italian bishops, while releasing him from an alternative bond with Aribert of Ravenna. Within a political complex of multiple claims and demands, an aggressive act like Aribert of Ravenna’s had produced a polarized relationship *vis-à-vis* the target of aggression: it had temporarily pushed all other claims into the background and opened up a bi-valent negotiation process. However, once aggression received the label of *violentia* a moral dimension entered the relationship, and other parties could get involved again. Targets and witnesses collectively bound themselves as victims of the *violentia* that had taken place.

*Violentia* produced a set of relationships and associations that endured as long as it was invoked. The historical record of conflict was a provision for the future, and all parties in the production of that record could appropriate *violentia* in order to provide for subsequent interactions. When *violentia* appears and is then maintained in copies of a text it is a pertinent claim about deluded love that for some reason remains relevant. It can signal a space beyond negotiations, or even license the target of violence to respond with force henceforth, free from accusations of treachery. The preservation of an older record of violence may suggest, as in the case of Milan and Ravenna, conflicts and jealousies as yet unresolved. Shortly after the coronation, Milan and the empire were at war; Conrad forced Arderic of Vercelli into exile. By the 1070’s when Arnulf wrote his account, Ravenna was the foothold of imperial power in Italy, and its archbishop Wibert had been preferred over others as imperial candidate.

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48 Writing, preservation and copying of records are as subject to theories of “practice” as are the interactions recorded (cf. P. Geary, *Saints, Scholars and Society: The Elusive Goal*, in: *Living with the Dead*, pp. 9-29).

49 See H. Wolfram, op.cit., pp. 131 and 293.
for pope. Milan, meanwhile, was the center of a controversy between papacy and empire. The original account of the disrupted ceremony – and Conrad’s acceptance of the primacy of Milan – remained relevant, as evidenced by thirteenth-century copies. The *Commemoratio* could be maintained as an assertion of historic rights and privilege within the context of ongoing litigations, its claim of *violentia* to be unleashed when all other negotiations had failed.

Churchmen who traded accusations of violence were discussing the same fidelities that animate accounts of conflict in monastic cartularies and even Romance sources. It is not enough to treat their language as simply the theological salvoes of Southern’s “men withdrawn from the world and speaking to a very few”\(^{50}\). The eleventh-century reformist pursuit of sacramental integrity only manifested a much broader concern with the imposture of fidelity and love. The formation of a peaceful bond was an act of will, made possible by a passage from aversion to love. What held true for theology did the same for the language of contract – because both communion and confrontation were sites for the activation and authentication of pleasure. Theologies of love thus share a dialectical relationship with habits of love, honor and treachery expressed in conflict narratives.

Our description of an invading, violent archbishop from northern Italy echoes calumnies of monasteries in Francia from the late 10\(^{th}\) to the 12\(^{th}\) century. Studying eastern and southern France, Stephen White and others of his school have pointed out that those memories of violence often emerged when rights of ownership and dominion were being re-negotiated\(^{51}\). We may extend the analogy: the aggression of Aribert of Ravenna might be seen as the first step in what Richard Barton calls “renegotiation of aristocratic relationships”\(^{52}\). Barton has discussed – to my mind – similar “violence” in the cartulary of Marmoutier. A landowner named Juhel of Marmoutier testifies that he almost laid violent hands on his serf Guarinus, before upright men restrained him by forcibly taking him elsewhere. Subsequently, however, Juhel and Guarinus made peace, at the behest of possibly the same upright men, and in the process they reiterated or modulated their mutual rights within the relationship of lord and servant\(^{53}\).

I should point out in that instance, *violentia* is invoked but never actually happened – it becomes instead a very present absence in text and memory, which makes it an element in the maintenance of ongoing relationships. By his own admission, if Juhel were to lay hands on Guarinus that would in fact have constituted *violentia*, a space beyond the rough and tumble of negotiation. In short, it would invalidate the relationship – as it now stands

\(^{51}\) S. White, ‘Feudal Revolution’ (II),..., p. 221 ff.
\(^{52}\) R. Barton, op.cit., pp. 153-170. See note 10 above.
post confrontation, and post recording. In a consensus text – one composed after the partial or complete resolution of a conflict – *violentia* may therefore still persist, denuded of its power to invalidate bonds but serving as a warning. The record of violence may thus arise from both or several parties, in order to delimit the conditions under which a loving relationship will become a captive one.

**EPILOGUE**

Anxiety to distinguish between superficially similar bonds of peace and violence generated what looks like a crisis but was in fact merely a *critique* of fidelity in the new millennium\(^54\). Love was not static in medieval communities; it propelled actors into diverse associations that “felt” the same but could be violent as easily as peaceful. An ordered society thus relied not only on the love its members shared but also on their ability to redirect the affections and aversions that served both marketplace and cloister. After the middle of the 11\(^{th}\) century, self-professed church reformers began to edit alliances to a single standard, to monopolize a strict definition of appropriately guided love, and make it the sole determinant between peace and violence.

The reformist obsession with true love and solicitude for the sacraments conveyed fears of betrayal, unfavorable alliance and captivity, anxieties that bridged the imaginative worlds of *clericus* and *laicus*. An image of true peace as a feudal alliance extended to the church’s most rarified minds. When Hugh of Saint-Victor distinguished between good and wicked sacraments, he called them the insignia of Christian and diabolical armies, one held together by bonds of faith (*sacramenta*) and the other shackled by carnal oaths (also *sacramenta*)\(^55\). In his *Speculum caritatis*, the Cistercian Aelred of Rievaulx spoke of peace as a condition activated by love (*dilectio*) that was “unambiguous”, that is absent doubts or jealousy\(^56\). These themes echo in Chretien de Troyes’s *Yvain*, whose emotional resolution Frederic Cheyette and Howell Chickering have compared to that of a feud\(^57\). Its direction determining a state of peace or violence in contract and congregation, love provided overlap between clerical and lay, intellectual and popular, even Latin and vernacular.

Stephen White ended an essay on “The Politics of Anger” with a remark that emotional shifts such as anger to love seem to have been “encoded as

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\(^{54}\) Cf. T. Bisson, *Crisis of the Twelfth Century*... (see note 17 above).

\(^{55}\) Hugh, *De sacramentis*, 1.8.11, 312B-C.


deeply” in the culture of Benedictine monks as they were in the world of warring noble kin groups. They were political acts subject to favorable or unfavorable representation\textsuperscript{58}. In fact, emotional shifts are encoded even deeper. A more intimate knowledge of lay feuding habits might disclose Christian theological resonances as yet unheard – ideas about love and community alien both to modern sensibilities and to the late Roman societies of the Church Fathers. As we confront present anachronisms in the study of medieval emotions and mentalities, we should consider that regardless of where they fall on our registers of mystical and mundane, clerical and lay, medieval attitudes toward peace, love and violence had much more in common with each other than with the visions of ancients and moderns.

\textsuperscript{58} S. White, *Politics of Anger*..., pp. 151-152.