‘The Rascal with his fire stick’: Gun Culture and Firearms Violence in Sixteenth-Century Bologna

Joe M. Tryner

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The University of Sheffield

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

Department of History

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Abstract:

While on campaign during the Italian Wars the French soldier Blaise de Monluc received news of the death of his friend, the Prior of Capua. Monluc related the end of this 'true servant of Kings' as a 'very great loss' made worse by the manner of his demise. He writes disdainfully of the 'Rascal', the 'Peasant' who struck the Prior down with his 'fire stick'.[1] In this brief description Monluc introduces both the violence of the Italian Wars but also one of its most iconic weapons – the firearm. Deployed in greater numbers on battlefields in this century the gun took on a pronounced role in battle stratagem. However, the figure of the gun-toting peasant threatened not only to overturn the established military order on the battlefield but also 'seemed poised to undermine if not overthrow the existing political and social order' beyond it.[2]

Using chronicles and criminal records from the north Italian city of Bologna as a case study, this thesis takes the backdrop of warring states and conniving princes of the Italian Wars to highlight the proliferation of firearms from the period's battlefields into civilian arenas. Alongside the development of popular gun cultures, the firearm was incorporated into established practices of vendetta, criminality, and honour-based demonstrative violence across the social spectrum. Often without being fired, the gun offered novel, subversive potential to contemporaries as it became a symbolic, empowering extension of identity and a loud, largely masculine medium of agency and communication on interpersonal and political levels as state, people and technology clashed.

[1] B. De Montluc, *The Commentaries of Messire Blaize de Montluc* (London, 1674, Early English Books Online Text Creation Partnership (2011) [https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo/A51199.0001.001?rgn=main;view=fulltext. Date accessed: 1st August 2022), p.118.

[2] R. C. Davies, 'The Renaissance Goes Up in Smoke', in J. J. Martin (ed.), *The Renaissance World* (London, 2008), p.401.

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Title & Declaration:

Title:

Full title of thesis: '*The Rascal with his fire stick': Gun Culture and Firearms Violence in Sixteenth-Century Bologna.*

Author: Joe M. Tryner, Department of History, The University of Sheffield, November 2023.

Declaration:

I, the author, confirm that the Thesis is my own work. I am aware of the University's Guidance on the Use of Unfair Means (www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/unfair-means). This work has not been previously presented for an award at this, or any other, university.

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Abbreviations:

BSBo – Biblioteca Seminario Arcivescovile, Bologna

ASBo – Archivio di Stato di Bologna

F. – Folio (plural ff.).

Vol. – Volume (plural vols.)

Square brackets in translations indicate an approximation of a word that has been abbreviated or is only partly legible in the original manuscript.

Introduction: Gunpowder, Firearms and The Italian Wars

The sound of the European sixteenth century was the crack of the arquebus. The same century witnessed the first assassination of a head of state by a gun, and the attempted assassination of Emperor Charles V with a blast of bullets delivered by a band of ambushing peasants.[3] The 1500s saw the explosion of firearms industries across the continent, with the earliest recording of perhaps the most notable name associated with guns – Beretta - being founded in 1526. The establishment of production centres also supported the development of novel economies and a host of attendant professions.[4] The penning of the firearm's history was captured by those shaped directly by their use. When Miguel de Cervantes wrote *Don Quixote*, for example, he expressed the concerns of an age witnessing the supposed downfall of traditional warfare and the knightly class with his own hand maimed by the shot of an arquebus.[5] Blaise de'Monluc complained bitterly of the gunshot he took to the face in his own memoirs, a biography of his life he claims only existed because of his forced retirement from soldiering.[6] Their eventual movement from the battlefield into civilian spaces meant that from the sixteenth century onwards 'everywhere a man looked, he saw guns'.[7] An anonymous writer from Perugia in the 1570s wrote that 'soon there will be no place nor state with personal security, given that every low herdsman or shepherd you meet in the countryside today had a wheel-lock arquebus over his shoulder'.[8]

[3] L. Jardine, *The Awful End of Prince William the Silent: The First Assassination of a Head of State with a Handgun* (London, 2006), pp.16-17; Y. N. Harari, *Special Operations in the Age of Chivalry, 1100-1550* (Woodbridge, 2007), pp.166-167.
[4] C. Fletcher, *The Beauty and the Terror: An Alternative History of the Italian Renaissance* (London, 2020), p.271.
[5] Harari, *Special Operations*, pp.166-167; M. Martínez, *Front Lines: Soldier's Writing in the Early Modern Hispanic World* (Pennsylvania, 2016), p.3.
[6] Montluc, *Commentaries*, p.399.
[7] J. R. Hale., 'Gunpowder and the Renaissance: An Essay in the History of Ideas', in J. R. Hale (ed.), *Renaissance War Studies* (London, 1983), p.407.
[8] Quoted in C. Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State: Gun Proliferation and Gun Control', *Past & Present*, 260:1 (August 2023), p.1.

Despite the dismay of contemporary writers, members of the period's elite began taking an interest in the gun as a piece of material culture. The wealthy began amassing private collections of firearms and artillery pieces, proudly boasting guns engraved and inlaid with artistic design, apparently regardless of those concerns from moralists over gunpowder's corrupting and diabolical power.[9] While this thesis does consider the role of artillery played on the sixteenth-century Italian battlefields as a key component of the experience of the era's novel violence, the focus remains on the portable firearm. The gun was most accessible and given its obvious practicalities, it was the firearm, not the cannon, that could be taken home after the war. While degrees of control over firearms differed from region to region, B. Ann Tlusty has argued that locals in the north Italian comune of Brescia carried firearms 'habitually and universally'.[10] A similar extent of proliferation is found in other areas of Europe at the same time – in early modern England, for example, Schwoerer points toward the 'genuine liking' that people began to develop for guns. This enthusiasm found expression in popular cultures and even in toy-form for children.[11] While Tlusty has underlined particular masculine aspects of gun ownership, Schwoerer has also pointed toward the appeal of guns across gender divides, suggesting that women 'of all social standings accepted firearms'.[12] Above all, however, guns were incorporated into discussions over the right to bear arms and as such became a 'form of social control from below', as citizens negotiated power relationships between populace and authority by force of arms'.[13] In summary, this thesis will show how guns were circulated by the Italian Wars and experiences of gunpowder violence. Using Bologna as a case study, it will show how they were integrated into established frameworks of criminality and violent practices in civilian arenas. It will demonstrate how guns offered new means of expression and defence in an honour-bound Italian society but also how they became tools of subversion, soon

[9] Fletcher, *The Beauty and the Terror*, p.274; pp.276-277.
[10] A. B. Tlusty, *The Martial Ethic in Early Modern Germany: Civic Duty and the Right of Arms* (Basingstoke/New York, 2011), p.273.
[11] L. Schwoerer, *Gun Culture in Early Modern England* (Charlottesville, 2016), p.175; p.4.
[12] Tlusty, *Martial Ethic*, p.265; Schwoerer, *Gun Culture*, p.3.
[13] Fletcher, *Beauty and the Terror*, p.271; Tlusty, *Martial Ethic*, p.6.

associated with a sense of individual or group independence. Finally, attention will be paid to the gun's integration into notions of masculinity and how the firearm added an extension to express that identity to a viewing public.

The following chapters draw on records that capture the interaction between people and gunpowder from various areas of Europe but remains primarily focused on the Italian experience and the experience of the Bolognese. There are several reasons for this. The most straightforward justification for this is the source base provided by the *Tribunale del Torrone* in Bologna, the remarkable nature of which is outlined below. The extraordinarily rich collection of judicial records offers detail on the lives of contemporaries interacting with a newly established judiciary and the processes of negotiation, challenge and contestation that occurred between central authority and a disparate Bolognese population spread across rural and urban holdings. While this thesis has the primary aim of investigating the experience of firearm use, it also shows how guns were deployed to underline these moments of contest between early modern Bolognese people and the Papal States as part of that history of state 'making' that is relevant to the specific conditions of time and place.[14] Bologna presents itself as an ideal case study in this regard.

The sources included in the following sections will also reference experiences from the French Wars of Religion and the Thirty Years' War. While the numbers involved in these conflicts vary, a study of the Italian Wars in particular can make major contributions to understandings of historical wartime experience and arms proliferation across the early modern period. As Stephen Bowd has pointed out, the civilian experience of violence during conflict in the Italian Wars 'was little different from that endured by their French, Dutch, or German counterparts later in the century' but the rich source base available for Italy offers another window into the uneven impact of war and its effects across gender, social class, and religious lines.[15] However, the fact that Bologna experienced

[14] J. Watts, *The Making of Polities: Europe, 1300-1500* (Cambridge, 2009), p.425.
[15] S. Bowd, *Renaissance Mass Murder: Civilians and Soldiers During the Italian Wars,* (Oxford, 2018), p.227.

relatively little religious division in this period somewhat differentiates the typologies of violence studied here. Nevertheless, in other areas of comparison, Tlusty's work on the martial ethic in Germany across the early modern period highlighted how civilians were encouraged by local authorities to own weapons amid the political context of small independent states. This is not too unlike Italy in the same period. The necessity for locals to be readied for defence during times of instability became tied to their citizen status and by extension the right to bear arms became not only necessary for the defence of their state but also of themselves, leading to problems of weapons proliferation that became a threat to more than just enemies of the state. Tlusty similarly noted the link between soldiers and the spread of weaponry, as will be seen in Bologna during the Italian Wars. However, Tlusty does not go into an in-depth study of gun use akin to that presented here.[16] In other similarities with wider European conflict within this period, the sense of popular agency and propensity for tremendous violence that characterised the French Wars of Religion is also evident in the Italian Wars. In this conflict and in Bologna the sense that 'the elites wielded power' but 'could not always impose their own will' places the popular classes in a 'crucial' role in the 'story of the civil wars'.[17] Mack Holt points towards the adaptation and reaction of the 'popular classes to the structures of power that restrained them' as being 'at least as important as the structures themselves'.[18] This study of criminality in Bologna speaks to similar themes of negotiation, contest and defiance but stands apart from previous studies by showing how the firearm became a sought-after tool to underline individual and group intentions. Finally, while also highlighting the shared experiences of gunpowder warfare across Europe in this period, the significance of the Italian Wars is brought into focus. This significance is underlined by Mallett and Shaw who argue that this conflict was a 'watershed' in the history of Europe and military warfare as a 'proving-ground for developments in the constitution of armies, in tactics and in weaponry' that shaped the experience

[16] Tlusty, *Martial Ethic*, pp. 15-27; 76-81;158-165.
[17] M.P. Holt, *The French Wars of Religion, 1562*-1629 (Cambridge, 1995), p.191.
[18] *Ibid*.

of Italian soldiers and civilians.[19] This is combined with the pervasiveness of military culture and experience that marked the lives of those geographically tied to the events of the Italian Wars. These factors, along with the founding of a significant and renowned firearms production base in Brescia, northern Italy, helped fuel the popular proliferation of firearms in Bologna, and across Italy. The Italian conflict, then, represents a major initial confrontation between a wider populace and guns, and a key point in the history of gun cultures, violence, and popular politics.

The Violence of the Italian Wars:

The wider Italian relationship with gunpowder and firearms began with the French King Charles VIII's offensive into Italy in 1494, thus initiating the six-decade conflict of the Italian Wars. According to the contemporary historian Francesco Guicciardini the onset of the Wars was 'sudden and violent', marked above all by new, huge armies backed by an arsenal of gunpowder weaponry more 'diabolical than human'. These armies could lay waste to 'entire kingdoms' in 'less time than it used to take to conquer a village'.[20] In the place of ponderous and often indecisive encounters was a newly 'fierce and bloody' battlefield, that more often witnessed the clash of larger, infantry-focused armies.[21] Civilians were not only pulled into service during this conflict but also witnessed their towns and cities re-shaped in reaction to the gunpowder salvos now directed against their homes. Here, the thick, low walls of the *trace italienne* featuring artillery placements and gunning platforms were introduced as a rapid redesign of medieval defences. Other than as soldiers in the fields, civilians were a significant part of the Wars' story, as they took shelter behind sieged walls or actively defended their homes against cannon and gunshot.[22] The reintegration of soldiers into wider society and the proliferation of gunpowder technologies from production centres and battlefields

[19] Shaw and Mallett, *The Italian Wars*, p.1

[20] F. Giucciardini, *The History of Florence*, (trans.) M. Domandi (New York/London, 1970), pp.88-89; F. Guicciardini, *The History of Italy,* (trans.) S. Alexander (Princeton, 1969), p.51.

[21] Guicciardini, *History of Florence*, pp.88-89; M. Mallett, 'The Transformation of War, 1494-1530', in C. Shaw (ed.), *Italy and the European Powers: The Impact of War, 1500-1530* (Leiden/Boston, 2006), p.5.

[22] On placing the civilian experience of the Italian Wars at the forefront of this period's history, see Bowd, *Renaissance Mass Murder,* (Oxford, 2018).

across the peninsula also meant that the encounter between people and the gun remained a common one, eventually becoming a regular, and often brutal visitation upon civilian lives.[23] When Luca Landucci, for example, made casual note of the 'continual sound of spingards' in his diary in 1514, he was already recognising a change to his city's soundscape, and a technology that had dramatically altered European warfare, national and local economies, urban topographies, and the lived experience of the Italian sixteenth century.[24]

Gunpowder and firearms found fertile ground to spread in the violence of the sixteenth century. In fact, a definitive aspect of life for many in this period was violence. However, the extent of that violence has been underappreciated in historiography, especially since it was given relatively little consideration in the writings of sixteenth-century historians. These writings played a key part in establishing a 'long tradition of historiography' that suggested that 'almost no one died'.[25] In recent years, historians such as Alison Brown have argued that Italian culture was fundamentally shaken by the violence of the Italian Wars and the defining humanist culture of the Renaissance era was thrown into a 'crisis of confidence' by the Wars' brutality. There was a bloodiness in this conflict that Brown urges historians 'not to undervalue'.[26] Francesco Guicciardini's observation that the wars now began 'instantly and most violently' is compounded by testimonies from the battlefields, such as Bernardino Prosperi's from the battle at Fornovo where he wrote on the mass 'killing without respect', on the soldiers 'slain like pigs'.[27] Francesco Gonzaga described the aftermath of another

[23] Bowd, *Renaissance Mass Murder*, p.3.
[24] L. Landucci, *A Florentine Diary from 1450-1516* (trans.) A. De Rosen-Jervis (London, 1927), pp.267-268; Schwoerer, *Gun Culture*, pp.95-96.
[25] A. Brown, 'Rethinking the Renaissance in the Aftermath of Italy's Crisis', in J. Najemy (ed.), *Italy in the Age of the Renaissance, 1300*-1550 (Oxford/New York, 2004), p.247; O. Niccoli, 'I morti, la morte, le guerre d'Italia', in G. M. Anselmi, A. De Benedictis (eds.) *Città in Guerra: Esperienze e riflessioni nel primo '500 – Bologna nelle "Guerre d'Italia"* (Bologna, 2008), p.121.
[26] Brown, 'Rethinking the Renaissance', p.247; the cultural impact is even seen in changing fashions according to Byrne, who suggests that Italian men began to copy the 'variously bearded' Spanish, French, Swiss and German soldiers who flooded into the Italian peninsula during the Italian Wars. They set new 'models of masculinity' and fashions for beards, for example, amongst urban males. J. P. Byrne, *The World of Renaissance Italy: A Daily Life Encyclopedia* (Santa Barbara/Denver, 2017), p.241.
[27] Guicciardini, *History of Florence*, pp.88-89; Niccoli, 'I morti, la morte', pp.121-122.

battle to Isabelle d'Este where, he claimed, the ground could not be seen for bodies.[28] The character of Ruzante in Beolco's sixteenth century play *The Veteran (Parlamento de Ruzante)*, described seeing only 'dead man's bones…as far as the eye can see' in the aftermath at the Battle of Agnadello.[29] Brown points specifically to the battle of Mordano in October 1494 as a telling moment in the novel bloodiness of the Italian Wars – here 'the French fought to kill' and news of the 'cruelty of Mordano' spread 'terror' across the peninsula.[30] While Guicciardini admitted that nothing 'is more uncertain than the numbers of dead in battle' he nevertheless saw 1494 as a turning point when war become 'most fierce and most bloody'.[31] Niccoli has argued that the 'fearful expanse of bodies' made a significant impact on experience and 'remained in the memories of contemporaries'.[32]

Other historians have also made efforts to uncover the visage of the early modern soldier. This soldier was the figure first and foremost initiated into the violence of gunpowder battles in the sixteenth century and, following their disbanding, they played a notable role in the proliferation of firearms into wider society. Idan Sherer's research into the men of the Spanish *tercios* provided a 'vivid illustration of what it meant to be a Spanish soldier in the sixteenth century in particular, and perhaps a soldier in early modern Europe in general'. [33] In particular, Sherer highlights the experience of strong comradery among troops, their organisation, and their professional and political awareness that argues against traditional generalisations about their lowly status, morality

[28] Niccoli, 'I morti, la morte', p.125.

[29] Niccoli, 'I morti, la morte', p.125; A. Beolco (Ruzante), *The Veteran (Parlamento de Ruzante) and Weasel (Bilora): Two One-Act Renaissance Plays,* (trans.) R. Ferguson (New York, 1995), p.7.

[30] Brown, 'Rethinking the Renaissance', p.247.

[31] Niccoli, 'I morti, la morte', pp.122-123; Niccoli has demonstrated the potential for contemporary battle statistics to vary significantly. For the battle of Agnadello, Zerbinati's chronicle claimed that 16,192 Venetians died against a much smaller number of French. Guicciardini put the number of dead between 6,000 and 8,000 for the same battle, while Luigi da Porto claimed it was 18,000 dead for both sides. Landucci relays reports of 12,000 dead in his diary, and Tommasino Lancelotti proffered another confidently specific figure with 14,508 dead, in Niccoli, 'I morte, la morte', pp.123-124; News of another battle at Brescia in 1511 brought numbers of dead varying anywhere between 4,000 to 18,000 according to Landucci in another entry in his diary, Landucci, *Florentine Diary*, p.249.

[32] Niccoli, 'I morti, la morte', p.125.

[33] I. Sherer, *Warriors for a Living: The Experience of the Spanish Infantry During the Italian Wars, 1494-1559* (Leiden/Boston, 2017), p.4.

and ineffectiveness on the battlefield.[34] Miguel Martínez's research into the literary output of Spanish soldiers campaigning in the early modern world has described the 'chaotic tumult of war', the 'agitation of combat' and the 'extreme material deprivation of life at war', as well as considering the role of soldier's writing in 'shaping Renaissance literary culture'.[35] This line of research has taken inspiration from the 'landmark' study of John Keegan in 1976, which attempted to view the experience of battle from behind the helmet of the common soldier.[36] In Keegan's construction of three infamous battles, that is Agincourt, Waterloo and The Somme, the author presented afirst-person perspective of the solder readying themselves for battle across three eras. Nevertheless, the early modern period was left out in this appraisal. This is surprising given the changes in the experience of battle as the confrontation between soldier and gunpowder became most common. This thesis asks Keegan's questions on personal experience in a similar manner but takes the confrontation between individual and firearms as its focus. It considers the experience of the violence on the early modern battlefield but also moves beyond the fields, as did the soldiers returning home after campaign, to interrogate the continued experience of firearm use, ownership, and conflict in the civilian sphere. In this way it plots a contemporary lived experience of the mass introduction of firearms in the Italian sixteenth-century.

As part of a move away from plotting battlefield events and from the 'flashy *condottieri*', 'bellicose popes' and 'scheming princes', historians such as Stephen Bowd have highlighted the wider impact of these wars by bringing the experience of civilians 'to the fore for the first time'.[37] By pointing to the 'striking casualty rates' among civilian populations, as well as the active experiences of civilian men and women defending against marauding troops, Bowd highlights how the experience of early modern war and its violence crossed from military to civilian spheres and constituted a significant

[34] *Ibid*, pp.256-260.
[35] Martínez, *Front Lines*, p.6.
[36] J. Keegan, *The Face of Battle: A Study of Agincourt, Waterloo and the Somme* (London, 2014).
[37] Bowd, *Renaissance Mass Murder*, p.3.

part of common experience.[38] This was one such channel for the adoption and proliferation of firearms discussed later. Lauro Martinez has also sought to establish a social perspective of early modern war. Again, focusing on the civilian experience of violence, Martines points towards the polyglot composition of contemporary armies and poor pay structures among other factors within a general culture of violence that led to a 'universal practice of preying on civilians'.[39] John Gagné has drawn attention to the personal experience of in the immediate aftermath of brutal war-time events. Within a period characterised by 'info-lust', the practice of enumeration of war-dead took on a new significance and began carrying a new 'commemorative freight in extending a cult of memory'.[40] Victory chapels on the site of battles took on significance not only as numerical records of the fallen, but for the locals left behind in the wake of such events they also embodied the qualitative commemorations to those lost. The traumatic impact of these events might be seen in contemporary reports of ghost armies clashing in the fields outside their town and city walls but are more clearly seen in records such as that from Hans Frisching of Bern who recorded the death of his son at the Battle of Marignano.[41] The boy 'died, struck by a pike through both sides… And at the hour of his death he was fourteen years, fifteen weeks, and one day old'. Gagné underlines the significance of such a voice 'rarely heard through the din of noble or humanist commentary: a civilian response to the wars that was both by and about the pawns on the Italian chessboard'.[42] This thesis aims to present a similar view of the common figures caught in a violent world but builds on the continuation of their experience beyond the battlefield and their relationship with these weapons of war.

Though undoubtedly exacerbated by the Wars, violence in the Italian sixteenth-century was nevertheless commonplace and informed a significant part of everyday life. Elias's theory of *The*

[38] *Ibid*, p.3; p.14; pp.79-99.
[39] L. Martinez, *Furies: War in Europe, 1450-1700* (New York, 2014), pp.81-82.
[40] J. Gagné, 'Counting the Dead: Traditions of Enumeration and the Italian Wars', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 67:3 (2014), pp.794-795.
[41] Landucci, *Florentine Diary*, pp.216-217.
[42] *Ibid*, pp.820-821.

Civilising Process has become an essential reference point for arguments over the decline of violence from the early modern period onwards, but it has also now become a common point of divergence for historians. In recent decades most have challenged the optimism of Elias's thesis and broken down the contention that the European world became less violent. Stuart Carroll, for example, has highlighted France's 'social and economic dynamism' and competing religious tensions as significant factors in increased levels of violence in early modern French society. Carroll also found that precarious authority of the early modern state was a structural underlier for the incitement of wider social violence – much the same can be found in the instability of the Italian peninsula in the sixteenth century, as will be demonstrated with Bologna.[43] Carroll also found that the *feud*, a phenomenon often associated with a medieval, not a Renaissance, mentality was in fact demonstrated and performed with stronger vigour than ever before in early modern France.[44] The vibrancy of *vendetta* in Italy in the same period will be demonstrated in this chapter, as will the prominent role given to firearms in these disagreements. While violence certainly plagued other areas of Europe, as suggested by Carroll, one of the clearest rebuttals to Elias's ideal is thrown down by the statistical and qualitative analysis of Italy. In fact, Italy's condition in the early modern period both resoundingly rejects the ideals of an increasingly peaceable western-European society and erases the lines of demarcation between the violence of a medieval and Renaissance world.

Violence in Italian Society:

The Italian sixteenth and seventeenth centuries witnessed a significant increase in homicide rates – the established means of measuring violence in a society.[45] While the general picture of European violence in this period might conform to Elias's theory – according to Eisner's survey of 380 estimates in 10 countries, the homicide rate fell from 41 per 100,000 in the fifteenth century to an average of 11 per 100,000 by the seventeenth century – available materials from Italian states of the

[43] S. Carroll, *Blood and Violence in Early Modern France* (Oxford, 2006), p. 331; p.333.
[44] Carroll, *Blood and Violence*, pp.15-16.
[45] J. Davies, *Aspects of Violence in Renaissance Europe* (London, 2013), p.2.

sixteenth century present a figure of between 73 and 32 per 100,000 over the 15th and 17th centuries, and between 25 and 55 per 100,000 at the end of the sixteenth century.[46] Remarkably high statistics for violence rates in Italy have led Dean and Lowe to argue that murder 'was normal in Renaissance Italy', it could take place 'everywhere, in every type of situation' and anyone 'could be murdered, from the pope to an unborn baby', perhaps even more remarkably, anyone 'could murder', from 'young wife to hired assassin'.[47] Violence in early modern Italy formed part of the daily experience for contemporaries, and crucially, informed popular cultures. Salzberg and Rospocher have investigated the popularity of 'murder ballads' in the same period, which were able to convey 'the evolving fears and preoccupations of Italians in an era marked by calamities ranging from war to economic tribulation, plague, famine and religious schism'.[48] Blanshei has highlighted an enduring 'culture of hatred' in medieval Bologna, and Enrica Guerra has brought attention to the compounding central role of 'legal homicide' (execution) by medieval and early modern states, which utilised the public realm to underline demonstrative state violence.[49] Popular pastimes across Italy incorporated violent practice, as Davis's study of the 'The war of the fists' (*La guerra dei pugni*) events in Venice has shown for sports events, while others have pointed to the enthusiasm for violent celebration during carnival and even religious festivals.[50]

Violence also played a social and political role in local communities according to the dictates of vendetta and enmity that influenced not only relationships between noble factions but also interactions on a smaller social scale. The practice of private justice is most apparent in windows of

[46] M. Eisner, 'Long-term Historical Trends in Violent Crimes', *Crime and Justice*, 30 (2003), pp.99-102; For reference the homicide rate for the 21st century is 1.4 per 100,000, Eisner, 'Trends in Violent Crimes', p.2; Davies, *Aspects of Violence*, p.2.
[47] T. Dean, K. J. P. Lowe (eds.), *Murder in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge, 2017), p.9.
[48] R. Salzburg, M. Rospocher, 'Murder Ballads: Singing, Hearing, Writing and Reading about Murder in Renaissance Italy', in Dean and Lowe, *Murder in Renaissance Italy*, p.166.
[49] S. R. Blanshei, 'Homicide and the Culture of Hatred in Bologna, 1351-1420', in Dean and Lowe, *Murder in Renaissance Italy*, pp.106-122; E. Guerra, 'Legal Homicide: The Death Penalty in the Italian Renaissance', in Dean and Lowe, *Murder in Renaissance Italy*, pp.269-288.
[50] R. C. Davies, *The War of Fists: Popular Culture and Public Violence in Late Renaissance Venice* (Oxford, 1994); J. J. Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe, 1500-1800* (Cambridge, 2001), pp.160-183.

time where 'the competing discourses of localized and state authority' clash in moments when 'rulers sought to enforce standardization'.[51] This was an intention for revenge that was 'widely viewed as legitimate' seeking either violent or more peaceful resolution, but the onset of the Italian Wars marked a period where the former became a more favoured solution.[52] Concurring with Carroll, Edward Muir's study of Friuli's 'Cruel Carnival' in 1511 suggests that violence and vendetta became worse during times of instability, which characterised the sixteenth in Italy. Such events also demonstrated the difficulties that urban authorities experienced in controlling their often-vast territorial peripheries – these being the stretches of countryside surrounding the urban centre of Italian city-states.[53] The political shake-up occasioned by the onslaught of the Italian Wars across the peninsula' patchwork of independent or semi-independent city states informed a breakdown of social bonds and a reliance on private justice that, conversely, often preferred a public stage. Elizabeth Crouzet-Pavan pointed toward violence's 'taste for publicity' in the close streets of Venice.[54] Scott Nethersole has investigated contemporary depictions of Cain and Abel, particularly in San Petronio in Bologna, and indicated that violent acts were often loaded with the context of intentionally chosen geographies. The representation of Cain and Abel in Bologna was placed clearly within the urban fabric of Bologna and deployed at a time when social disharmony was a 'pressing concern'.[55] The linguistic and cultural turns in historiography have, according to Jonathan Davies, underlined the importance of being attentive to 'the specificity of violence' in order to understand 'what violence meant in particular places and at particular times.'[56] There has also been a focus on 'the role of ritual, custom, law, and religion in limiting violence', and the typologies of violence,

[51] A. G. Madden, 'Vendetta Politics and State Formation in Early Modern Modena: A Case Study of the Bellencini-Fontana Vendetta, 1547-1562', Ph.D. thesis (Emory University, 2011), p.8.
[52] S. Carroll, *Enmity and Violence in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2023), p.69; pp.72-79.
[53] E. Muir, *Mad Blood Stirring: Vendetta in Renaissance Italy* (Baltimore/London, 1998)
[54] T. Dean, 'Eight Varieties of Homicide: Bologna in the 1340s and 1440s', in Dean and Lowe, *Murder in Renaissance Italy*, p.86; '…le goût de la publicité qui s'exprime.', E. Crouzet-Pavan, 'Violence, Société et pouvoir à Venise (XIV-XV Siècles): Forme et Évolution de Rituels Urbains', in *Mélanges de l'école française de Rome*, 96:2 (1984), p.915.
[55] S. Nethersole, 'The First Murder: The Representation of Cain and Abel in Bologna, Florence, and Bergamo', in Dean and Lowe, *Murder in Renaissance Italy*, p.32.
[56] Davies, *Aspects of Violence*, p.13.

which were left out of Elias's study.[57] Thomas Cohen's study of a murder case in Rome's countryside, for example, makes for tragic reading but does make interesting inroads in contemporary attitudes towards murder, its justification, or condemnation. Studies such as this offer a means of viewing such phenomena from the streets of early modern conurbations and along the paths of their rural communes, giving insight into the internal reckoning of contemporaries who acted violently, were victims of violence, or who witnessed its execution.[58] Mats Hallenberg has shown where cultural dynamics intersected with particular social and political conditions with consideration of violence and masculinity under the state in sixteenth-century Sweden. In this context, the men of early modern Sweden chose public action and violence as a means of asserting themselves during a renegotiation of 'power relations' between state and subject. Expressions of state power 'triggered' violence that was 'rational' and 'calculating' but closely tied to masculine representation.[59] A sense a similar relationship is expressed by the gun-toting men found in the court rolls of Bologna's *Tribunale del Torrone*. However, beyond the political classes highlighted by Hallenberg, those from the lower social strata caught in Bologna's criminal justice system also display an inherent understanding of the significance of demonstrative violence in public and contested spaces within this context. The Bolognese across the social spectrum, then, exhibited a similarly, expressive, dramatic, and violent masculinity within the context of a renegotiation of power relations following the arrival of the Papal States. Building from Hallenberg's findings, however, this thesis shows not only that the lower classes engaged in considered violence and masculine expression as well, but also that this this masculinity was formed around the adoption of new technology in the firearm. In the cases surveyed here, violence was underlined by the demonstrative aspects of the gun, which

[57] Carroll, *Blood and Violence*, p.5.
[58] T. Cohen, 'A Daughter-Killing Digested, and Accepted, in a Village of Rome, 1563-1556', in Dean and Lowe, *Murder in Renaissance Italy*, pp.62-80.
[59] M. Hallenberg, 'The Golden Age of the Aggressive Male? Violence, Masculinity and the State in Sixteenth-Century Sweden', *Gender & History*, 25:1 (April 2013), p.145.

arguably informed the weapon's popularity and utility to contemporaries within this particular socio-political context.

In recent years, the experience and practice of violence in the early modern world has been viewed through the gendered lens with greater consideration, particularly in studies of female criminality. Sanne Muurling recently pointed toward a failure of historiography to demonstrate the realities of 'justice processes on daily life, on the lived experiences and on women as important historical actors'.[60] Nevertheless, Muurling notes that a history of women's role in early modern violence is made more challenging by a lack of detail in sources given that contemporary authorities were prone to focus on male violence, and disregard women's actions and experiences given their supposed insignificance to the security of the state and the social fabric.[61] However, Muurling's study of early modern women's crimes reveals that 'women had a greater scope of action than is commonly believed', and that 'women, like men, were able to strategically employ justice to settle their conflicts'.[62] This thesis similarly shows that women were regularly involved in the quotidian violence of Bologna in the sixteenth century and regularly chose violence as a justifiable solution to many problems. They were also likely to demonstrate that solution in a public arena. Violence and its practice were a shared experience across the gender spectrum and was not the sole preserve of men in early modern society. Nevertheless, the discussion of gendered violence in this thesis will highlight the limitations of involvement in types of violence and in the weapons used. As such, it will show that the firearm had already been established as an overtly masculine tool – an association that persists to the modern day.[63] In sum, despite being undoubtedly scarred by the violence of the wars around them, violence and violent cultures were no less embraced in civilian life. This is a significant factor in the ready acceptance of firearms into wider society, since the gun now

[60] S. Muurling, *Everyday Crime, Criminal Justice and Gender in Early Modern Bologna* (Leiden/Boston, 2011), pp.2-3.
[61] *Ibid,* p.219.
[62] Muurling, *Everyday Crime*, pp.222-223.
[63] L. N. Wallace., 'Female Gun Owners: Differences by Household and Personal Gun Ownership', *The Social Science Journal* (2022), 59:4, p.601.

presented a new tool in the arsenal of violent implements deployed in sport, celebration, and social relations of early modern life. Nevertheless, the gun presented certain novelties to contemporaries that will be explored through accounts of their use in the archives and chronicles of sixteenth-century Bologna.

Bologna:

The northern-Italian city of Bologna presents an ideal case study to demonstrate the disruption and instability wrought by the Italian Wars. Formerly a Papal possession, control of Bologna was assumed by oligarchical rule in 1442 after a century of rapid regime changes and bloody Bolognese infighting. After 1442, the Bentivoglio family maintained a relatively steady control over the city until the invasion of Charles VIII in 1494. Despite an initial strategy of neutrality toward the ultra-Alpine threat, it is apparent that from the outset the *Bolognesi* were involved in the Wars' bloody reality. In August 1494, Jacapo Nadi wrote of the '48 squadrons' of soldiers lodged in the countryside around Bologna, including '500 crossbowmen and gunners on horse'.[64] In 1495 he wrote of a significant battle involving many of Bologna's men in which 'many people died'.[65] Soon after Cesare Borgia set his own sights on capturing Bologna and the attempt was followed by more bloody infighting between the city's prominent families.[66] In 1506 the city became the most important objective in Pope Julius II's grand 'temporal aspirations', culminating in the siege of Bologna in 1506.[67] Julius's entry into the city shortly thereafter alongside soldiers and the *Bolognesi* who had previously been

[64] 'Rechordo chome le gente d'arme del signiore ludovigo chome ducha de milan vene in lo nostero teren de beolognia adì 23 d'agosto 1494 y primi sono 48 schuadere alozono in susso ren al trebo de san zone e a san vidale e non feno dano niuno pagavano li suo' dinari a chi li deva de la roba….adì 28 pasò 500 balistriere e schopiteri a chavalo…', J. Nadi, *Diario Bolognese* (Bologna, 1969), pp.181-182.

[65] 'Altri chavalari veneno e dise chome aveano chombatudo per insino 12 ore onde vi era morti asae persone…e fu in susso le giare del taro tra parma e piassenza se dise yera morti di taliani e fanzossi più di 5000 persone de una parte e de l'atra messer anibale di bentivogli fe un sforzo chon li nostri bolognissi e agituò el marche[se] de mantoa che feva male...', Nadi, *Diario Bolognese*, p.197.

[66] A. Ferri, G. Roversi (ed.s), *Storia di Bologna* (Bologna, 2005) pp.175-176.

[67] M. Rospocher, 'Il papa in guerra: Giulio II nell'iconografia politica al tempo di Ravenna', in D. Bolognesi (ed.), *1512: La battaglia di Ravenna, L'Italia, L'Europa* (Ravenna, 2014), p.144; Julius II sought to control the city's symbolic, practical, and most importantly, strategic importance, C. Shaw, *Julius II: The Warrior Pope* (Oxford, 1993), PP.148-149.

exiled by the ousted Bentivoglio regime reignited party tensions and opened up new opportunities for contemporaries to pursue vendetta with renewed vigour.[68]

The imposition of control over Bologna by a relatively remote Papal State from 1506 and then again from 1512 contributed to a picture across Italy at the time, where a patchwork of city-states and rural settlements each espousing their own history of liberty and division left fractious communities, jurisdictions and competing local powers to be challenged by the aims of larger, central authorities. In the case of Bologna, this was the papacy in Rome. This sense of disconnection could be found in many areas of Italy and was compounded by the competition between city-states and larger powers.[69] Attempts to describe the political patchwork of Italy on this time have led to various models being proffered – as a general picture some have argued that this period should be imagined as two Italies, one feudal, one urban, or even a mosaic of tiles often tenuously connected to a common centre. For others, arrangements like those with Bologna after 1512 conform to a 'dualism' model, wherein the relationship between centre and periphery was based on a pact, an acknowledgement of the centre's executive power and a recognition of the periphery's liberties.[70] That often meant, however, that cultural and social differences between a centre and its holdings could differ significantly, adding to the inherent tensions in the relationship.[71] Elliot's variation suggests a 'composite state' where a central authority was able to exert influence over a distant, but largely independent community.[72] Despite the various potential models in place, Bologna shows that the relationship between the city and its new papal administration maintained a sense of dislocation between Bolognese society and its political system that goes some way in explaining the continued

[68] Ferri and Roversi, *Storia di Bologna*, pp.189-190.
[69] C. Shaw and M. Mallett, *The Italian Wars, 1494-1559: War, State and Society in Early Modern Europe* (Abingdon/New York, 2019), p.2.
[70] E. F. Guarini, 'Centre and Periphery', in J. Kirshner (ed.), *The Origins of the State in Italy, 1300-1600* (Chicago/London, 1995), p.81.
[71] For such an example see G. Cozzi, 'La political del diritto nella Repubblica di Venezia', in G. Cozzi (ed.), *Stato, società e giustizia nella Repubblica veneta (sec. XV-XVIII)* (Rome, 1980), pp.15-152; G. Cozzi, *Repubblica di Venezia e Stati Italiani: Politica e giustizia dal secolo XVI al secola XVIII* (Turin, 1982); Guarini, 'Centre and Periphery', p.85.
[72] J. H. Elliott, 'A Europe of Composite Monarchies', *Past & Present*, 137 (November 1992), p.50; p.64; pp.68-69

reliance on violent solutions and private justice. Important here as well is the place of weapons control within that relationship. Catherine Fletcher's research has shown that the development and attempted control of firearms is as much a history of technological development as it is a history of state development.[73] Attempts to control the proliferation of firearms went hand in hand with controlling the violence of contemporaries who sought private restitution of grievances by violent means rather than seek resolution by official state channels. While the *Torrone* court sought to curb the excesses of violence and wrest egregious levels of influence from the local nobility and bandit groups (often one and the same), levels of violence throughout the sixteenth- and seventeenth centuries continued to vary according to local political, economic, or social conditions. Current historiography has underlined the importance of this process to the history of the early modern state. Watts, for example, dismissed the 'old motifs of decline and transition' that earlier historiography used to plot the 'inevitable' development of the modern state.[74] In fact, the 'resistance and subversion' expressed in the reaction to government are an integral part of the 'complex and diverse' growth of the early modern state.[75] It was the combination of 'pressure from below' and 'design from above' that is seen in the Bolognese case, as the *Torrone* model interacted the competing agencies of a large and varied population.[76] This sense of 'interaction' is evident in the 'complementary rather than alternative' relationship between violence and litigation – both grew or declined in line with one another as useful tools to use simultaneously in social conflict.[77] In this way then, the challenges of the Papal States to corral the local nobility and the wider populace into its own model for judicial process and political power does not constitute a crisis of state development but a 'growth' and 'making' of social and political systems relevant to their own time.[78]

[73] Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', pp.3-37.
[74] Watts, *The Making of Polities*, p.13.
[75] *Ibid*, pp.424-425.
[76] *Ibid*, pp.425.
[77] Carroll, *Enmity and* Violence, p.14.
[78] Watts, *The Making of Polities*, p.425.

Chronicles, diaries, and criminal records show that tensions between Papal overlords, local nobles and Bologna's general population continued long into the later sixteenth-century alongside the raging of the Italian Wars.[79] In the same years though, famine, economic dislocation and factions afflicted the city. The desperation of the times is, for example, reflected in anxious reports from contemporaries reading portents in comments and witnessing angels brandishing flaming swords over the city.[80] According to the chronicles cited by Corradi, anywhere between 12,000 and 20,000 people died from famine and disease between 1527 and 1528.[81] These afflictions are found throughout the century – in Pompeo Vizzani's chronicle of Bologna the author claims that 'ten thousand of the needy' died in Bologna in the famine of 1590, and 'more than thirty thousand peasants in all the *contado*, even in the fields'.[82] In these moments of economic and political crisis historians have also found an increase in violent behaviours and criminality, as contemporaries railed against the failings of their state. Alessandro Pastore found just that in a study of the social impact of plague in Bologna in the early 1600s, while Nicholas Terpstra made the link between lawlessness and the destitution of the Bolognese sixteenth century – in 1540, for example, 'More criminals went to the scaffold' than 'in any other year on record in that century', barring 1585 when Bologna 'waged a determined campaign to flush bandits out of the Apennine hills'.[83] The experience of division stemming from and fed by the political and economic instability tainted the Bolognese experience for decades and manifested itself in, according to Rose, 'factional strife' that dominated

[79] Detailed examples of ongoing social and political unrest in Bologna will be included in Chapter 3's focus on violence in Bologna, but some source examples include Rinieri's contemporary chronicle; G. Rinieri, *Cronaca: 1535-1549* (Bologna, 1998); while many other examples can be found in L. Machiavelli's manuscript copy of the *Libri dei giustiziati* originally recorded by the confraternity of the Santa Maria della Morte, which listed the crimes associated with criminals sentenced to death across the century. These are held in the Biblioteca Seminario Arcivescovile, Bologna (hereafter BSABo) as L. Machiavelli, 'Catalogo di tutte le giustizie seguite in Bologna dall'anno 1030 sino a 1786', Aula 2.a C. VIII. 3, vols. 4831, 4832, 4835 (no pagination).

[80] Ferri, Roversi, *Storia di Bologna*, p.177.

[81] A. Corradi, *Annali delle epidemie occorse in Italia dalle prime memorie fino al 1850*, Vol.1 (Bologna, 1865-1894), p.693.

[82] G. Alfani, C. Calvert (trans.), *Calamities and the Economy in Renaissance Italy: The Grand Tour of the Horsemen of the Apocalypse* (New York, 2013), p.63.

[83] A. Pastore, *Crimine e giustizia in tempo di peste nell'europa moderna* (Roma, 1991); N. Terpstra, 'Theory into Practice: Executions, Comforting, and Comforters in Renaissance Italy', in N. Terpstra (ed.), *The Art of Executing Well: Rituals of Execution in Renaissance Italy* (Kirksville, 2008), p.119.

the city's 'streets and canals' for a significant period of time.[84] Bologna's history of semi-independence chafing against the impositions of the Papal States during a period of warfare goes some way in explaining the violence of the sixteenthcentury. At the same time, the contemporary experience of war, the liveliness of military cultures, cultures of violence and the inability of the state to control manufacture and movement of guns during the Italian Wars all contributed to the wider proliferation of firearms.

Source Base and Methodology:

The geographical, political, and economic conditions of Bologna have already suggested its potential to be an interesting case study for violence and firearm proliferation in the sixteenth century. Carol Lansing, Sarah Blanshei, Colin Rose, Trevor Dean, Sara Cucini, Sanne Muurling, Cesarina Casanova and Giancarlo Angelozzi have each spread their expertise across the Bolognese medieval and early modern periods. Blanshei has produced an unrivalled companion to the city and a separate edited collection that showcases the key findings of some of the most notable recent historical enquiries into *la Dotta*, particularly showcasing those that plot the formation of the Bolognese state and its handling of violence as a barometer of that progress, using, above all, the rich record preserved by the city's *Torrone* court.[85] Nevertheless, the history of Bologna post-1512 (marking the true beginning of Papal control) has also been underappreciated in histories of the Italian Renaissance. According to Sarah Blanshei historiography has tended to follow the tone set by contemporary writings by reflecting on the city's supposed 'Golden Age' before the arrival of Pope Julius II.[86] However, following Gina Fasoli's lament in the twentieth century over the lack of any 'monumental' history of Bologna, studies in more recent years have slowly begun to pay more attention to the

[84] Rose, 'Homicide in North Italy', pp.36-37.
[85] S. Blanshei (ed.), *Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Bologna* (Leiden/Boston, 2018); S. Blanshei (ed.), *Violence and Justice in Bologna,* (Lanham, 2018).
[86] S. Blanshei (ed.), *Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Bologna*, p.7; collections such as O. Capitani (ed.), *Storia di Bologna: Bologna nel Medioevo* (Bologna, 2007) end their study at 1506, making Bologna's medieval history and its rule under the Bentivoglio the focus of research, like others have.

city.[87] Works by Carlo Poni and Alberto Guenzi have convincingly argued for Bologna's economic vibrancy and dispelled the 'myth of its permanent decline' after its medieval 'golden age'.[88] Contributors to Blanshei's edited collection have underlined the potential for novel research in almost all areas of Bolognese history, including economic and political histories, the city's vibrant artistic and cultural output, and significant to this study, the city's socio-political condition during the course of the Italian Wars.[89] Above all, however, Bologna has been chosen for this study because of its remarkable extant collection of criminal court records housed within the administrative trail of the *Tribunale del Torrone*. Established in the early sixteenth century as part of the attempts by the Papal State to ordain its rule over the newly conquered city, the *Torrone* court heard the criminal cases reported by its representatives stationed in various quarters of the city or out in the further flung reaches of its countryside territory. The court's mission to instil the influence of central authorities on the various areas of Bologna achieved a slow and steady success over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, meaning that an increasing number of Bologna's contemporaries began taking their complaints and reports directly to the court.[90] An estimated 11,000 surviving registers from the early modern period, including around 1 million criminal cases, including both denunciations and full-scale investigations (*processi*), make it one of the 'most long-

[87] G. Fasoli, in S. Blanshei, 'Introduction: History and Historiography of Bologna' in Blanshei, *Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Bologna*, pp.8-9.

[88] Blanshei, *Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Bologna*, p.13; F. Giusberti, F. R. Monaco, 'Economy and Demography', in Blanshei (ed.), *Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Bologna*, p.165; in fact Poni points to Bologna's silk industry in the sixteenth century as a precursor to the Industrial Revolution, C. Poni, 'Per la stroia del distretto industriale serico di Bologna (secoli XVI-XIX), *Quaderni storici* (Aprile 1990), 25:72 (1), p.94; similar comparisons were made by Guenzi and Poni in A. Guenzi, C. Poni, 'Un "Network" plurisecolare': Acqua e industria a Bologna', *Studi storici,* 30:2 (April-June, 1989), p.364.

[89] See, for example, R. Pini, 'Miniaturists, Painters, and Goldsmiths (mid-13th-early 15th Century), pp.530-558; A. De Benedictis, 'Popular Government, Government of the *Ottimati,* and the Languages of Politics: Concord and Discord (1377-1559), pp.289-309; T. Duranti, '*Libertas*, Oligarchy, Papacy: Government in the Quattrocento', pp.260-288 in Blanshei, *Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Bologna*.

[90] A combination of an emphasis on peace-making, the threat of pecuniary punishment, capital punishment, and ultimately offering an alternative to the at times dangerous or dissatisfying outcomes of private justice meant that the *Torrone* court slowly became an accepted forum for resolving conflict among Bologna's populace, S. R. Blanshei, S. Cucini, 'Criminal Justice and Conflict Resolution', in Blanshei, *Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Bologna*, p.355. However, Rose is quick to remind that this process was gradual and impacted by flares of instability and downturn across the period, which meant the contemporary government lost legitimacy in the opinion of many of its denizens, C. Rose, *A Renaissance of Violence: Homicide in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge, 2019), p.228.

term, best preserved systematic court archives both within and outside Italy'.[91] For Carlsmith, the Bolognese archives offer especially enticing potential to further explore that particular strain of violent behaviour, the 'vivid drama' and 'colorful characters' of historical criminality that offer both excellent case studies for microhistories or demonstrate the wider forces at play.[92]

The *Torrone*'s task of extending papal control over the judicial apparatus of the Bolognese state was a difficult one to accomplish. It was expected to investigate reports of serious crime, including, theft, fraud, insult, and violence spread across some 4,000 kilometres squared of largely mountainous territory, as well as the city itself. The rural *contado* under Bologna's jurisdiction included some 150 communities, varying in scale and economic circumstance and ranging from small rural holdings to centres that were essentially wealthy, urban settlements. This territory was home to anywhere between 150,000 to 300,000 people.[93] Bellettini placed a population division at the end of the sixteenth century at over 70,000 in the city and over 166,000 in the rural territories. [94] This was after a century of demographic fluctuation but one that overall witnessed a remarkable population and economic growth.[95] Combined with a large and unwieldy population diverse in social and economic circumstance, however, the *Torrone* also faced significant challenges from the Bolognese nobility. It was Julius II who was determined to 'put an end to the privileges and conflicts of the elite classes' by removing their control over 'criminal and civil law courts'. These nobles also posed as unofficial judges for localities, attracting the inhabitants of Bologna to seek their mediation in social and political conflict and thereby accruing a significant amount of influence as arbiters of justice. The *Torrone* was a tool in the aim of the Papal State to 'achieve a judicial monopoly', but it was an arduous task and it was only at the end of the century that the authorities 'reined in the violence of

[91] Muurling, *Everyday Crime*, p.17.
[92] C. Carlsmith, 'Student Violence in Late Medieval and Early Modern Bologna', in S. Blanshei (ed.), *Violence and Justice in Bologna: 1250-1700* (Lanham, 2018), p.221-222.
[93] G. Angelozzi, C. Casanova, *Donne Criminali: Il genere nella storia della giustizia* (Bologna, 2014), p.62.
[94] A. Bellettini, *La popolazione di Bologna dal secolo XV all'unificazione italiana* (Bologna, 1961), p.25; p.48.
[95] F. Giusberti, F. R. Monaco, 'Economy and Demography' in S. R. Blansehi, *A Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Bologna*, (Leiden/Boston, 2017) pp.165-166.

the Bolognese nobles'.[96] However, with increasing regularity over the course of the century under review, the *Torrone* became a compelling tool for the *Bolognesi* and the authorities as an alternative to the justice systems of the city's traditional oligarchs, and eventually an attractive opportunity to settle personal conflict.[97]

The *Torrone,* then, was the symbolic and physical manifestation of papal governance in the city and part of the papacy's refashioning of the political and legal structures of the city. The structure and processes of the *Torrone* underwent several changes during the sixteenth century but settled on a core shape by mid-century.[98] The court's tribunal manager, the *Auditore*, was named by the Papal Legate and in theory tied to the papacy's point of view. Alongside the court's judges, however, the *Auditore* was appointed in perpetuity and had great potential to become closely connected with the city and its inhabitants.[99] The court progressed cases on an inquisitorial basis and relied on denunciations from officials stationed in locales across the city and countryside, or from complaints brought by third parties. Judges could initiate *ex officio* investigations for particularly serious crimes but otherwise relied on the functioning of these reports and denunciations.[100] Punishments meted out from the mid-sixteenth century onwards tended toward financial penalties, and corporal punishment in cases of heresy and deviancy.[101] Judges were able to place the accused under torture if the evidence was deemed strong enough but were also able to interrogate the accused without disclosing the criminal charge.[102] Often, however, the investigative process was 'decidedly in favour of the prosecution'.[103] According to the *libri dei giustiziati*, capital punishments were meted out for homicide, 'professional' robbery, cases of heresy and violent sexual crimes. The Papal State also

[96] Blanshei, Cucini, 'Criminal Justice and Conflict Resolution', ppp.353-354.
[97] Rose, 'Homicide in North Italy', pp.61-62.
[98] Angelozzi, Casanova, *Donne criminali*, p.62.
[99] Blanshei and Cucini, 'Criminal Justice and Conflict Resolution', pp.354-355.
[100] Angelozzi, Casanova, *Donne criminali*, pp.61-62; Blansehi and Cucini, 'Criminal Justice and Conflict Resolution', p.354.
[101] Blanshei and Cucini, 'Criminal Justice and Conflict Resolution', p.355.
[102] Angelozzi, Casanova, *Donne criminali*, p.63.
[103] *Ibid*, p.63.

found hanging and beheading a particularly useful tool in quelling political unrest, particularly against those deemed dangerous to its own hold over authority. [104] The practice of exiling other criminals in contumacy from the city was a sentence that conversely, also worsened issues with banditry – something the authorities wrestled with for a greater part of the century. For those banned from the city the peace accord was a means of achieving re-entry. This was also an outcome pursued with increasing enthusiasm for the *Torrone* court across the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to stifle 'cycles of violence'. As such, for many, banditry might only be a 'temporary stage in a criminal process that could last for years, even decades' as peace accords were eventually arranged between aggrieved parties.[105]

The judicial body itself was supported by eight court notaries and a *caponotaio*, who held their positions for two-year terms and whose records of trials, statements and denunciations now fill the remarkable body of surviving material housed in the *Archivio di Stato* in Bologna.[106] The very same records also expose the pitfalls of the system - known for their potential corruption the archive still contains records of accusations and trials brought against notaries themselves, as does Machiavelli's record of those condemned by the state in the same years - many of whom were accused of having manipulated testimonies.[107] Alongside this central body of court administrators were those officials posted in urban localities - *ministrales* - and those charged with the oversight of the smaller rural comunes included within Bologna's orbit - the *massari*.[108] The *massari* play a prominent role in the surviving *Torrone* cases. As a medieval office that was continued under the *Torrone*, there was often one *massaro* per comune who could have jurisdiction over 1one, or even two to three villages. Their

[104] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, aula 2.a, CVII.3., volumes 4831, 4832, 4835 (no pagination is available with this source and so the date of each case and its respective volume will be referenced); C. Rose, 'Violence and Centralization of Criminal Justice in Early Modern Bologna', in Blanshei, *Violence and Criminal Justice*, p.114.
[105] Rose, 'Violence and Centralization of Criminal Justice', p.116.
[106] *Ibid*, p.106.
[107] Archivio di Stato, Bologna (hereafter ASBo), Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, 1 (1551), listed as 'Processo contro il notaio Gio. Battista Ferri per falsificazione di testamento', no pagination; also BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 17th December, 1498; 4th October, 1507, vol.4831.
[108] Blanshei and Cucini, 'Criminal Justice and Conflict Resolution', pp.354-355.

role was no doubt a pronounced one in the community given their responsibility to hear the *querele* (complaints) from locals and decide whether the case necessitated the involvement of the central court.[109] They were embedded within local politics and likely navigated a complex relationship between a familiar community and the bureaucratic function of the *Torrone* as a representative of papal governance. At the same time, given the volume of complaints received across a vast population, notaries would often conduct questioning of the accused or of witnesses for those crimes deemed less significant, particularly in the *contado*.[110] Nevertheless, the repeat appearance of the *massari* in the court's documentation demonstrates not only the potential lawlessness of the countryside during the mid-sixteenth century but also the trust that at least some locals placed in the institution. It is unclear why, for example, that Antonio di Sant'Agata took himself directly to Bologna's court to make his case rather than lodge his complaint with the respective *massaro*, but the fact that he made the journey to the court to 'make it known' that he 'was a good man' and to lodge the complaint of assault against a gentleman and his servant before they themselves took any further action suggests that Antonio, at least, valued the *Torrone* and its judicial process, or, that he had no larger support networks to draw on.[111]

The geographical representation in cases collected by the *Torrone* court is also pertinent to this research and the themes of place and space that will be covered over the following chapters. Having replaced the medieval office of the podestarial court and the *Ufficiali di contado* as well, the *Torrone* eventually extended the city's judicial oversight to over 4,000 square kilometres of countryside.[112] These cases therefore present an insight into both urban and rural contexts, which will be shown to have influenced both the regularity of firearm possession and the ways in which they were used. Bologna's urban centre was characterised by tight streets, overhanging houses and amalgamations

[109] *Ibid*, pp.354-355.
[110] Angelozzi, Casanova, *Donne criminali*, p.64.
[111] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 186 (July-September 1563), 7r; 38r.
[112] Muurling, *Everyday Crime*, p.46.

of shared abodes with shared doors, stairways and landings.[113] Historians who have attempted to see and hear the streets of such towns and cities found the echoes of the 'coughing and snipping' of neighbours, 'bawdy nocturnal songs' and the shouts of street vendors bouncing across the city's paved streets, through the cloth or wax linen hangings over windows and into intimate, domestic interiors.[114] Historians have underlined the role of such urban settings in underlining notions of early modern identity too, where the individual became tied to group identities associated with streets, neighbourhoods and occupation.[115] In Florence, Nicholas Eckstein refers to the sense of 'neighbourhood culture', Phillipa Jackson to the culture of 'surveillance', and Luca Gatti has explored the importance of contemporaries' 'projection' of identity along these lines.[116] The firearm's integration into the city-scape was more controlled than in the countryside, but it was also where gunfire had potential for the greatest effect.

Urban spaces catered for a greater public, group, or individual projection, but these same rules also applied to the rural settlements captured in the same records. The constant reference to reputation and the significance given to character statements in the *Torrone* court's handling of rural cases underlines the same forces at play in the Italian *contado*. Indeed, across social and geographical divisions, contemporary moralists and writers paid great attention to the currency of honour and its real-world implications.[117] This honour was also under constant threat from gossip and the determination of one's *fama* in the court of public opinion, meaning that for some, a somewhat

[113] F. Dennis, 'Sound and Domestic Space in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Italy', *Studies in Decorative Arts*, 16:1 (Fall-Winter, 2008-2009), p.9.
[114] *Ibid*, p.7; pp.9-10.
[115] This contrasts with Jacob Burckhardt's belief that the same years saw the rise of individualism, J. Burckhardt, *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy* (London/New York, 1904).
[116] N. Eckstein, 'Neighbourhood as a Microcosm', in R. Crum, J. Paoletti (eds.), *Renaissance Florence: A Social History* (Cambridge, 2006), p.230; P. Jackson, 'Parading in Public: Patrician Women and Sumptuary Law in Renaissance Siena', *Urban History*, 37:3 (2010), p.457; L. Gatti, 'Ambiguity and the Fixing of Identity in Early Renaissance Florence', *Diogenes*, 45:177 (1997), p.32.
[117] Leon Battista Alberti wrote of the importance of 'contest for honour and glory' in 'the race of human life', as one of the most notable writers on the subject in this period, L. Alberti, *I libri della famiglia,* Book 2, (trans.) R. N. Watkins (Long Grove, 2014), p.140.

cynical maintenance of appearance was highly recommended.[118] Regardless of geography, the sense of being watched and reviewed was at the forefront of the contemporary mind and will similarly be shown to have influenced both the reception of firearms into the hands of contemporaries, and their public use. The differences between urban space and rural hinterland on the use of firearms will be shown in the times and contexts within which they were deployed, but also the number of guns involved in the cases from different geographies investigated by the central court.

In a similar vein to Biow's belief that early modern male fashions and professions presented opportunity for individual expression, the use of the firearm on certain stages allowed the character of the individual to be seen and heard above the group associations often deemed to have informed the early modern personality.[119] Nevertheless, the gun-toting individual was still ultimately playing a role within shared cultures that demanded participation in acts of violence and public demonstration. In much the same way that Braddick's analysis of social clashes in the English Civil War has highlighted the potential for crisis to expose the dynamism in contemporary social relations, this thesis focuses in on a fractious point in the history of Bologna and the impact of the firearm in this environment.[120] Bologna's condition in this period presented people with a range of potential allegiances but also a stage on which to exercise their agency, as the newly established state struggled to impose control over its territory. The combination of social and political fracture, the potency of honour and the compulsion to avoid shame, and the potential to both feel tied to an

[118] R. E. Weissman, 'The Importance of Being Ambiguous: Social Relations, Individualism, and Identity in Renaissance Florence', in S. Zimmerman, R. E. Weissman (eds.), *Urban Life in the Renaissance* (Delaware/Toronto/London, 1988), pp.269-280; J. J. Martin argued that modern notions of individuality are not applicable to the early modern period and the contemporary's concept of self, J. J. Martin, *Myths of Renaissance Individualism* (Basingstoke, 2004).

[119] Historians who have argued against the domination of group identity in shaping the selfhood of early modern people include Douglas Biow, *On the Importance of being Individual in Renaissance Italy: Men, Their Professions, and Their Beards* (Philadelphia, 2015), p.17.

[120] M. Braddick, 'Loyauté partisane durant la Guerre Civile et histoire des relations sociales en Angleterre', in L. Bourquin, P.Hamon, P. Karila-Cohen, C. Michon (éd), *Conflits, opinion(s) et politicization de la fin du Moyen Âge au début du xxe siècle* (Rennes, 2011), pp. 95-114; M. Braddick, 'Face, légitimaté et identité partisane dans la négociation du pouvoir de l'État en Angleterre (1558-1660)', in Hèloïse Hermant (ed.), *Le pouvoir contourné.Infléchir et subvertir l'autorité a l'âge modern* (Paris, 2016), pp.193-221; M. Braddick, J. Walters (eds.), *Negotiating Power in Early Modern Society: Order, Hierarchy, and Subordination in Britain and Ireland*, (Cambridge, 2001).

association but also willingly independent informed the role of violence in the Bolognese sixteenth century. Alongside the cases from the central *Torrone* court, this thesis also considers records of firearm use in cases of capital punishment in Bologna during the sixteenth century and in chronicles from throughout the period. The *Libri dei giustiziati,* compiled by the comforters of the confraternity of the *Santa Maria della Morte* hold the list the names and crimes of those sentenced to death by Bolognese authorities and comforted before their deaths by members of the confraternity. Across the *Torrone* and *Libri dei giustiziati*, I have reviewed around 100 cases of gun crime or gun violence during this research. For various reasons that will be explored, these cases by no means represent the majority of criminal cases in this period. Theft, insult, and assault with a range of weapons including knives, swords, polearms, and work equipment cover the rest of the 146 cases reviewed in the *Torrone* and nearly 800 entries in the *Libri dei giustiziati*. According to Colin Rose's study of homicides in Bologna during the 17th century firearms became the most common homicide weapon in the city.[121] The 1500s instead present an introductory period for firearm use and highlights how contemporaries were beginning to incorporate guns into practice.

The *Torrone* cases will show that the firearm was welcomed into these existing practices and cultures, adopted by the roaming groups of youths and bandits in the countryside and within the vendetta and violent confrontations in the city stage. It also, however, presented a new tool within the early modern arsenal to contemporaries fascinated by its effect and eager to integrate it into practices of demonstration and enmity. The *Torrone* files will constitute the main source base analysed in the course of this research; however, these will be supplemented by records from contemporary diarists, chroniclers and Bologna's records of those condemned to death by the state, all of which will underline the role played by firearms and the contexts for their use.

[121] C. Rose, 'Homicide in North Italy: Bologna, 1600-1700', Ph.D. Thesis (University of Toronto, 2016), p. p.129.

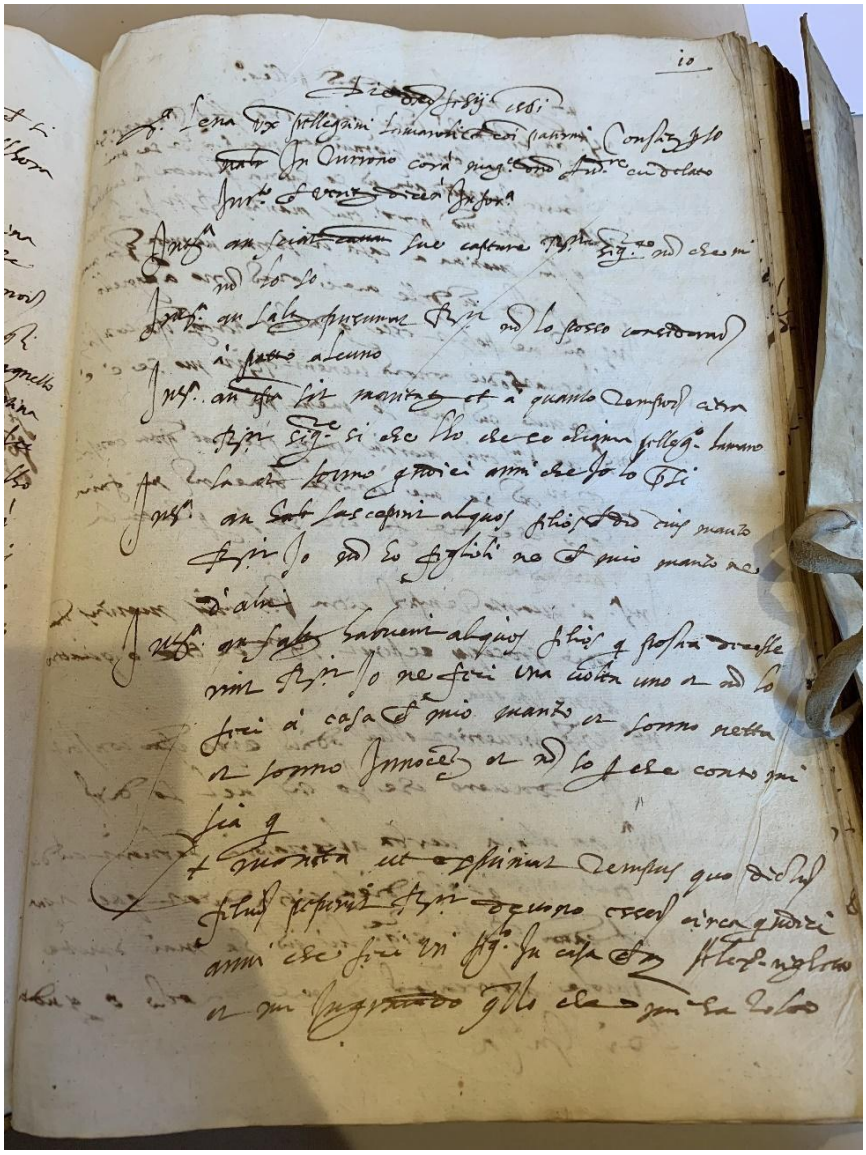

Figure 0:1 ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 45, f.10r. A typical example of a record from the Torrone documents. The legibility of the hand can vary significantly.

Chapter Breakdown:

This thesis begins with an introduction to the production and introduction of gunpowder technologies in the Italian peninsula during the Italian Wars. The battlefield was often the first meeting of the individual and gun and the first experience of the gunpowder's potentially devastating effect. The experience of war not only presented a physical route for the spread of

firearms as soldiers returned home and battlefields were looted, but the shared experience of violence also contributed to established popular military cultures and cultures of violence that contributed to the early modern readiness to adopt firearms and their use. Chapter 2 follows the journey of the gun from battlefields into wider gun cultures that developed in this period, outlining the challenge they posed to established norms in the worldview of some contemporaries, but also the enthusiastic welcome they found in the hands of many others. As such, this chapter establishes the popularity of the firearm and provides context to the examples of their use in Bologna's archival records. Chapters 3 and 4 bring the focus to Bologna, primarily using the records of the *Torrone* criminal court to establish the regularity of violent practice in the city's territories while also considering the differences in practice across gendered divides. This chapter provides context to the gendered nature of firearm use and the circumstances of the gun crime cases analysed in the final chapter. Chapter 4 will demonstrate the integration of gun use into criminal practice, demonstrative violence, and matters of honour in vendetta, revenge, and threat.

Ultimately, this thesis is a social history of the gun. Inspired by aims of microhistories to establish the 'view from the street', it engages with the individual's experience of life in Bologna during a fractious sixteenth century, plotting the meeting point of the individual with the firearm.[122] By following the spread of firearms, their popularity and circumstances of their use outside of military arenas, this project joins recent attempts to navigate the 'uncharted waters' of historical gun culture but also contributes to the histories of violence, criminality, early modern society and selfhood using the 'genuine liking people had for guns', their reception and exploitation.[123] Above all it broaches an as-of-yet unstudied aspect of all these themes – the circumstances of firearm ownership and use within these established cultures and contemporary practices. It will explain why firearms became popular, how they were used, why they were used, and demonstrate that guns were deployed in ways that modern understandings of firearm use would not expect. As such, looking at society through the

[122] Tlusty, *Martial Ethic',* p.5.
[123] Schwoerer, *Gun Culture*, p.175.

prism of early modern gun ownership highlights the distinctive nature of early modern society. At the same time, in other areas it makes early modern people more relatable to the modern reader, who can find the roots of contemporary gun cultures in the Italian sixteenth century.

Chapter 1: Soldiers, Civilians, and Gunpowder

During an assault on Rabastens, France in July 1570, Blaise De Monluc was climbing the walls of the town when he suddenly felt blood gushing from out of his mouth, nose, and eyes. 'I could scarce speak', he writes, 'by reason of the torrent of blood'.[124] A fellow soldier caught hold of him before he steadied himself, but he found himself too faint to continue. Monluc was carried away and landed in the surgeon's tent. He then describes feeling the medic's fingers rummaging through his cheek as two bones and a 'great deal of flesh' were pulled out.[125] Monluc had been on the receiving end of an arquebus shot to the face. His survivability was remarkable. As a veteran of the Italian Wars, Monluc had survived a multitude of battles, sieges, and even special operations, but his life had been thoroughly punctuated by gunshot. [126] He records the loss of his peers shot down by bullets, and even the death of his own son by a gunner – 'and I verily believ'd that the sorrow for his death would have ended my dayes'.[127] On another occasion Montluc describes himself being pinned down under an 'infinite number of Harquebuze shot', one of which 'pierc'd my Targuette, and shot my arm quite through', and another 'so batter'd the bone at the knitting of my arm and shoulder, that I lost all manner of feeling'.[128]

Monluc's luck eventually ran out with the shot that blasted through his cheek, forcing him into retirement. Evidently affected by the wound that he was 'constrain'd to keep open', Monluc complained of never being able to find happiness in his retirement, in fact, he 'eternally' cursed taking command on that particular day.[129] Fortune had also ultimately turned on him.[130] For decades

[124] M. Wolfe, 'Pain and Memory: The War Wounds of Blaise de Monluc', in P. M. E. Lorcin and D. Brewer, *France and its Spaces of War: Experience, Memory, Image* (New York, 2009), p.111.
[125] Montluc, *Commentaries,* p.367.
[126] See, for example, Harari's retelling of Monluc's mission behind enemy lines at Auriol during the invasion of France, Harari, *Special Operations in the Age of Chivalry*, pp.163-183.
[127] Montluc, *Commentaries*, p.33; p.401.
[128] *Ibid,* p.15.
[129] *Ibid*, p.270; p.291.
[130] The concept of Fortuna, 'often envisioned as the embodiment of the eponymous Roman goddess, loomed large in the Renaissance imagination'. Fortuna promised material and social wealth but was also fickle in her support and according to contemporary thought led many 'to ruin'. Fortuna was part of the 'moral education

Monluc had been using firearms himself to dispatch his foes and on more than one occasion admitted to using his own men to soak up the enemy's bullets in his place. With sardonic tone he would remember the men he pushed into rooms or from ladders onto besieged walls full of enemy gunners, making them 'take a leap' they 'never intended' at sieges across Italy and France.[131] This particular history of the firearm, however, would likely not have been written if it were not for the injury Monluc sustained and which led to the 'occasion of writing these Commentaries, which I have an opinion will continue when I am dead and gone'.[132] It is a history that introduces many of the themes of the following chapter - the introduction of gunpowder technologies across European and Italian battlefields in the sixteenth century, and the experience of battle for soldiers serving during the introduction of gunpowder warfare. This chapter will also plot the journey of guns from their point of manufacture, onto the battlefields and their proliferation through mass availability and demobilisation of armies. This chapter also introduces the experience of those on the opposite side of the walls from their attackers – the multitude of civilians who took shelter during sieges, actively defended their homes, or who became victims in early modern wartime atrocity. In this way this chapter introduces the meeting point of early modern people and the military cultures and cultures of violence that informed a great deal of the lived experience. The ubiquity of such experiences helps explain the aspects of violence found in the *Torrone* court cases analysed in chapter 4. Finally, Monluc's autobiography describes the clash of chivalry and technology, between cherished traditions and the intrusion of the firearm. It is full of the sense of contradiction and tension that appears to have characterised the Italian early modern period in general.[133]

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of humanity', N. Scott-Baker, 'Deep Play in Renaissance Italy', in E. Muir, M. Jurdjevic, R. Strøm-Olsen (eds.), *Rituals of Politics and Culture in Early Modern Europe: Essays in Honour of Edward Muir* (Toronto, 2016) pp.269-270.

[131] Montluc, *Commentaries*, p.186.

[132] *Ibid,* p.399.

[133] The picture of the Renaissance in the popular imagination and its bloodier reality is the subject of Fletcher's recent work, *The Beauty and the Terror*, as is the sense of contradiction in the Renaissance period's immense creativity and depravity, as well as the contrary lives of many of the period's most famous faces, Fletcher, *Beauty and the Terror*, pp.1-13.

The Introduction of the Firearm:

"[T]he fate of my battles was decided by the fuses of my Spanish arquebusiers"[134]

Gunpowder technologies were most likely brought to Europe from the East after the invention of gunpowder in China potentially in the 9th century.[135] Kenneth Chase puts the Mongols of the thirteenth century at the centre of this picture of diffusion.[136] In the fourteenth century weapons resembling firearms were evident on European battlefields, but it was not until the late fifteenth-century that the portable arquebus appeared. The development of firing mechanisms was key to the proliferation of portable firearms that changed battlefield tactics and instigated the spread of popular gun cultures. These innovations, beginning with the 'serpentine' lighting mechanism, changed the arquebus from 'a heavy piece of light artillery (approximately 15kg) to a handheld weapon of only 5-6kg'. The serpentine mechanism meant the gunner no longer needed to hold a burning match in one hand and meant they could now use both hands to aim.[137] This was later followed by the wheel-lock mechanism by the mid-1500s. The wheel-lock was a circular mechanism that spun when the trigger was pulled and created a spark. These were complex and prone to malfunction but easier to store and prime given that no live flame was required.[138] These models were not replaced until the introduction of the cheaper and more reliable flintlock in later centuries.[139]

During the course of the Italian Wars firearms played an iconic and often decisive role in battles - Cerignola (1503), Bicocca (1522) and Pavia (1525) are some of the most significant noted for the important role gunpowder played.[140] The mobility that firearms in particular eventually offered in

[134] Charles V quoted in I. Sherer, *The Scramble for Italy: Continuity and Change in the Italian Wars, 1494-1559* (Abingdon, 2021), p.86.
[135] K. Chase, *Firearms: A Global History* (Cambridge, 2003), p.31.
[136] *Ibid*, p.58.
[137] M. Pellegrini, *Le guerre d'Italia: 1494-1530* (Bologna, 2009), pp.159-160.
[138] Chase, *Firearms: A Global History*, p.69.
[139] *Ibid*, p.201.
[140] Fletcher, *Beauty and the Terror*, p.271.

combination with light infantry has been noted as a key tactics evolution in the sixteenth century, culminating in the Spanish *tercio* formation which toppled the dominance of the period's Swiss pike-square formation, and accelerated the decline of heavy cavalry. It was this combination of manoeuvrability and focused firepower that eventually pushed the French out of Italy at Saint-Quentin in 1557, forcing the French capitulation with the treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis.[141] Their proliferation and efficacy on contemporary battlefields is apparent in Monluc's recording both of the injuries done to him by shot, but also in his boastful description of the 'wonders' that he and his men were able to deliver against the enemy with their guns, using the 'good smart claps of the Harquebuze shot'.[142] He also writes with wonder at their potential to easily 'default' a man's armour when, on one occasion, he watched a nobleman take a shot 'through his bowels almost to the other side' before he 'sunk to the ground'.[143] Firearms evidently took a significant role within his military thinking as he started to describe spaces between himself and the enemy being 'about an Harquebuze shot distant'.[144] Monluc also references their regular deployment across the peninsula throughout his memoirs. He notes, for example, the 400 'harquebuzeers' that Monsieur de Fourcavaux was able to raise by himself.[145] On another occasion he relates a scouting report of a significant force which was claimed to have consisted 'for the most part' of 'seventeen or eighteen thousand Harquebuzeers'.[146] Their presence in the *contado* was unsurprising enough for Monluc to make a fairly casual note of 'the fifteen or sixteen Peasants loaden with Harquebuzes' who had brought a prisoner into his camp.[147] The prevalence of firearms in Monluc's record is not surprising given the significant role given to them within armies that grew significantly in size in the same period. The size of Charles VIII's army at the beginning of the Wars in 1494 was already marvelled at

[141] Pellegrini, *Le guerre d'Italia*, pp.161-162.
[142] *Ibid*, p.9; p.40.
[143] *Ibid*, p.51.
[144] *Ibid*, p.42.
[145] *Ibid*, p.302.
[146] *Ibid*, p.302.
[147] *Ibid*, p.281.

by contemporaries, alongside its remarkable number of cannon - Charles had assembled a force of around 30,000 men with an initial artillery train of around 40 cannons.[148] Henry II deployed 36,000 men at Metz in 1552. 40,000 were mustered at Pierrepont in 1558 under Henry II and Charles V mobilised 42,000 for the invasion of France in 1544, 56,000 to defeat the Schmalkaldic League in Germany in 1546, and 55,000 to lay siege to Metz in 1552.[149] According to Parker, Charles V was able to command nearly 150,000 total troops in 1552 – armies that were 'twice the size' of the armies that his grandparents were able to call upon.[150] It was also the longevity of these army sizes that characterised a new era of military endeavour since, according to Parker, similarly sized organizations in previous times had been sporadic and short-lived.[151] The significant role that firearms would play within the context of growing army numbers is referenced in Bernard Van Orley's tapestries representing the Battle of Pavia and the capture of Francesco I. Idan Sherer argues that, on this occasion, the gun lying below Francesco I indicates the 'central role of firearms in winning the day'.[152]

[148] Mallett, 'The Transformation of War, 1494-1530', p.4; Chase, *Firearms: A Global History*, p.62.
[149] G. Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800* (Cambridge, 1996), p.162.
[150] *Ibid*.
[151] *Ibid*, p.161.
[152] Sherer, *The Scramble for Italy*, p.86.

Figure 1:1 *Bernard Van Orley, La cattura del re di Francia Francesco I (third of six tapestries representing the Battle of Pavia), 1528-1531, Il Museo di Capodimonte, Napoli. Note the arquebuses at the feet of Francesco I (bottom left).*

The growth in army sizes, then, coincided with a greater emphasis on light infantry and the opportunity to outfit more men with firearms.[153] From the beginning of the sixteenth century to its end, the ratio of forces across Europe moved in favour of the arquebusier.[154] Fletcher identified sixteenth-century forces in Italy organising up to one-third of their manpower specifically as gunners.[155] Numbers were also bolstered by the development of the militia core, which came to constitute a significant proportion of armed forces during the Italian Wars.[156] By 1508, the state of Venice, for example, could call upon 9,000 militiamen for the battle of Pontevico.[157] In 1525, an ex-

[153] Shaw, Mallett, *The Italian Wars,* p.285.

[154] Hale noted that 'In Venice the proportion was first fixed in 1548, at 10 percent halberds, 30 percent arquebuses, 60 percent pikes. French contracts of 1562 simply specified 33 percent arquebusiers. For the English 1571-1572 campaign in France the recommended balance in newly formed companies was 6 percent halberds, 20 percent muskets, 34 percent cavaliers and 40 percent pikes; this was adjusted in 1589 to 10 percent halberds, 30 percent pikes and 60 percent unspecified shot, By 1600 France was aiming for equal proportions of pike and shot, and Spain for 10 percent halberds, 30 percent pikes, 25 percent muskets and 35 percent arquebuses.', J. R. Hale, *War and Society in Renaissance Europe, 1450-1620* (London, 1985), p.52; on the growth of firearms on Italian battlefields from the fifteenth century, M. Mallett, *Mercenaries and their Masters: Warfare in Renaissance Italy* (London, 1974), pp.156-159.

[155] Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', p.15.

[156] *Ibid*, pp.10-19.

[157] M. E. Mallett, J. R. Hale., *The Military Organisation of a Renaissance State: Venice c.1400-1617* (Cambridge, 1984), p.350.

proveditor of the army believed it feasible to recommend a militia force of 12,000 men.[158] Machiavelli was similarly aware of the importance of a militia force and attempted to establish a significant body in Florence during the same years.[159] In 1525, a Venetian plan for militia forces included a recommendation of 4,000 arquebusiers, and in April 1528 the Senate of Venice ordered 20,000 arquebusiers to be equipped with guns.[160] In Friuli, however, militia forces were being outfitted with guns as early as the 1490s.[161] By the mid-century Florence could count nearly 6,500 militiamen equipped with firearms on its books. Their presence is also notable among the populace in cities as part of defensive provisioning. In the defence of Ferrara in 1551, 514 people were listed as active defenders, 268 of whom had a gun, including six women readied with firearms. In 1552, the Sienese authorities ordered 1,000 arquebuses to arm its denizens in defence of their state.[162] For Arfaioli, there is little debate around the assertion that by the middle of the sixteenth century, *scoppiettieri* (handgunners) 'had become an important feature of European warfare'.[163]

[158] Mallett and Hale, *Military Organisation*, p.353.

[159] In a period that also saw the steady professionalisation of armies, Machiavelli also castigated mercenaries within his framework for a militia. Machiavelli believed that soldiers would only show determination when defending their homeland, and that Italy's reliance of mercenaries in this period was a key reason for the peninsula's relative military weakness, Sherer, *Scramble for Italy*, p.138; N. Machiavelli, *Il Principe* (Milan, 1979), pp.77-78; p.86; M. Hörnqvist, 'Machiavelli's Military Project and the *Art of War*', in J. Najemy (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Machiavelli*, (Cambridge, 2010), p.122. Despite now being known as a man assumed to have captured the zeitgeist of his times through his famous political treatise, Machiavelli downplayed the role of gunpowder weaponry, which he believed encultured negative, defensive strategies not akin to superior attacking classical strategy models; B. Cassidy, 'Machiavelli and the Ideology of the Offensive: Gunpowder Weapons in *The Art of War*, *The Journal of Military History* (April 2003) pp.402-403.

[160] Mallett and Hale, *Military Organisation*, p.353.

[161] Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', pp.12-13

[162] *Ibid*, pp.18-19.

[163] M. Arfaioli, *The Black Bands of Giovanni: Infantry and Diplomacy During the Italian Wars (1526-1528)* (Pisa, 2005), p.9.

Firearms Production:

The demand for firearms was supplied by prolific arms industries, the most notable were established at Tours, Malines, Liège, Milan and, perhaps most importantly for Italy, in the northern comune of Brescia. Nestled in the valleys of the Gardone Val Trompia, the Brescian firearms industry became an internationally acknowledged centre of firearms production. It was also the founding site of the renowned Beretta gun company, still operating today, and which is claimed by Beretta to have been established in 1526.[164] Despite that, neither the technological development nor social impact of the burgeoning arms industries of the sixteenth century have been given much attention. Morin, one of the foremost historians of the Brescian firearms industry and of the Beretta gun company, remarked in an article in 1981 that the evolution and impact of the arms industry has never been studied in depth, if ever at all.[165]

Nevertheless, in recent years progress has been made in illuminating other aspects of the early modern gunpowder and weapons industry. Catherine Fletcher has plotted the routes firearms took from point of manufacture and highlighted the practices of the early modern arms dealers who supported the proliferation of firearms through military and civilian contexts, licit or otherwise.[166] Fletcher has also highlighted the spread of firearms from mainland Europe into colonial settlements, while Ágoston has contributed to the picture of state development and the role of gunpowder in non-European contexts with an illumination of the Ottoman Empire's relationship with its arms industry in the same years.[167] The complex social, political and economic consequences of these developments has been addressed by David Cressey's broader review of saltpetre production –

[164] Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', p.9

[165] M. Morin, 'La produzione delle armi da fuoco a Gardone V. T.', in M. Pedini, F. Feroldi, C. Trebeschi, G. Zamboni, *Armi e cultura nel Bresciano 1420-1870* (Brescia, 1981), p.67.

[166] C. Fletcher, 'Agents of Firearms Supply in Sixteenth-Century Italy: Rethinking the Contractor State', in S. Bowd, S. Cockram, J. Gagné (eds.), *Shadow Agents of Renaissance War. Suffering, Supporting, and Supplying Conflict in Italy and Beyond* (Amsterdam, 2023), pp.201-225.

[167] Fletcher, *Beauty and the Terror,* pp.277-279; G. Ágoston, *Guns for the Sultan: Military Power and the Weapons Industry in the Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge, 2005).

saltpetre being a crucial base element in the production of gunpowder.[168] England's desire to establish a self-sufficient gunpowder industry in the early modern period saw various monarchs, entrepreneurs and inventors attempt to find a way to address a constant need to import the materials needed in gunpowder manufacturing. While the state desperately moved to source this 'inestimable treasure' they also called upon roaming workers to make use of any natural deposits within the realm, however insubstantial they were. Soon landowners complained of the 'vexation and oppression' that saltpetre men caused by digging up public and private land.[169]

States' anxiety over the production and control of gunpowder reserves is apparent in other areas of Europe too. In France, saltpetre production was placed exclusively under royal control.[170] In Venice, where gunpowder production and weaponry were placed under the careful observance of the *Provveditore alle Artiglierie,* Panciera has drawn attention to the Republic's policy of 'armed peace'. This policy sought to control reserves, imports and exports from the Brescian foundries and to hoard as much material as was financially possible away from competing markets.[171] Venice, like many other powers in this period, balanced economic and political necessity – but remained particularly vigilant of allowing such valuable and volatile materials from falling into the hands of the Republic's enemies, real or perceived.[172] In 1577, the Council of Ten prohibited the sale of saltpetre to any private party in the Republic's territory.[173] In the Ottoman realm, Ágoston's study has challenged the preconception that the Ottomans were reliant on European imports for their gunpowder weaponry by illuminating an extensive gunpowder and weapons production system within the Empire.

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[168] D. Cressey, *Saltpeter: The Mother of Gunpowder* (Oxford, 2013).
[169] Cressey, *Saltpeter,* p.2.
[170] Ágoston, *Guns for the Sultan*, p.124.
[171] W. Panciera, 'Venetian Gunpowder in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century: Production, Storage, Use', in B. J. Buchanan (ed.), *Gunpowder, Explosives and the State: A Technological History,* (London/New York, 2016), p.95; L. Mocarelli, G. Ongaro, 'Weapons' Production in the Republic of Venice in the Early Modern Period: The Manufacturing Centre of Brescia Between Military Needs and Economic Equilibrium', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 65:3 (2017), pp.231-242.
[172] C. M. Belfanti, 'A Chain of Skills: The Production Cycle of Firearms Manufacture in the Brescia Area from the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries', in A. Guenzi, P. Massa, F. Piola Caselli, *Guilds, Markets and Work Regulations in Italy, 16th-19th Centuries* (Aldershot, 1998), p.273.
[173] Panciera, 'Venetian Gunpowder', p.97.

Nevertheless, similar constraints were encountered in a bid to achieve self-sufficiency and the Ottomans only traded their richer saltpetre reserves in exchange for the two other constituent parts of gunpowder production – sulphur and charcoal.[174] In the same period, Portugal recognised the importance of gunpowder and established production centres in India, Iran and China but had already encountered expertise in gunpowder production in India in the early 1500s.[175]

Saltpetre was now regarded as a substance that 'no regime could do without, and none could get enough', a component of state maintenance that was now 'more important than money'.[176] Unsurprisingly, this was not lost on the Medici in Florence, who early on began to fund significant trade in the gunpowder production chain. Between January 1489 and October 1494, the Medici bank 'imported an average of seven thousand kilograms' of saltpetre per year and became a principal supplier of one of the early modern world's most sought after resources.[177] Lorenzo de Medici's trade initiative in all parts of the gunpowder and gunpowder weaponry production process tells a story of Medici state formation and the monopolisation of a resource that at once shored up the Medici regime and its coffers.[178] The necessity felt to stockpile a resource now believed to be crucial to any war effort oftentimes overrode competing political exigencies. For a portion of the Eighty Years' War, the Dutch Republic continued to trade materials with the Spanish after an English demand for the ban on exports during the conflict.[179] Ottoman authorities were known to have imported English weapons despite the prohibitions imposed by the papacy at the time.[180] In 1605, an English vessel was intercepted and found to be supplying 700 barrels of gunpowder, 1,000 arquebus barrels and 500 arquebuses. Despite the Ottoman's domestic industry, it appears that European

[174] Ágoston, *Guns for the Sultan*, pp.97-102.
[175] J. M. de Mascarenhas, 'Portuguese Overseas Gunpowder Factories, in Particular Those of Goa (India) and Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)', in Buchanan, *Gunpowder, Explosives and the State*, pp.183-184.
[176] Ansani, 'Military Entrepreneur', p.11.
[177] *Ibid*, p.14; pp.11-15.
[178] *Ibid*, p.20.
[179] M. de Jong, 'Arms Exports and Export Control of the Dutch Republic 1585-1621', in R. Beeres et al (eds.), *Netherlands Annual Review of Military Studies* (2021), pp.301-302.
[180] Ágoston, *Guns for the Sultan*, p.91.

firing mechanisms were still sought after.[181] The illicit arms trade is known to have caused major issues in Spain, forcing a dependency on imports despite Spain's relatively healthy natural resource pool useful for gunpowder production.[182]

Brescia:

The production of the firearm itself was similarly complex and large scale. In Italy, it was Brescia, northern Italy, that became the peninsula's international centre of gunpowder weapons manufacture and outfitter of Europe's armies.[183] The organisation and scale of the Brescian foundries have remained obscure largely because of the lack of statistical data. This dearth of information means that even the labour organisation of the industry remains relatively vague, as are specifics around the distribution of forges and workers.[184] However, it is known that the forges and workshops in Brescia soon became synonymous with high quality firearm production and home to gunsmiths possessing remarkably high technical ability. In fact, 'almost all European powers' sought to secure the privilege of ordering and owning firearms produced by specialists in the Gardone area.[185] The chain of production relied on specialist skills involving those of the gun barrel makers – *maestri bollitori* – at the apex of the skill chain and who were responsible for the 'most delicate operation in the whole production cycle'.[186] A series of other specialist roles finished the product and added aesthetic touches. The process also employed women as burnishers, while *fornitori* added extras, perhaps as specified by the buyer, such as sights and other usability improvements.[187] The urban locale of Brescia was also included in the manufacture process, where craftsmen created the wooden stocks of the gun and a range of experts in the craft's guilds provided sling hooks,

[181] *Ibid,* p.91.
[182] *Ibid*, p.125; Fletcher has shown how the firearms trade in Italy presented plentiful opportunities for agents to fulfil illicit aims; Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', p.25; p.35.
[183] Belfanti, 'A Chain of Skills', p.70.
[184] F. Rossi, 'Fucini Gardonesi', p.23.
[185] Belfanti, 'A Chain of Skills', p.267; Morin, 'Armi da fuoco a Gardone', p.70.
[186] Belfanti, 'A Chain of Skills', p.268.
[187] *Ibid*, p.268.

plates, screws and bespoke decorations for private buyers.[188] Beyond the workforces centred around the valley's forges and the craftsmen operating out of workshops in Brescia itself, there were also contributions from a cottage industry across the territory that produced the bayonets, firing rods, powder horns, munitions and other accessories.[189] As Morin remarked, these guns represented the work of a multitude of workers practising very specialised skills.[190] They were also supplying an intense demand for guns from both state and private purchasers, evidently also serving individuals who often took enough of an interest in their gun to request extra accessories and decoration. Unfortunately, according to Morin and Held, any significant record of private orders from this period has been lost.[191] Nevertheless, the professions involved in the production process serviced the development of the popular gun cultures that will be analysed in chapter 2, while also demonstrating gunpowder weaponry's role in developing economies, professions, and feeding demand.

It was a prolific industry too. By the middle of the 1600s there were almost 500 individuals 'directly or indirectly' involved in firearm production in the comune of Gardone, Brescia. In 1607 Gardone was recorded as having a total population of little more than 1,000 people, which gives an insight into the significance of the industry as an employer.[192] In 1562, 25,000 guns were produced in and exported from the valley's forges. During the War of Cyprus in the later sixteenth century the Brescian foundries were creating 300 barrels a day, over 100,000 a year.[193] During conflict between Venice and the Ottoman Empire in the latter part of the century, the Brescian outfit was producing nearly 3,000 arquebuses a day.[194] The decorated pair of Japanese matchlock guns from the late 1600s fitted with Gardonese barrels previously on display at the Kyoto National Museum also attests

[188] The *lissadori* added finishings to the wooden parts of the gun, and the *camuzzadori* engraved the barrel with decoration, for example. *Ibid*, p.269.
[189] *Ibid*, p.270.
[190] Morin, 'Armi da fuoco a Gardone', p.70.
[191] Morin, Held, *Beretta: La dinastia*, pp.36-37.
[192] Morin, 'Armi da fuoco a Gardone', p.71.
[193] *Ibid*, p.71.
[194] Belfanti, 'A Chain of Skills', pp.271-272.

to their widespread geographical proliferation, as do the Brescian marked guns from Henry VIII's collection, now housed at the Royal Armouries.[195] Venetian authorities were right to feel compelled to guard their access and relative control over the Brescian foundries with jealousy. Brescian craftsmen and masters were often poached by rulers who would establish competing industry centres in Europe and conniving foreign agents were regularly arrested in Brescia while trying to lure its workers into competing states and countries.[196] Nevertheless, Brescia remained a jewel in Italy's industrial crown in this period and played an important role in feeding the firearm evolution that was changing the conduct and experience of war.

Gunpowder Battles:

Ultimately, firearms were produced and ordered in significant numbers because of their utility on the battlefield. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of gunpowder on sixteenth century battlefields has been debated.[197] Contemporaries certainly struggled with the lack of standardisation across equipment and gunpowder, which often undermined the potency of cannons and firearms. The capable range and lethality of the individual firearm might vary significantly according to conditions, quality of weapon, powder, ammunition, and the competency of the user, especially in the middle of battle. That means the effective killing range of the early modern arquebus might only have been 60 yards – the Duke of Alba recommended firing when the enemy was within 'a little more than two pike lengths' – perhaps only 12 yards.[198] Nevertheless, the effect of gunpowder in early modern

[195] Morin, Held, *Beretta: La dinastia*¸ p.37; Matchlock Muzzle-Loading Heavy Arquebus (Musket), c.1540, Gardone Brescia, Italy. Royal Armouries, Leeds, UK, object number, XII.5315; Chase has noted the significant impact of the European firearms trade and gun production in Japan from at least 1542, making it plausible that the Gardonese barrells included with the guns at Kyoto Museum were delivered in this period, Chase, *Firearms: A Global History*, pp.178-183.

[196] Belfanti, 'A Chain of Skills', pp.272-273; Morin, Held, *Beretta: La dinastia*, p.66.

[197] Hale, for example, downplayed the impact of firearms, admitting they might have 'decided the issue of a single battle', but 'cannot be said to have decided a war', in 'Gunpowder and the Renaissance', pp.390-391; Eltis maintained that the introduction of the firearm improved the firepower of early modern armies via their penetrative power, despite Roberts' contention that it actually reduced it by replacing the longbow, Eltis, *The Military Revolution*, p.11.

[198] L. White, 'The Experience of Spain's Early Modern Soldiers: Combat, Welfare and Violence', *War in History,* 9:1 (2002), p.15.

confrontations is still underlined by contemporary reports and appears to have had a significant impact on their witnesses. At the Battle of Pavia in February 1525, described by some as the first 'modern' battle defined by the dominance of the firearm, Paolo Giovio wrote of the new mobility and potency offered by bands of arquebusiers. He writes of the '800 Spanish *sclopetarii*' who 'levelled a huge number of horses and men when they shot an awful hail of balls', before their 'natural' mobility and light armour allowed them to avoid the 'attack of the cavalry'.[199] Giovio also wrote of the aftermath of the same battle, where he had seen 'the infinite number of lead shots' that had penetrated 'from one side to another not only men-at-arms but often two soldiers and two horses, such that the fields were covered in a miserable killing of noble knights and horses…'.[200] For Giovio, it was a decisive battle against the tradition of French heavy cavalry and a graveyard for chivalry.[201] At the same battle, the anonymous diarist from inside Pavia recorded the retreat of a 'large squadron' of the infamous *landsknechts* mercenaries after they were harried by the 'gunners' and 'arquebusiers'.[202] At Cerignola in 1503, two thousand French soldiers were killed in less than one hour, largely dealt by the power of Spanish arquebuses.[203] Within the wider context of gunpowder weaponry's effectiveness, Jacopo Guicciardini wrote of the effect of artillery at Ravenna in 1512, 'It was a horrible and terrible thing to see how every shot of the artillery made a lane through those men-at-arms, and how helmets with heads inside them, scattered limbs, halves of men, in vast quantity were sent flying through the air'.[204] Martin du Bellay claimed that more than 1,000 Swiss troops were cut down by artillery rounds in just their single advance toward the imperial army at

[199] B. Hall, *Weapons and Warfare in Renaissance Europe: Gunpowder, Technology, and Tactics* (Baltimore/London, 1997), p.181.
[200] '…gli tiravano infinite palle di piombo…passavano dall'una all'altra banda non pure gli uomini d'arme ma spesse volte ancora due soldati e due cavalli, talc he le campagne coperte da una miserabile uccisione di nobili cavalieri e di cavalli…', P. Giovio, *Le vite del Gran Capitano e del Marchese di Pescara*, C. Panigada (ed.), (Bari, 1931) p.429.
[201] 'Era quella battaglia molto pericolosa e grandemente contraria a' cavalli francesci….che morivano in un medesimo tempo, nocevano alla virtú della cavalleria…',Giovio, *Le vite*, p.429.
[202] Anonymous, *Diario anonimo dell'assedio di Pavia: Ottobre 1524-Febbraio 1525*, (ed.) M. Galandra (Pavia, 2015), pp.55-56.
[203] Fletcher, *Beauty and the Terror*, p.81.
[204] Shaw and Mallett, *The Italian Wars*, p.290.

Bicocca.[205] 3,000 French soldiers were killed at the same battle, and anywhere between 4,000 and 17,000 men were slain at Pavia – both battles were defined by the role given to firearms and artillery.[206] The effect of volley fire by a group of gunners could still be immense then, despite the pitfalls of the gun's accuracy. Monluc wrote often of being under fire, on one occasion finding himself ducking behind a church pillar – 'In my life I never heard so great Harquebuze shots…the Bullets almost continuously slapt against the pillar…'.[207]

Relative to the early modern soundscape, the noise of gunpowder battle must also have been immense. Grumello wrote that the discharge of firearms at Cerignola sounded as though the world was collapsing.[208] He also described the gunpowder fire lighting 'up the sky, so terrible a thing to see'.[209] At Pavia, the anonymous diarist describes how the great 'fury' of cannonade made it seem as though the world was being brought to ruin.[210] Leonardo Da Vinci, renowned artist but also inventor of gunpowder weaponry and designer of fortresses, wrote on how to represent these battles in art;

> 'The air must appear full of trains of fire, darting like lightning, some upwards, some down, and others in a level with the earth. The balls discharged from fire-arms, must leave a train of smoke behind them; and the front figures must appear covered with dust…Nothing…must be seen throughout the whole field of battle, but what is full of horror, blood, and carnage'.[211]

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[205] Sherer, *Scramble for Italy*, pp.107-110.
[206] Fletcher, *Beauty and the Terror*, p.197.
[207] Montluc, *Commentaries*¸ p.168.
[208] '…dischareghano li sciopi, parendo ruinasse il mondo…', A. Grumello, 'Cronaca di Antonio Grumello Pavese dal MCCCCLXVII al MDXXIX', *Raccolta di cronisti e documenti storici Lombardi inediti,* 1, (ed.) Giuseppe Müller (Colombo, 1856), p.82.
[209] Grumello, 'Cronaca', p.82.
[210] 'A di' 8 [novembre] cominciorono con tal furia a batter che parea il cielo, et tutto il mondo ruvinasse', Galandra (ed.), *Diario anonimo*, p.12.
[211] L. Da Vinci, *A Treatise on Painting*, (London, 1796), p.55; p.57; There has also been debate as to whether Da Vinci invented the wheellock firing mechanism, or whether it originated from Germany during a similar time period, Fletcher, *Beauty and the Terror*, p.272; V. Foley, S. Rowley, D. F. Cassidy, F. C. Logan, 'Leonardo, the Wheel Lock, and the Milling Process', *Technology and Culture*, 24:3 (July 1983), pp.399-427; M. Morin, 'The Origins of the Wheel Lock: A German Hypothesis: An Alternative to the Italian Hypothesis', *Arts, Arms and Armour* 1 (1979-1980), pp.80-99.

Firearms were often relied upon for their volley power. This might also mean that gunners would get close to the action, as Monluc relates with his description of placing arquebusiers in between the initial ranks of French pikes on one occasion. The plan there was to open fire when Monluc's men were within five metres of the enemy, but he soon realised the opposing force had used the same tactic. What resulted was a 'great slaughter' as the two bodies of men clashed pikes and exchanged shot at remarkably close range.[212] Given the noise and effect of firearms in encounters such as this it is unsurprising that they became objects of fascination for contemporaries. Monro wrote in the seventeenth century of his own experience of gunpowder warfare at Ingolstadt and declared that he 'who would swear he was not affrighted for a shot, I would not trust him again'.[213]

A well-placed shot from the arquebus also had potential to fly past the multitude and hit army leaders, which could rapidly burst the morale of the soldiers. Monluc was pragmatic in this regard, remarking on one occasion that he planned to 'kill all the captains first' with his band of gunners.[214] Monluc experienced the effect of this personally, as mentioned, when he noted that 'almost all the Soldiers and Gentlemen began to lose courage' at the sight of his own gunshot injury.[215] On another such injury he lamented that this 'unlucky shot of mine was the cause that the Army under my Command moulder'd away to nothing'.[216] The Venetian field-surgeon, Alessandro Benedetti, recorded a similar phenomenon at the siege of Novara in 1513 when he described the lead ball that struck the Count of Pitigliano, which hit 'under the right kidney and passed to the left scapula'. 'Straightaway', Benedetti wrote, 'great anxiety and grief pervaded the camp, and the wailing soldiers lamented that at so favourable a point in affairs their most eminent leader had been killed…'.[217]

[212] Montluc, *Commentaries*, p.72; Hall, *Weapons and Warfare*, p.187.
[213] Scannell, *Conflict and Soldier's Writings*, p.127.
[214] Montluc, *Commentaries*, p.72; Hall, *Weapons and Warfare*, p.187.
[215] Montluc, *Commentaries*, p.367.
[216] *Ibid*¸ p.370.
[217] A. Benedetti, *Diaria de bello carolino*, (ed.) D. M. Schullian (New York, 1967), pp.173-175.

Shaw has seen a trend in the same year, remarking on the 'growing number of captains and commanders killed and wounded by arquebus fire in the 1520s'.[218]

The issues posed by gunpowder injuries also motivated innovation in medical care. In these same years Ambrose Paré 'revolutionised the treatment of gunshot wounds' with his observations on contemporary cauterisation methods and his alternative development of the egg yolk, rose oil, and turpentine mixture to treat gunshot wounds. He wrote with genuine empathy for those he treated – 'From then on', he resolved to 'never again so cruelly to burn poor men wounded with arquebus shot'.[219] Where a gunshot would often not kill a man immediately, the dangers of infection from gaping wounds or bullets that pulled dirty fabrics into the flesh nevertheless posed significant problems to early modern military surgeons. The internal bleeding common in gunshot wounds, blood-poisoning and shattered bones were conditions 'which sixteenth-medicine was powerless to cure.[220] Francis Vere, wrote of personally sustaining two shots, the first 'through my leg, and a quarter of an hour later through the same thigh'. He attempted to 'care and provide for myself' but was fighting the 'bloud leaking from me at four holes', making him 'extreme weak and faint'.[221] Those that did survive such wounds might be left severely mutilated by the injury itself, or by the swift amputations performed by army surgeons.[222] Richard Wisemen summarised in the seventeenth century that gunshot wounds remained 'the most complicate sort of Wounds that can be inflicted'.[223] The potent effect of the gun undoubtedly combined fear and fascination among contemporaries, which goes some way in explaining the attention early modern people paid to them, despite pitfalls in the design of contemporary guns.

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[218] Mallett and Shaw, *The Italian Wars*, p.303.
[219] I. M. L., Donaldson, 'Ambrose Paré's Account of New Methods for Treating Gunshot Wounds and Burns', *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, 108:11 (2015), p.458.
[220] G. Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road, 1567-1659: The Logistics of Spanish Victory and Defeat in the Low Countries' Wars* (Cambridge, 1972), p.168.
[221] P. Scannell, *Conflict and Soldier's Literature in Early Modern Europe: The Reality of War* (London, 2015), p.127.
[222] Parker, *The Army of Flanders,* p.168.
[223] R. Wiseman, *A Treatise of Wounds, One of his Majestie's Serjean-Chirugeons,* pt.2, ch.1 (London, 1672), p.4.

The Sixteenth Century Soldier: An Overview of the Historiography

Gunpowder warfare evidently had a powerful physical and psychological effect on early modern combatants. A reappraisal of this impact also has potential to invert many of the assumptions commonly made about warfare in the early modern period, particularly the myth that the Italian Wars were bloodless. The soldier's experience of these wars is an important factor to consider when considering the cultures of violence that characterised this period, both within military and civilian contexts. These soldiers returned with their experiences of warfare and their use of gunpowder weaponry to their civilian lives after disbanding; as such they were vehicles for the proliferation of gun cultures and, alongside civilians, they offer an insight into the regular experience of violence in the lives of early modern Italian people. Alongside their inurement with firearms and the Wars' brutality this section will also contribute to recent historiography that has attempted to uncover the individual of the early modern army. In doing so, it plots the lived experience of men who later found themselves stood before the courts in Bologna charged with gun crimes.

In general terms, Scannell has argued that the historiography of warfare in the early modern period has more often 'emphasized the many difficulties of waging war in this period and portrayed a generally negative view of both the organizing efforts of central government and performance in the field of the soldiers that government employed'.[224] This narrative has been amply challenged in recent years by historians such as Scannell, Harari, Mallett, Berkovich, Sherer, and Hanlon, for example.[225] Mallett in particular has argued that the much maligned figure of the Italian *condottiero* commander was in fact capable of 'highly complicated tactical manoeuvres', demonstrating knowledge of the 'complexities of military decision making' that now incorporated 'artillery and the

[224] Scannell, *Conflict and Soldier's,* pp.2-3.

[225] Scannell, *Conflict and Soldier's Literature*; Y. N. Harari, *Renaissance Military Memoirs: War, History, and Identity, 1450-1500* (Woodbridge, 2004); Mallett, *Mercenaries and their Masters*; I. Berkovich, *Motivation in War: The Experience of Common Soldiers in Old-Regime Europe* (Cambridge, 2017); Sherer, *Warriors for a Living* (Leiden, 2017); G. Hanlon, *The Hero of Italy: Odoardo Farnese, Duke of Parma, his Soldiers, and his Subjects in the Thirty Years' War* (Oxford, 2014).

coordination of arms'.[226] Similarly, the subjectivity of the early modern soldier has largely been overlooked and instead the characterisation of the soldier as wretched cannon fodder has proven to be an enduring stereotype.[227] The image of the hapless or even savage soldier of the early modern world has largely been handed down by contemporary portrayals. These often reveal a disdain for the poorer men who made up the ranks of most armies, particularly through militias. Most famous of all, Shakespeare presented the 'fraudulent' Falstaff, the 'swaggering' Pistol, the 'damnable rogue' Parolles and the 'rascally' Bardolph.[228] In *Henry VIII*, Falstaff replies to Prince Hal's evaluation of his soldiers as 'pitiful rascals' with the reassurance that they are 'good enough to toss; food for powder'.[229] In Italian literature, the playwright Angelo Beolco's remarkably sympathetic portrayal of peasant soldiers in *The Veteran* is still incomplete. The character returning from war is still framed as cowardly, ignorant and dim, though there is some consideration given to the horrors of war witnessed – '…and you see that pal of yours killed dead, and that other one cut down before your eyes…and there's a fellow that's running for it getting shot in the back'.[230] Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* received criticism for pleasing 'the crowd' but nevertheless the common soldier is generally treated disdainfully.[231]

Contemporary commentators, political theorists and those occupying the highest ranks of the military and of society more generally further contributed to the disdainful picture of the average recruit. Mercenary groups, often represented in popular concepts by the infamous *Landsknechts* infantry were accused by Machiavelli as being symptomatic of the greater failings and military

[226] Mallett, *Mercenaries and their Masters*, pp.178-180.
[227] In a review of Barbara Donagan's *War in England,* Patrick Little wondered if the soldiers in the English Civil War were really as 'crude' as those represented in the book, P. Little [review], 'B. L. Donagan, *War in England, 1642-1649* (Oxford, 2010)', *Renaissance Quarterly,* 62:1 (Spring 2009), pp.294-295; Hanlon has outlined the importance of the movement in military studies that considers the 'subjectivity of soldiers' using 'social and behavioural sciences to explain the conduct of men in combat', Hanlon, 'Universal Soldier Revisited', p.210
[228] Scannell, *Conflict and Soldiers' Literature*, pp.2-3.
[229] W. Shakespeare, *Shakespeare's Henriad – Complete Tetralogy* (ed.) William Hazlitt (Kindle Edition, 2019, E-Artnow), p.229.
[230] Beolco, *The Veteran and Weasel*, p.75.
[231] C. P. Brand, 'The Poetry of War in the Italian Renaissance', in J. R. Mulryne, M Shewring (eds.), *War, Literature and the Arts in Sixteenth Century Europe* (New York, 1989), p.90.

incompetencies of Italian states.[232] Of the Swiss mercenaries, Guicciardini said they were greedy, fickle and rapacious, concerned only with the accumulation of wealth and not interested in the all-important 'frutto publico' that would have brought glory to their own countries.[233] A captain of the *landsknechts*, Philip of Cleves, wrote, 'I know nothing better for every commander than to avoid the ordinary infantry if possible'.[234] During the siege of Metz in 1552, Ambrose Parè claimed to have overheard Charles V say 'it was no matter if [the soldiers] did die, comparing them to 'caterpillars which eat the buds and other good things of this earth, and if they were men of worth they would not be in his camp for six livres a month, and therefore there was no harm if they died'.[235] Nehemiah Wharton wrote of the 'ruder sort of soldiers, whose society, blessed be God, I hate and avoid'.[236]

In the art realm, Hale has highlighted the scant representation of soldiers as individuals in this period. Barring an 'exceptional moment' produced by German and Swiss artists such as Dürer, Albrecht Altdorfer, Urs Graf and the Beham brothers, soldiers were rarely presented as individuals.[237] While Altdorfer's image of the hunched sixteenth-century mercenary throws a sympathetic light on the rigours of military life, others were more likely to depict the soldiers as

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[232] 'Le mercenarie e ausiliarie sono inutile e periculose: e se uno tiene lo stato suo fondato in sulle arme mercenarie, non starà mai fermo né sicuro; perché le sono disunite, ambiziose, senza disciplina, infedele…', N. Machiavelli, *Il Principe*, pp.77-78; p.86. Machiavelli's disdain for mercenaries was undoubtedly tied to his belief in the militia organisation, which he believed would fight with determination when defending their own territory.

[233] '…non uscendo del paese se non come soldati mercenari non hanno riportato frutto publico delle vittorie, assuefattisi, per la cupidità del guadagno, a essere negli eserciti, con taglie ingorde e con nuove dimande, quasi intollerabili, e oltre a questo, nel conversare e nell'ubbidire a chi gli paga, molo fastidiosi e contumaci.', F. Guicciardini, *Storia d'Italia*¸ (ed.) S. Seidel Menchi, (Torino, 1971), p.952.

[234] Quoted in Sherer, *Scramble for Italy*, pp.87-88.

[235] *Ibid,* p.46.

[236] N. Wharton, 'Letters from a Subaltern Officer of the Earl of Essex's Army', *Archaeologia,* 35 (January 1853), p.333.

[237] J. R. Hale, 'The Soldier in German Graphic Art of the Renaissance', *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, (Summer, 1986), 17:1, pp.86-87; p.92; On the sense of parody in depictions of the contemporary mercenary see Urs Graf's, 'Satire auf di Laster der Landsknechte, 1515, black ink on paper, Kunstmuseum Basel, (https://sammlungonline.kunstmuseumbasel.ch/eMP/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=16535&viewType=detailView) [accessed 10/03/2023]; and Urs Graf, 'Landsknecht, der sein Geld verspielt hat', 1519, black ink on paper, Kunstmuseum, Basel (https://sammlungonline.kunstmuseumbasel.ch/eMP/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=16570&viewType=detailView) [accessed 10/03/2023].

'cocksure and aggressive', or in parody.[238] In a similar vein, the realities of battle were rarely the focus of artwork either. The ignoble end of common soldiers dropped into mass graves found scarce representation, neither did the realities of war's human cost.[239] The existence of such scenes is instead recorded in army diaries, such as that of Alessandro Benedetti, who on one occasion wrote of those fallen, stripped of possessions, leaving them 'naked everywhere', some 'dead or half-alive', their 'tongues thrust out' as they 'begged for water'. He describes the dead carried away by nearby rivers while others 'unburied and swollen by the heat of the sun and the rain, were left to the wild beasts.'[240] According to Hale, there would be no village war memorials, or tombs for the 'unknown soldier' until the 'maturing of nationalism'.[241]

[238] See figure 1:2, Albrecht Altdorfer, 'Mercenary Foot Soldier', 1480-1538, pen and black ink, Frick Collection, New York (https://collections.frick.org/objects/7/mercenary-foot-soldier?ctx=d6d18f44-9e57-4597-a3ac-a6238301ff7a&idx=0) [accessed 10/03/2023],Hale, 'The Soldier in German Graphic Art', p.102.
[239] Hale, 'The Soldier in German Graphic Art', p.94.
[240] Benedetti, *Diaria*, pp.107-109.
[241] Hale, *War and Society*, p.84.

Figure 1:2 Albrecht Altdorfer, 'Mercenary Footsoldier', (1480-1538), pen and black ink, Frick Collection, https://collections.frick.org/objects/7/mercenary-foot-soldier?ctx=d6d18f44-9e57-4597-a3ac-a6238301ff7a&idx=0 (accessed 10/01/2023)

In 1974 Michael Mallett called for a history of the '99 per cent', a story of the regular soldier 'who did not aspire to become princes or control the destinies of states'. Important to this thesis, Mallett argued that such a history would also emphasise the major 'role of war in Renaissance society' and, I would add, the major influence war had on people's lives in sixteenth-century Italy. [242] Despite this call decades ago, Scannell still argued in 2015 that very few historians have attempted a 'bottom-up' evaluation of the military experience in the early modern world.[243] Much attention in this subject area has been diverted by the pull of Military Revolution debate, first posited by Michael Roberts in 1955, and which continues to inspire debate for those historians who either support, qualify the original thesis, or challenged the very existence of a revolution.[244] Nevertheless, among those who have drawn attention to the experience of the soldier specifically include Idan Sherer who has similarly challenged the histories that have too often prioritised 'organization, tactics and strategy' as the key points of investigation.[245] Miguel Martínez has used soldiers' writings and uncovered a 'soldiery republic of letters' among the Spanish soldiers fighting in Italy. The remarkable literary output of serving and former soldiers was inspired, according to Martínez, specifically by the 'technologies, social spaces, and practices of early modern imperial warfare'. These writings could also be strikingly subversive and 'oftentimes eroded imperial certainties and assumptions.' In fact, in spite of 'the burdens of partial literacies and the lack of cultural capital', the writings of early modern soldiers reflected a varied experience and opinion evidenced in writings that ranged from

[242] Mallett, *Mercenaries and their Masters*, p.3.
[243] Scannell, *Conflict and Soldiers' Literature*, pp.11-12.
[244] Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West,* p.164; Michael Roberts first suggested a military revolution for this period in 1956 but downplayed the role of firearms in the sixteenth century, M. Roberts, *The Military Revolution, 1560-1660* (Belfast, 1956); For Geoffrey Parker some decades later, the revolution lay in the reaction to gunpowder arsenals in the planning of new defensive works – castles and walls – across Europe. Both share the contention that gunpowder in some way led to the downfall of heavy cavalry, Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West* (Cambridge, 1988); Jason and Visoni-Alonzo sit on the other side of this debate and call for a 'total abolition of the theory of a Military Revolution' in favour of a longer-term evolutionary model, F. Jason, G. Visoni-Alonzo, *The Military Revolution in Early Modern Europe: A Revision* (London, 2016), p.6; p.9; More recently, David Eltis has argued instead that the firearm was more effective than the longbow and crossbow it replaced and played a significant role in the 'momentous sixteenth-century changes in the conduct of war', D. Eltis, *The Military Revolution in Sixteenth-Century Europe*, (London/New York, 1995), p.33.
[245]Sherer, *Warriors for a* Living, p.3.

'enthusiastic support to frontal opposition, from scepticism to indifference', suggesting a depth to the early modern soldiery that is often not appreciated.[246] Martínez, however, also pointed to the 'unwillingness' on behalf of scholars to '*understand war as an inextricable part of culture in the early modern age*'.[247] These cultures of war and violence would be crucial to the proliferation of firearms and their popularity outside of warring.

In other recent works, the edited collection presented by Raymond Fagel, Leonor Álvarez Francés and Beatriz Santiago Belmonte has taken advantage of the soldier literature created during the Revolt in the Low Countries spanning the late 16th and early 17th centuries, and includes contributions from Gregory Hanlon, whose work has again highlighted that the 'history of the common soldier is not a field with a long pedigree'.[248] In another key publication, Hanlon's evaluation of the Duke of Parma's armies during the Thirty Years War presents a detailed image of the composition of the Duke's forces using the surviving company records in the Archivio di Stato in Parma, which list origins, ages, descriptions and destinies for over 13,000 soldiers. While providing fewer first-hand accounts of service, Hanlon's investigation does allow an insight into the experience of soldiering that have traditionally been overlooked – for example, the muster and desertion records show how groups of men from the same localities, assumedly friends, enlisted together and would also often desert together; financial records give an insight into the modest living conditions of the rank and file stationed in their 'box-beds', while mortality records reconjure that sinister spectre of disease that forever loomed over early modern encampments.[249] The muster rolls also give tantalising glimpses of the faces that filled these ranks with descriptions of those enrolling or

[246] Martinéz, *Front* Lines, pp.4-5.
[247] *Ibid*, p.6; p.9; p.13 (emphasis my own).
[248] R. Fagel et al, *Early Modern War Narratives and the Revolt in the Low Countries*, (Manchester, 2020); G. Hanlon, 'Geoffrey Parker's Universal Soldier Revisited: European Military History and Human Universals', p.201, in Fagel et al, *Early Modern War Narratives*, p.201.
[249] Hanlon, *The Hero of Italy*, p.65;61;73.

presenting themselves for payment – heights, shapes, facial hair, scars and traces of smallpox were all noted, as were 'melancholy' airs and 'ugly' faces.[250]

Others have also built upon the notion of the roaming army as an organism, or peripatetic community, with a fresh focus on the baggage train and army followers. This perspective has brought the role of military-camp women to the fore of considerations and has highlighted women's connections to the military revolution by drawing attention to their key contributions to army logistics in a period when operational support for larger armies was crucial, but often forgotten.[251] Many contemporaries remarked upon the 'throng' of 'servants', 'camp-followers', 'women' and the 'great mass of baggage' that usually accompanied large moving forces.[252] The Italian Wars in fact provide a glimpse of women's military roles perhaps at their most visible and before the gradual diminishment of their position in armies that took place during following centuries.[253] The roles performed by women in armies was significant enough to regularly be represented in artwork from the period, and oftentimes contentious enough to elicit both favourable and particularly negative response in contemporaries' writings.[254] Nevertheless, despite not serving on the frontline of battle, many women were equally aware of wartime experience and the weapons involved. The above works on the social history of the early modern army are, however, remarkable examples in a field

[250] *Ibid*, p.59.

[251] Mary Elizabeth Ailes, 'Camp Followers, Sutlers, and Soldiers' Wives: Women in Early Modern Armies (c.1450-c.1650), pp.61-61, in B. C. Hacker, M. Vining (eds.), *A Companion to Women's Military History*, (Leiden/Boston, 2012); B. C. Hacker, 'Women and Military Institutions in Early Modern Europe: A Reconnaissance', *Signs,* 6:4, (Summer, 1981), pp.643-671; J. A. Lynn, *Women, Armies, and Warfare in Early Modern Europe*, (Cambridge, 2008), p.8.

[252] Benedetti, *Diaria*, p.83.

[253] Lynn, *Women, Armies, and Warfare*, pp.12-13.

[254] In artwork, see for example; Johann Theodor de Bry (1561-1623), 'The Baggage Train with the Sergeant Major', unknown date, engraving on paper, [https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/45144/baggage-train-sergeant-major]; Albrecht Altdorfer's prints on military life also captured the varied constitution of the baggage train. See A. Altdorfer, 'The Baggage Train' (1516-1518), woodcut on paper, image courtesy Clark Art Institute, clarkart.edu (https://www.clarkart.edu/artpiece/detail/the-baggage-train) [accessed 20/03/23]; Jacob von Wallhausen highlighted the significance of women's' presence in early modern armies when he wrote, 'When you recruit a regiment of German soldiers today, you do not acquire only 3,000 soldiers; along with these you will certainly find 4,000 women and children', in Lynn, *Women, Armies and Warfare*, p.1.

with a great deal more to offer. In summary, such works have demonstrated how common the experience of warfare was among all sections of early modern society, and perhaps suggest how that might have informed behaviour.

It should be acknowledged, however, that there are significant challenges in undertaking a history of the common soldier in the early modern period. There are, first and foremost, a paucity of accounts. Many of those accounts that do survive also offer frustratingly vague descriptions of battle. Harari's research into the personal writings of soldiers in this period has suggested that contemporary writing practice dedicated itself to presenting the author's honourable conduct in battle, focused on their action rather than professing any real sense of emotion and feeling – aspects that would become common parts of writing practice and reflection only by the 20th century. .[255] This has resulted in accounts of battle that rarely represent the emotion or the visceral nature of the experience and instead value relaying fact, demonstrating composure and listing the wounds an individual received but persevered with – like counting tokens of honour. Beyond the compulsion to record events with an audience in mind, Hall also suggests that the practicalities of gunpowder warfare conditioned a veneer of nonchalance that characterised battlefield reports. While, Hall claims, 'it would be a mistake to imagine that early modern soldiers were in some way fundamentally different from soldiers of any other era', the 'deeply inhuman' fire drill associated with the introduction of firearms encouraged men 'to keep their emotions under tight control'.[256] With this in mind, Monluc's writings constitute a relatively remarkable source base compared to what else is available. [257]

The autobiography of the renowned goldsmith, Benevenuto Cellini, offers an insight into a life that regularly moved between civilian and military spheres – an experience it seems was shared by many

[255] Harari, *Renaissance Military Memoirs,* p.79; p.88, Harari suggests that this model of writing about personal experience in battle was shaped by the influences of Julius Caesar's *Commentaries*.
[256] Hall, *Weapons and Warfare*, pp.150-151.
[257] Montluc, *Commentaries.*

in this period.[258] Fellow artist Rafaello Montelupo provided a brief description of his own enlistment in the early modern soldiery, and even found himself side-by-side with Cellini at the siege of Rome - despairing at the situation in the city, Rafaello decided the best option was to enlist as a 'bombardiere', for six scudi a month.[259] In other areas, David Edwards has compiled an edited collection of campaign journals from the Elizabethan Irish Wars that provide rich testimony of battlefield experience, of bravery and atrocity, and of human desperation surmised, for example, by the tragic fate of the junior officer who 'wilfully slew himself' with a firearm after months of punishing service.[260] These constitute some of the more remarkable examples of soldier literature discovered until now, however there has also been a reluctance on the part of historians to engage with contemporary soldier narratives as a source base. Scannell has shown how the priority of military histories has been a top-down one focused on utilising 'state papers, correspondence between key personalities, and other manuscript sources' to draw conclusions. Even those, claims Scannell, who attempted to evaluate the living conditions of contemporary soldiers rarely considered the input that soldiers' personal sources offered, perhaps, due to concerns over the 'potential subjectivity and inaccuracies of personal reports', even though 'many works were published with myriad detail'.[261] The following section will outline the experience of battle for both soldiers and civilians in the beginning of the era of gunpowder warfare, and specifically their introduction to firearms which would soon spread through the country's cities and rural hinterlands.

[258] B. Cellini, *The Autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini*, (trans.) J Addington Symonds (New York, 1910).
[259] 'Dopo aver attraversato il portone incontrai il mio maestro che sostituiva nell'incarico di bombardiere un suo fratello di nome Guglielmo, che era andato a Firenze per affari. Appena mi vide mi disse che se mi fosse arruolato come bombardiere mi avrebbe fatto dare una paga di sei scudi al mesi…', R. Montelupo, *Autobiografia di un architetto e scultore*, (ed.) R. Gatteschi (Firenze, 2016) pp.53-56.
[260] D. Edwards (ed.), *Campaign Journals of the Elizabethan Irish Wars* (Dublin, 2014), p.ix.
[261] Scannell, *Conflict and Soldiers' Literature*, pp.11-12.

The Soldier's Experience:

In 1989, John Keegan attempted to view histories of wars from behind the helmet, to ground the experience of the soldier on the past's battlefields from their perspective. Keegan asked questions of experience – how a looming cloud of arrows looked and sounded, how did the practicalities of leadership and orders work in action, and how can the psyche of soldiers be understood as they rooted themselves on the frontlines, preparing for a bloody onslaught.[262] Keegan did not include the experience of encounter between soldier and gunpowder during a supposed military revolution and few others have picked up from Keegan's work, leaving many of the myths of the Italian Wars standing. According to Mallett these myths have often placed 'undue emphasis' on the era's *condottieri* and those 'few outstanding figures whose ambitions and vices have been seen to sum up Italian warfare'.[263] In the same way that these myths have consigned the common soldier to parody or derision, they have also obscured the realities of battle during the Italian Wars.

The elaboration of Machiavelli's ideal militia centred around notions of classical order and concerned with the militia man's 'dress', 'customs', 'usages, voice, and bearing', speaks to a sense of ideal that is not grounded in reality or experience.[264] In his castigation of mercenaries and mercenary captains, Machiavelli contributed to one of the Italian Wars' most enduring legacies – that of its bloodlessness – when he surmised the conflict as having been 'begun without fear, carried on without danger, and ended without loss' given the feeble state of Italy's military system.[265] This is not the picture of battle given by its witnesses. Benedetti wrote of watching the leader of the mounted archers in the Venetian army at the battle of Fornovo 'blown to bits by artillery', of those in the aftermath who 'still breathed after hands and feet had been amputated, intestines collapsed, brains laid bare', surmised with 'so unyielding of life is nature'.[266] Those lucky enough to survive a

[262] Keegan, *The Illustrated Face of Battle,* p.1.
[263] Mallett, *Mercenaries and their Masters*, p.16.
[264] N. Machiavelli, *The Art of War (1521)*, (trans.) C. Lynch (Chicago/London, 2005), p.3.
[265] N. Machiavelli, *Florentine Histories*, (trans.) L Banfield, H. Mansfield (Princeton, 1990), p.186.
[266] Benedetti, *Diaria*, p.105; p.109.

battle were still greeted with unimaginable scenes - the chronicle of Bernardi wrote of spectacles 'never before seen in the world', of the bodies of people of all ages thrown into huge pits outside the town of Forlì after its sacking.[267] Benedetti recorded on another occasion the movement of the Venetian army from the village of Oppiano 'for diseases were breaking out because of the stench of corpses lying over the fields.'[268] At Pavia the Swiss ranks were described as having been 'torn to pieces like beasts', while others jumped into the Ticino River and drowned.[269] At the Battle of Novara, Maréchal de Florange offers a glimpse from the frontline of a 10,000 strong clash of pikemen and arquebusiers. His survival is remarkable given the 'forty-six sizeable wounds' he sustained, and the fact that he was himself found by his men 'amongst the dead', that is, likely pulled from underneath the bodies of the men he had served alongside.[270] In fact, Mallett and Shaw have stated that it is now 'widely accepted that the Italian Wars created some sort of watershed in battle mortality'.[271]

As part of a growing emphasis on combined arms warfare, armies were usually comprised of a mixture of pikemen, heavier armoured men-at-arms, cavalry (with an increasing emphasis on the mobility of light cavalry), crossbowmen, bowmen, and gunners. As the century progressed the specific combination of gunners and pikemen came to be regarded as the most effective, and the era of pike and shot was defined. Within a regular offensive combination of shot and pike, the arquebusiers would form 'sleeves' around the marching pike body, that is, surrounding their sides in blocks of mobile gunners to provide cover to the unarmed sides of the pike square, but also to act as a moving skirmish agent able to harass enemy troops. This also helped the pike bodies to close the distance between the two armies.[272] If attacked directly by cavalry or other fast-moving infantry the

[267] '...mai non vide cosa nesuna simile al monde.', A. Bernardi, *Cronache Forlivesi di Andrea Bernardi (Novacula) dal 1476 al 1517*, (ed.) G. Mazzatiniti, 2 vols. in 3 pts. (Bologna, 1895-1897), pp.279-283; S. Bowd, *Renaissance Mass Murder: Civilians and Soldiers During the Italian Wars* (Oxford, 2018), p.8.
[268] Benedetti, *Diaria*, p.121.
[269] Sherer, *The Scramble for Italy*, p.110.
[270] Harari, *Renaissance Military Memoirs*, pp.77-78; p.79.
[271] Mallett, Shaw, *The Italian Wars*, p.302.
[272] Arfaioli, *Black Bands*, pp.16-17.

gunners could move into the pike square for cover, and even fire from within the square if properly coordinated, creating a rudimentary 'human machinegun' that was able to march forwards.[273] The mobility of these attachments is referenced by Giovio in his account of the Battle of Pavia:

> 'Pescara sent about 800 Spanish *scloptarii* [arquebusiers] as a reinforcement, who were suddenly surrounded on their flanks and rear and levelled a huge number of horses and men when they shot an awful hail of balls… naturally mobile and lightly armoured [they] quickly retreated to avoid the attack of the cavalry.'[274]

Despite the potential range offered by the firearm however, gunners were often included in assault vanguards, the first to meet the enemy, and often were afflicted with particularly high mortality rates – forming a part of military skirmishing groups that became known collectively as the 'Forlorn Hope'.[275]

[273] *Ibid,* p.17; Fletcher, *Beauty and the Terror*, p.81.

[274] Hall, *Weapons and Warfare*, p.181.

[275] John Norden wrote: 'A souldier thinketh it a great grace that can obtain the place to leade the *Vangard* of a battell, the *Forlorn hope*, which is to betake him into the greatest danger for a little glorieamong men, and priseth life of little value, in regarde of the reputation of being desparate in the field' (1597), in P. Pugliatti, 'Shakespeare and the "Military Revolution": The Cultural and Social Weapons of Reformed War', in C. Fitter (ed.), *Shakespeare and the Politics of the Commoners: Digesting the New Social History*, (Oxford, 2017), p.159; H. J. Webb, *Elizabethan Military Science: The Books and The Practice* (London/Madison, 1965), p.100; Pugliatti, 'Shakespeare and the "Military Revolution"', p.159.

Figure 1:3 Hans Schäufelein, 'Three Soldiers with Muskets', ca 1511-15, woodcut, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. (Hans Schäufelein | Three Soldiers with Muskets | The Metropolitan Museum of Art (metmuseum.org) [accessed: 10/01/2023].

Contrary to the image of the cowardly and uncommitted soldier presented by contemporary literature and imagery however, the soldiers of the sixteenth century were often praised for their bravery even with the odds stacked significantly against them. Paolo Giovio wrote of the Spanish and German troops besieged at Naples by the French in 1528 who, despite battling starvation, 'said each day that they would rather die of hunger than surrender to the French… raising their right hand, in some sort of oath-taking which is done in haste, they swore to keep it'.[276] The destruction of the

[276] Sherer, *Scramble for Italy*, p.103.

Swiss force at Bicocca in part stemmed in their pride and determination to undertake a head-on assault.[277] At Ravenna, Raimondo da Cardona's men exclaimed they would rather die in a 'manly fashion' with lances 'across their thighs' than sit and wait before they threw themselves into a 'most cruel battle'.[278] When Monluc was shot in the face he stood his ground for as long as possible, reassuring his wavering men to 'not flinch nor forsake the sight, for I have no hurt, and let every one return to his place', this despite the 'torrent of blood'.[279] When Monluc successfully executed a daring raid on the mills behind Imperial lines at Auriol he had hoped that his bravery in undertaking a mission many others had dared not to take might be rewarded. The fact that his superiors took recognition for the success instead might suggest a familiar story for the common soldiery, whose achievements according to the memoirist Jean de Saulx were often appropriated by commanders who slept in their beds while their men were in the fields.[280] The common soldier's experience of particularly bloody wars fuelled by gunpowder weaponry is an important experience of contemporary life that is connected to the actions and circumstances of individuals found in the *Torrone* criminal courts in Bologna, which will be demonstrated in chapters 3 and 4. For the same reasons, it is also worth outlining some of the factors and experiences of military life, where soldiers accrued knowledge of using firearms but also established a network of connections that could influence their lives after demobilisation, and which will be shown to be significant in cases from Bologna's criminal courts discussed in later chapters.

[277] *Ibid*, p.109.

[278] 'Vedendo li milliti del Chattollicho essere posti in rina per lartellaria, lamentandosi gravemente di Riamondo da Cordona vicere che non voleano morire dartellaria, più presto voleano morire virilmente con la lanza sopra la cossa che herano per andare a trovare linimicho exerctio…et che voleano morire da homini vallenti…poste le lanze in resta et abassate le vicere feceno impeto contra Galli. Facto lo incontro con sue lanze apichata fu crudelissima battaglia fra luno et latltro exercito combattendo virilmente.', Grumello, *Cronica*, p.151.

[279] Montluc, *Commentaries*, p.367.

[280] Harari, *Special Operations*, p.180.

Conditions of Army Life:

Scholars have recently carved out an area of military studies dedicated to investigating the circumstances and motivations of the common soldier in the early modern period. Berkovich's study on the 18th-century soldiery has sought to counter the common assumption that the 'troops had little personal concern for the cause for which they were fighting' and the generally 'unfavourable' assessment of the soldier figure.[281] Histories in the last few decades focused on the 'socially marginalised groups' have presented a varied picture of motivation, ideology and experience than is traditionally assumed.[282] Histories focused on the social role of armies, the organism or moving community of the army, have also made suggestions towards the ties of fraternity, military and notions of social honour and military justice systems that persuaded the common soldier to hold the line (despite the ease at which they could desert) as much as honour systems affected the thinking of the period's literati.[283]

Soldiering during the Italian Wars was taken up for a variety of reasons according to an individual's circumstances. The decision making was likely eased by the nature of military service in the same years. While many point to this period as being a defining century in the professionalisation of soldiering, it was nevertheless mostly marked by the 'porous' boundary between common soldier and civilian.[284] Much like the aforementioned figure of Cellini, Scannell has noted how English gentlemen in the sixteenth century would pick up soldiering while on their travels, almost like casual mercenaries, suddenly rendering the 'diaries to gentlemen' into the 'accounts of soldiers'.[285] The main figure in Beolco's *The Veteran* again demonstrates the casual movement from military service back into civilian life on his return from the Italian Wars.[286]

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[281] Berkovich, *Motivation in* War, p.1.
[282] *Ibid,* p.3.
[283] *Ibid,* p.229.
[284] Woodcock, Mahoney, *Early Modern Military Identities*, p.7.
[285] Scannell, *Conflict and Soldiers' Literature*, p.25.
[286] Beolco, *The Veteran and Weasel*, pp.67-69.

The contemporary Venetian military engineer Giulio Savorgnan wrote somewhat negatively of those general motivations, claiming that enlistment roles were filled by those wanting to 'escape being craftsmen, working in a shop; to avoid criminal sentence', while the rest simply joined in 'the hope of having enough to live on and a bit over for shoes or some other trifle that will make life supportable'.[287] Nevertheless, in an analysis of muster rolls from the Thirty Years' War, Hanlon has challenged the 'tenacious legend that sixteenth and seventeenth century soldiers were victims forced by circumstance to fight in wars in order to survive', arguing that such an assumption fails to acknowledge the 'psychological diversity of personalities and inclinations that was as rich then as it is now'.[288] As much as these armies were comprised of multivarious backgrounds and nationalities (which also played a part in creating the 'cauldron of violence' that was the Italian Wars), they were also a collection of circumstances.[289] Some evidently took the opportunity of seasonal work to cover downtime in their civilian roles, such as the farmers pointed out by Benedetti in the forces at the Battle of Fornovo, 'who knew the terrain' well.[290] Sherer's appraisal of the Spanish forces mustered for service in Italy, however, shows that around 15% of those enlisting emanated from the country's nobility. In this case Spanish nobles may literally have walked side-by-side in formation with the lower classes.[291] Nevertheless, the general impression of enlistment driven by pecuniary necessity or ambition remains. On occasion this might have demonstrated a combination of circumstance – Monluc for example claimed nobility but also joined the Wars to earn money and establish a career.[292] Diego Nuñez de Alba wrote that he 'began to arrive to the wars not to live a military life or gain honor in them, but to gather some money to return home with'.[293] Nevertheless, the figure driven by poverty was most commonly drawn by contemporaries representing the common soldier.

[287] Quoted in Martinéz, *Front Lines*, p.13.
[288] Hanlon, *Hero of Italy*, p.64.
[289] *Ibid*, p.69; Sherer, *Scramble for Italy*, p.89.
[290] Benedetti, *Diaria*, pp.89-91.
[291] Sherer, *Warriors for a Living*, pp.20-21; pp.21-22.
[292] Sherer, *Special Operations*, p.170
[293] Quoted in Sherer, *Warriors for a Living*, p.23.

The youth who greets Don Quixote sang that 'necessity carried me to the wars'.[294] In Beolco's play, the main character returning from the Wars describes himself as 'a skinny broken-winded mare' as he discards the pair of worn-through shoes stolen from a fellow peasant. At the same time, he claims 'I wasn't out to hurt folk…What have they ever done to me? I was out to get a few cows or horses…'[295] Martinéz decisively claimed that early modern warfare 'was not an aristocratic business but rather a plebian one', in fact, the 'ragged' were the 'protagonists' of the military revolution.[296]

Beyond the gruesome realities of battle, the day-to-day life of a soldier was often gruelling and rarely delivered on promises of wealth and loot. The early modern army was a surprisingly mobile one, but the demands of that mobility often claimed lives before battle was even seen. Geoffrey Parker estimated that the Spanish Army of Flanders covered around 12 miles a day on their march over the Alps and along the Spanish Road.[297] According to Scannell, some units were recorded as having covered 20 miles a day in the middle of winters.[298] Diego Nuñez de Alba wrote of the 'burning sun' and 'terrible heat' on the road to Cerignola in 1503 – the dust and 'fatigue of the entire army' meant that many 'died of thirst' on the way.[299] In clothing that was often not dissimilar from standard civilian wear, soldiers regularly succumbed to the elements as well.[300] Both Landucci and Grumello reported the news of naked and starving French soldiers stumbling into Rome in 1503 who, having been denied lodging, were forced to warm themselves on dung heaps. By the next morning these were littered with the dead.[301] Burial was not always guaranteed either – Benedetti claims to have seen 'corpses of brave men protruding at intervals which had been despoiled by

[294] *Ibid*, pp.21-23.
[295] Beolco, *The Veteran and Weasel*, pp.68-69; p.73.
[296] Martinéz, *Front Lines*, p.12.
[297] Scannell, *Soldiers' Literature,* p.131; Parker, *The Army of Flanders*, p.96.
[298] Scannell, *Soldiers' Literature*, p.131.
[299] Sherer, *Warriors for a Living*, p.49
[300] *Ibid,* pp.49-50.
[301] '...quali infanti foreno intrati in Saravalle standoli in quello locho per sino foreno ritrovate victuaglie; condutti poi a tanto tra per le neve et fredi grandissimi et la penuria grande del vivere che herano constrecti a mangiare cavalli, cavalle, muli et mule, axini et cani per non perire di la fame di sorte ne morirno assai.', Grumello, 'Cronaca', p.497.

many' after the clash at Fornovo.[302] Occasional mercy could be found, as Benedetti notes with the wounded French 'begrimed with mud and blood and looking like slaves' brought into the Venetian camp 'and attended to by the surgeons at the public expense'.[303] On other occasions though he would write of the French wounded killed by their own allies as they made a swift retreat.[304] Compounding the ever-present dangers threatening the early modern soldier with a sordid end was the weakness of many military systems' organisation structures. Miguel de Cervantes wrote that 'No one is poorer in their misery, because they depend on their wretched pay, which arrives too late or never at all, and thus they are forced to subsist with whatever they can get with their own hands at the risk of their lives and their conscience'.[305] According to Guicciardini, the 'licentiousness' of the Spanish soldiers in Italy, who lived 'entirely off the substance of the population', was a consequence of being 'poorly paid by their kings'.[306] The experience of soldiers at war, then, was a violent, unpredictable and often miserable one. They likely became accustomed to a visceral world that combined military cultures with violence of life and more often, perhaps, came out of the ordeal with little monetary gain to show for it. Conditions of life even after surviving a potentially brutal military experience could be desperate, which will be highlighted in Bologna's court records.

Another factor of this experience that should be acknowledged, and which will be apparent when reviewing the court cases later in the thesis, is the comradery of army units. During their stint in the armies, men no doubt established connections and networks as they would have done in occupations at home. This sense of a society on the move was still run with violent rules – Benedetti again, for example, records the Venetian *proveditors* had ordered deserting soldiers to have their noses cut off, 'their faces burned', and to be 'dismissed without their arms'.[307] Nevertheless, Sherer has found socially and politically active military bodies grouping together at times during the Italian

[302] Benedetti, *Diaria*, pp.108-109.
[303] *Ibid*, p.109.
[304] *Ibid,* p.117.
[305] Quoted in Martinéz, *Front Lines*, p.12.
[306] Guicciardini quoted in Sherer, *Warriors for a Living*, p.79.
[307] Benedetti, *Diaria*, p.143.

Wars. These moments of agency might be concerned with immediate issues, such as those described by Benedetti at Novara who, it was claimed, would 'readily desert to the enemy unless a way of procuring wine is found'.[308] But Sherer has found in other parts a 'professional awareness' among the soldiery and soldiers capable of influencing military strategy or deploying considered argument in protracted negotiations with higher command. In such events the firearm might be another point of focus – Sherer has found soldiers firing their guns into the air in unison, signalling their intentions to peers or superiors.[309] The symbolic use of the firearm, and its potential to rally allies, will appear again in the witness statements given to the criminal court in Bologna. The 'small group mentality' and potential for cooperative ties to form between soldiers facing terrible conditions and poor prospects identified by both Hanlon and Sherer were also 'memorable and influential' experiences for soldiers.[310] This was perhaps more pronounced than ever before, since tight combinations of pike and shot required coordination and resolve, less the formation collapse. The necessity of such cooperation underlines the importance of camaraderie between members of military units.[311] The ties of association, perhaps even obligation, between former soldiers after their service will also become apparent in later chapters.

The Civilian Experience:

The Italian Wars made an intimate connection between civilians and the soldiery. This meant that even for many of those who did not directly serve in armies, the experience of war and its associated violence was very much a shared one. The extremes of this violence for non-combatants during the Italian Wars are presented in Bowd's work on mass murder and the confrontations between military and civilian lives. Bowd presents sack and massacre in these wars as 'the rule rather than the exception', plotting both the personal experience of life during this conflict and the wider social and

[308] *Ibid,* p.135.
[309] I. Sherer, '"All of Us, In One Voice, Demand What's Owed Us": Mutiny in the Spanish Infantry During the Italian Wars, 1525-1538', *Journal of Military History*, 78:3 (July 2014), p.906.
[310] Hanlon, *The Hero of Italy*, p.66; Sherer, *Warrior for a Living*, p.101.
[311] Fletcher, *Beauty and the Terror*, p.81.

cultural impact of a period that made 'a terrible impression' and in some way explained why Italians 'regarded the year 1494 as a dreadful turning point in their history'.[312] In much the same way to Bowd's research, this section contributes to uncovering the experiences of civilians (a history that has been largely overlooked) and demonstrates the proximity of civilians to the violence Italian Wars regardless of individual military experience. This experience, alongside existing military cultures and cultures of violence, provides context to the criminality explored in Bologna's *Torrone* court in chapters 3 and 4. More specifically, however, this section provides further context to the journey of the firearm and gunpowder technologies towards the wider Italian population. The terrifying effect of this technology against the walls and homes of Italian contemporaries was an experience that contributed to the spread of firearms as people sought to control this new, explosive piece of technology themselves.

Barbara Donagan underlined the close relationship between civilian and soldier in the early modern period in an analysis of the English Civil War - by highlighting that 'civilians became soldiers' and later, after war, 'became civilians again' as a fact of warfare in this era. Donagan emphasises the 'difficulty of divorcing studies of the military conduct of war from the domestic experience of civilians'.[313] Much the same can be said for the Italian conflict. In the same way that men and women regularly moved between the military and civilian sphere, so too did the violence that accompanied the Italian Wars. The recollections from an anonymous diarist held in Pavia during its encirclement by French forces in early 1525 captured a one such clash between the two spheres. In an entry marked on 18th February, the diary's author recorded the sortie beyond the walls of the city made by a group of women, labourers, artisans, and elderly during a lull in fighting. The group was guarded by only a handful of the city's beleaguered soldiers during their efforts to gather essentials from nearby farms and gardens when they were spotted by the infamous *condottiero* Giovanni de Medici, famed

[312] Bowd, *Renaissance Mass Murder*, p.264; p.8; p.3.
[313] B. Donagan, 'War, Property, and the Bonds of Society: England's "Unnatural" Civil Wars', in E. Charters, E. Rosenhaft, H. Smith (eds.), *Civilians in Europe: 1618-1815* (Liverpool, 2012), p.53.

for leading the *Bande Nere* mercenary company and specialising in hit and run skirmish tactics.[314] Driven by compulsion to avenge a previous defeat, Giovanni and his men charged at the search party with 300 horses and a large company of infantry. The author of the Pavian diary made note of the shamefulness of the act and the ensuing rout of the civilian expedition, though Bowd has noted how in many cases contemporaries appear to have seen little distinction between the soldier and the civilian who supported the resilience of a besieged settlement.[315] Small consolation was found for the anonymous diarist in this case with the fate of Giovanni de Medici - he was injured by an arquebus during his own retreat and would later die at the siege of Rome when a falconet round shattered his leg.[316]

War played out over longer campaigns and incorporating logistics practices such as billeting ensured that this relationship would continue. The lightest penalties incurred for needing to house roaming soldiers according to agreement between allies or demands of superior army might only be pecuniary, though given the financial instability of the period this extra demand may have driven many into further desperation. Luca Landucci writes of the French descent into Florence in November 1494 - '...there were not hundreds but thousands of the French, so that the whole city was occupied in every corner'. Even those houses not marked with chalk to signal a billeting house were obligated to house soldiers, regardless of whether the 'owners were rich or poor'. Landucci records it as a partial grace that some money exchanged hands between soldier and the accommodating civilian, but it often fell short of actual cost. In this case the French 'were really very

[314] Arfaioli, *Black Bands*, p.11.

[315] Bowd, *Renaissance Mass Murder*, p.235; according to Bowd, by the turn of the sixteenth century the 'modern notion of the civilian as a legally definable and protected figure' was beginning to be formulated, Bowd, *Renaissance Mass Murder*, p.237.

[316] 'Adi' 18 circa 20 hore uscite fuor della citta' molte femine, putti, saccomani, et aresani, con altra povera gentre de forse due mille, et erano andatti alli horti, per tuor herbe, et legne, com'era usanza di far ogni girono, et questo fu a porta nova de Milano. Lo sig. Giovan de Medici, che volea vendicar l'ingiuria fatta alli suoi Campezo, venne alla sprovvista, con 300 cavalli, et doi milla fanti et con gran furia correndo assaltorno questa povera gente, et non trovando contrasto ammazzorno forse 30 de nostri, tra quelli furon 7 fanti da piedi, il resto donne, ragazzi et poveri vecchi; il che le fu piu' de vergogna, che honor; ma maggior danno a lui, perche' nel rettirarsi fu ferritto, con arcobuggio, in una gamba; et per quano m'ha detto un suo tamburino, sta mal forte.', Anonymous, *Diario anonimo dell'assedio di Pavia: Ottobre 1524-Febbraio 1525*, (ed.) M. Galandra (Pavia, 2015), pp.49-50.

well behaved', which no doubt made the financial burden more bearable.[317] On other occasions though, relations took a turn for the worse. Later in November Landucci complains that 20 horses were 'put into my place' and having left his son Benedetto there with instructions to pay 'proper respect' to the imposing soldiers they nevertheless 'nearly slew him several times'.[318] Later they 'slew about eleven men' at Corella, 'ruining all the country like a flame of fire'.[319]

Sieges were a particularly bloody moment where civilian and soldier might clash. This was a similarly visceral and disturbing encounter for the soldier, as cannon and man pressed against the bastion walls of Italian cities in a frenzy, as it was for the civilian desperately willing the walls to stand from the other side. The siege, particularly a successful one, could become a point or moment of particularly intense bloodletting and graphic experience. The powder-fuelled opening of a siege signalled the beginning of what would be a chaotic and merciless encounter. Contemporaries often wrote of the incessant bombardment of city and town walls that initiated a siege by an array of cannon - Benedetti wrote at Novara that the towers and gate of the city were bombarded by 'two huge bombards' and 'the destruction was enormous; in one night you could see the appearance of the entire city changed'.[320] Simone di Goro Brami da Colle wrote of the constant bombardment against the walls of Prato in 1512, 'all day and all of the following night' as they waited for the walls to break 'without a quiet moment'.[321] Tommaso di Silvestro recorded the sight of cannon being directed towards the walls at Orvieto in 1497 - 'First the fire is seen, then the smoke and immediately the thunder', noting that smoke enveloped the scene for a significant length of time after the attack.[322] This bombardment was followed by five hours of fighting around the castle walls,

[317] Landucci, *Florentine Diary*, p.59.
[318] *Ibid,* p.72.
[319] *Ibid*, p.73.
[320] Benedetti, *Diaria*, p.177.
[321] 'E li detti murorno tutto quel dì e la notte seguente; e del continuo per insino alla domenica circa a ore dieciannove, attesono a rompere con la detta artiglieria senza quietare punto', Simone di Goro Brami da Colle, 'Narrazione del sacco di Prato', in C. Guasti (ed.), *Il sacco di Prato e il ritorno de' Medici in Firenze: narrazioni in verso e in prosa* (Bologna, 1968) p.116.
[322] Quoted in Bowd, *Renaissance Mass Murder*, p.80.

with the civilians within the town understanding that a loss there would mean everyone within would be put to the sword.[323] If the bombardment failed to make gaps in the stonework for soldiers to rush they would dash toward the battlements with ladders and make a daring climb against the walls. An account by the attacking Sydenham Poyntz at the siege of Nördlingen gives an insight into the terror of such scenes:

> 'So soone as hee came to the Top of the Walles…with a sword one struck of his head [which] fell to the ground. The head being of, the body falles upon mee and there it lyes very heavy upon mee and blooded mee wonderfully that I was almost smothered with blood…with the weight and with the blood I could hold no longer and downe wee fell together and what with my fall upon the stones and hee in his armour upon me that I knew not whether I was alive or dead'.[324]

Gunpowder was also used to great effect - Monluc recalled the action of Captain Castella who during a siege ran at the enemy's walls with his men, throwing three tall ladders against them and making the climb to the top, all while 'the Enemy plyed them very well with shot'.[325] At Novara enemy forces used mines to destroy the city's walls from below.[326] The bodies of thousands of soldiers being thrown into a compact space against such explosive weaponry obviously meant great bloodshed. Those that did break through could expect little let-up - at Novara the defending French threw barrels of gunpowder down onto raging Spanish troops, burning and injuring many.[327] Firearms were also brought into contention in these moments of storming the interior of the settlement's walls and for clearing rooms of buildings. At the siege of Como, Giovio relates the

[323] *Ibid,* p.80.
[324] In Scannell, *Conflict and Soldiers' Literature*, p.126.
[325] Montluc, *Commentaries*, p.337.
[326] Grumello, *Cronica*, pp.83-85.
[327] '...correndo essi Galli sopra uno torrono depso castello, gittando al basso barrili di polvere sopra li Spagnoli, di sorte ne foreno abruxati et guasti assai…', Grumello, *Cronaca*, pp.83-85.

storming of a building with a band of gunners - giving the signal to shoot the gunners fired a 'tempest' of bullets against the men therein, leaving many dead, the others, 'without shame', fled.[328]

The inevitability of most sieges was that food and water became scarce and necessities for defence perhaps even more so - Simone di Goro Brami Da Colle relates how the arquebusiers at Prato were forced to take lead from the roofs of churches and houses to fashion new bullets.[329] Devastating famine, disease and suffering were also reported by those trapped within the walls. Benedetti reported on the siege at Novara that the Venetians redirected the river away from the city and destroyed all surrounding mills, forcing the city's inhabitants to mash 'their grain with a pestle and made bread with half-ground unsifted flour'.[330] Later he would write how 'the people of Novara were at length wasted away by hunger' and sought to raise help with a system of signal fires. 'Hunger, along with the increased drinking of water, and then the unbroken wakefulness and continual fear, had spread many diseases', the streets 'were filled with people sick and only half-alive'.[331] The Duke of Orléans 'drove out all those of the populace who were poor and useless'.[332] According to a prisoner taken during the siege of Pavia, the inhabitants were suffering from a lack of both flour and gunpowder - two seemingly crucial elements that highlight how closely life was tied to war in this period.[333]

According to Angela De Benedictis, the Italian Wars were defined by 'a real war against civilians'.[334] Much like contemporaries appear to have understood the wars as a watershed in military tactics and

[328] '...fece entarui dentro gli archibugieri; commettendo loro che quando gli dava il segno, scaricassero una tempesta di palle contra nemici…Perche subito che fu dato il segno, ogni cosa, si come accade nel terremoto, si scosse con rumore, i Francesi & gli svizzeri piovendo - gli addosso una tempesta d'archibugiate si disordinarono; molti ne morirono & alcuni feriti senza vergona abandonarono il luogo.'; P. Giovio, *La vita del Signor don Ferrando Davolo marchese di Pescara* (Venice, 1557), p.39.
[329] 'Ma alla detta terra era fornita molto male, chè non vi era munizione alcuna di artiglieria, né di polvere, né saettume; e bisognò a'nostri scoppettieri, per fare pallottole, levare tanta piastra da uno antitettuccio di una chiesa; et non vi si trovava piombo altrova.'; Da Colle, 'Narrazione del sacco di Prato', p.115.
[330] Benedetti, *Diaria*, p.133.
[331] *Ibid*, p.169.
[332] *Ibid*, p.159.
[333] M. Belloni (ed.), *Cronache dell'assedio di Pavia, 12 November 1524-24 Febbraio 1525* (Roma, 2021), p.24.
[334] A. De Benedictis, *Una guerra d'Italia, una resistenza di popolo* (Bologna, 2004), p.11.

military violence, they also appear to have been particularly perilous for non-combatants. The moment at which the enemy troop flooded a breach was seismic. A range of early modern chroniclers record the moment and its immediate aftermath - Simone di Goro Brami da Colle wrote of the spilling over of the Spanish troops at Prato, who 'ran through the piazzas and churches; and everyone they met were dead', those watching from safe spots overlooking the city saw those scattered in squares and streets and 'bitterly killed'.[335] Modesti reported similar scenes of Spanish troops finally breaking through the walls and 'without mercy' ran through the city killing women, youths, children, friars and priests in the streets and even in the churches.[336] He reckoned that the number of dead from the sacking of the city stood at 5,600, a great number of those bodies were thrown into wells.[337] 'In summary', Modesti claimed, the sack of the city was 'universal', everything was stolen, both 'sacred and profane'.[338] Women who attempted to defend their honour (and who were generally made a target of sackings) were killed and there was no distinction in the killing of men, nobles or children - 'those who had their throats cut, those thrown from the windows, those brutally beaten, those stripped and burned…'.[339] According to Giovio, at the sack of Como the 'entire land was miserably put to sack, Madonna Lucia Capella was 'most cruelly' killed by 'una archibugiata'.[340] At an indirect level, these wars also heaped higher taxes on civilians, worsening

[335] '...corsero alle piazza et alle chiese; et tanti quanti ne furono giunti, ne furono morti. E nostri da Colle per fare la obbedienza , che'è il fondamento della guerra, si stavano a buona guardia delle mura e della porta dove erano stati posti; e veduto e sentito tanto rumore, admirati di tal cosa, non sapendo che partito pigliarsi…E subito si sbaragliorno chi qua e chi là alla ventura: quelli che capitorono in piazza e nella strada maestra furono tutti aspramente morti…', Da Colle,'Narrazione del sacco di Prato', p.119.

[336] '... i quali senza pietà alcuna corsano la terra, ammazzando donne, uomini grandi, vecchi, giovani, preti, frati, d'ogni sorte, et in ogni luogo. Furono mori nella Pieve di Prato circa 200 uomini; in San Francesco, in San Domenico. Ma che più? In tutte le chiese di Prato furono ammazzati uomini che vi erano fuggiti…'; J. Modesti, 'Il miserando sacco data alla terra di Prato dagli Spagnoli l'anno 1512', *Archivio Storico Italiano* (ASI), 1 (1842), pp.101-102.

[337] ' Il numero de' morti, è la comune opinione circa 5600; quali furono la notte medesima in gran parte gettati ne'pozzi…', Modesti, 'Il miserando saco data alla terra di Prato', p.102

[338] 'In somma, il sacco du universale di tutta la roba, e di tutte le persone, e di tutti i luoghi sagrati e profani.', Modesti, 'Il miserando saco data alla terra di Prato', p.105

[339] 'Non lascerò indietro di molte verginelle e maritate, che per voler salvare l'onestà loro, furono chi ammazzate, e chi segata la gola, e chi gettate dalle finestre, e chi gravissimamente battute, chi spogliate e bruciatagli la natura, e di poi lasciate quasi per morte; e fatte molt'altre infinite disonestà, le quali per vergogna voglio tacere.',Modesti, 'Il miserando saco data alla terra di Prato', p.105

[340] Giovio, *La Vita del signor don Ferrando Davalo*, p.40; Sherer, *Warriors for a Living*, p.144

living conditions, and contributed to a general sense of anxiety that has seeped into contemporaries' writings - Landucci, for example, writes of finding omens in lightning strikes and irregular weather, by a nearby monstrous birth that he finds explanation for in the nervousness of these decades.[341] Landucci justified his concern for the sight by noting that Ravenna was sacked shortly after this sighting - 'It seems as if some great misfortune always befalls the city where such things are born'.[342]

The atrocities committed by early modern soldiers according to accounts of the period have also come to overshadow the story of the conduct of soldiers during the Italian Wars. The accounts such as those at Mordano in 1494, dubbed 'the cruelty of Mordano', the poetry that caught the sack of Capua by the French who slaughtered 'without pity or mercy', and contemporary Tuscan proverbs such as 'in the soil where the Spanish leave their footprints, not a blade of grass will grow', have shaped the popular conception of the early modern soldiery.[343] War reports from those such as Jacopo Modesti wrote of the great number of enemy soldiers at the sack of Prato who 'without any mercy' ran 'through the land, killing women, great and small men, old and young, priests and friars, and every sort of person, and in every place they were dead'.[344] The Pavian chronicler, Antonio Grumello, reported on a range of atrocities committed by Italian, French, and Imperial troops, including the cruelties at Barbarano where the Gascon troops broke into a cave of sheltering civilians using arquebuses, pickaxes and gunpowder barrels - according to Grumello, 2,000 civilians were killed.[345] Some of the most heinous crimes committed by armies and individual soldiers of the early modern period took place across the Italian peninsula and included the sack of Mordano in 1494, the sack of Capua in 1501, the sack of Brescia in 1512, of Ravenna in 1512 and Prato in the same year,

[341] Landucci, *Florentine Diary*, p.189; p.194; pp.249-250.
[342] *Ibid*, p.250
[343] Brown, 'Rethinking the Renaissance, p.247.
[344] '...sensa pietá alcuna corsono la Terra, ammazzando donne uomini grandi e piccolo, vecchi et giovani, preti e frati, ed ogni sorte di persone, et in ogni luogo ne furono morti', Modesti, 'Il miserando sacco data alla terra di Prato', pp.239-240.
[345]'...non potevano intrare per li archbuxi, quali reusivano depsa crotta, cominciarno a rompere epsa crotta di sopra. Rotta essa crotta con picchi di ferro gittarno barili di polvere abasso di sorte doreno abruxate do milia anime', Grumello, 'Cronaca di Antonio Grumello', pp.126-127.

and the sacks of Rome and Pavia in 1527 and 1528 respectively, among many others. Many of those directed against the *contadini* in small *comuni* surrounding urban centres and scattered into the hinterlands were no doubt unrecorded, but surviving reports prove that they were as much a target as the wealthier prizes - Tommaso di Silvestro's report of the burning of village of Todi is typical, for example.[346] Benedetti also recorded the destruction of smaller civilian settlements.

> 'On 6 August a very wide level stretch was made on this side of the town of Cameriano, which lies between Vercelli and Novara. This town a few days before had been ravaged by Venetian soldiers; 'all the enemy were slain and all its buildings burned, and fire raged also in the suburbs'.[347]

The sack of Rome in 1527 was the event that sent the largest shockwaves throughout the early modern world.[348] A Florentine wrote from the scene of 'streets heaps with bodies', those now 'cut to pieces and covered in mud', many of whom were still 'half-alive, lying without any hope of assistance' and in 'that wild chaos' they saw 'men, women, and children of every condition throwing themselves from the windows, often voluntarily'.[349] Sensational war reports across early modern Europe were also inspiration for much of the period's artistic representation of the soldier, as were the stereotypes now grounded in the popular imagination. Artists such as Urs Graf, inspired by his own sense of national rivalry against the German *landsknechts*, compounded the stereotype of mercenaries deployed in the Italian theatre with depictions of the *landsknecht* either laden with symbolic references to their supposed cuckoldry, impotence or deviancy, or more directly presented as disgraced, naive or incompetent soldiers returning from duty.[350] In another example he

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[346] Tommaso di Silvestro, *Diario*, (ed.) Luigi Fumi, *Rerum italicarmum scriptores: raccolta degli storici italiani dal cinquecento al millecinquecento*, vol. XV, Part V (Bologna, 1900), p.74

[347] Benedetti, *Diaria*, p.155.

[348] J. Hook. *The Sack of Rome, 1527* (London, 1972), p.279.

[349] L. Kaborycha, *A Short History of Renaissance Italy*, (Princeton, 2011), p.230; see also I. Sherer, 'A Bloody Carnival? Charles V's Soldiers and the Sack of Rome in 1527', *Renaissance Studies*, 34:5 (November 2020), pp.723-869.

[350] See U. Graf, *Satire auf die Laster der Landsknechte,* 1514, pen and ink drawing on paper, Kunstmuseum Basel; U. Graf, *Landsknecht, der sein Geld verspielt hat*, 1519, pen and ink drawing on paper, Kunstmuseum Basel; C. Andersson, 'Niklaus Manuel and Urs Graf: Cuckolds, Impotence, and Sex Workers in Swiss

encapsulated the very real abominable ravages of war directed against women in particular with the figure of *An Armless Girl with a Wooden Leg*.[351]

Far from always being passive victims, however, examples such as the siege of Pavia demonstrate

Figure 1:4: Urs Graf, 'Armlose Dirne mit Stelzbein', 1514, Ink on paper, Blatt: 21x15.9cm, Kunstmuseum Basel.

how civilian engagement and agency could sustain a remarkable defence. Before civilians found themselves under siege, however, they had already often taken an active part in the defence of their localities and demonstrated their keen understanding of, and participation in, military tactics and wartime violence. In fact, Shaw has found civilian resistance during the Italian Wars to be 'more effective, more feared by the soldiers – and at times more organized – than it is generally given

Renaissance Art, (c.1510-1517)', in S. F. Matthews-Grieco (ed), *Cuckoldry, Impotence and Adultery in Europe (15th-17th Century*), (New York, 2016), pp.199-203.

[351] See figure 1:4, U. Graf, 'Armlose Dirne mit Stetzbein', 1514, Ink on paper, Kunstmuseum Basel (https://sammlungonline.kunstmuseumbasel.ch/eMP/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=16540&viewType=detailView) [accessed 10/03/2023).

credit for'.[352] Demonstrations of their agency further underline those blurred boundaries between combatants and non-combatants as well. At Gargliano, Grumello writes of the 'peasants' who killed the fleeing French soldiers and of those who killed the French soldiers billeted in civilian areas nearby, for example.[353] The same happened at Ravenna, where an Italian captain was killed by 'peasants'.[354] In fact, Grumello's record suggests that 'peasants' demonstrated a particular bloodlust against soldiers - at 'Villafrancha' he writes that those who fell into the hands of the French were saved, while those who fell at the mercy of 'peasants' were killed.[355] At Genoa he claims that over 500 starving soldiers were finished off by 'peasants'.[356] In 1528, 'Sanpo', a French captain, took his soldiers toward the city of Alessandria and, according to Grumello, was continually 'skirmishing with peasants' en route.[357] Landucci reports those peasant *'marraiuoli*' who laid waste to enemy lands, but on this occasion were captured by the Pisans and hanged, drawn and quartered.[358] Benedetti commented on those 'peasants' who 'at very many points destroyed bridges over the rivers' to disrupt the French army's retreat.[359]

Indeed, winning over the local population could swing the tide of a particular campaign. The French soldiers' behaviour as they wandered 'at will through Campania, Puglia, Calabria, and the Abruzzi', 'ravaging' homes, 'despoiling churches' and raping women and nuns convinced the 'natives' to

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[352] C. Shaw, 'Popular Resistance to Military Occupation During the Italian Wars', in S. K Cohn Jr. and F. Ricciardelli, *The Culture of Violence in Renaissance Italy: Proceedings of the International* Conference, *3-4 May, 2010* (Firenze, 2012), p.257-271.

[353] 'Apichata la battaglia non pottendo resistere alo Alviano foreno posti in fugha et assai ne foreno occixi, et molti, quali herano amalati, foreno occixi da li villani per non potere caminare, et alchuni homini darme de lo exercito Gallicho, quali erano alogiati per le ville et castelle, ignoratni del passo de lexercito Cattolicho foreno pregioni et morti da villani.'; Grumello, 'Cronaca', p.94

[354] 'Piero di Pagij, capittaneo de seicento zanetarij, fu occixo da villani.', Grumello, 'Cronaca', p.151.

[355] '...chi chaschava in le mane de Galli hera salvo, chi chaschava ne le mane de villani hera occixo.', Grumello, 'Cronaca', p.197.

[356] 'Stando el predicto Belgioioxo in la citrate Genvense foreno mandati in più volte infanti 1000 da Cexare, quali potevano essere al numero poi di 1500 infanti Spagnoli et altra genercione senza li infanti morti, quali perirno di fame et fredo et che foreno occixi da li villani circa al numero de 500.', Grumello, 'Cronaca', pp.497-498.

[357] 'Intexo Sanpo, capittanio Gallicho, essere intrato Annibal Fiescho con le prenominate fanterie et Genua vivere ala sicura, dubitando di qualche damno et schorno subito hebe levato suo exercito et piglió il camino di la citta di Alexandria sempre scharamuzando con villani.'; Grumello, 'Cronaca', p.493.

[358] Landucci, *Florentine Diary*, p.192.

[359] Benedetti, *Diaria*, p.121.

change 'their opinion and to offer vows to Ferdinand'.[360] At Novara, Benedetti claims that the 'citizens had treacherously handed over the city to the French' and began 'to build fortifications before their gates with turf, brushwood, leaves, and mud, and to throw up before the approaches to the city a rampart and a ditch…'.[361] The depth of contempt felt toward besiegers, and even what were deemed foreigners in the close-knit localities of early modern Italy is summed up by the story of one old woman refusing Florentine bread during the siege of Prato told by Landucci - 'Take away the bread of the accursed Florentines; I had rather die!'.[362] The aforementioned example reported by Monluc of peasants bringing prisoners into his camp while wielding firearms combined with the examples highlighted here demonstrated that even without direct military enrolment, the wider population could take an active role in the unfolding of the Italian Wars. It is suggestable that non-combatants were and there is a sense of ease in this transition given a familiarity with weaponry and violent conduct. In 1513, the 'populo' at Verona armed itself and rushed to arms in the face of an incoming Venetian army.[363] Others jumped to the defence of their cities seemingly without pay, as they did at Pavia, according to the anonymous diarist, where soldiers, priests, women and citizens made repairs to the walls during the city's siege.[364] In fact, there were several records of women specifically taking to the walls to defend a city. In 1501, a large stone was thrown from the walls of a castle near Ariete on top of Vitellozzo Vitelli. Under the terms of siege of those days, this initial act of violence led to the retributive deaths of four women and over 100 men.[365] Marin Sanudo, Antonio Cammelli and Baldesar Castiglione also reported on the bravery of women manning the walls during

[360] *Ibid,* p..75.
[361] *Ibid*, p.127.
[362] Landucci, *Florentine Diary*, p.232.
[363] Bowd, *Mass Murder*, p.80.
[364] '...li nostri soldatti et pretti, et fratti, et donne et cittadini et gentil huomeni tutti lavororno de modo che feciono un grosso repparo qual era molto più forte…', Galandra, *Diario anonimo*, p.21.
[365] Bowd, *Mass Murder*, p.68.

the siege of Pisa.[366] At the sack of Antwerp Francesco Bocchi praised the efforts of two women who bolstered the city's defences under heavy fire, one of whom was fatally injured by a cannonball.[367]

The battlefields of the Italian Wars were often the first meeting point of the early modern contemporary and the gunpowder technologies that became a defining feature of the Italian Wars. This chapter has underlined the ferocity and violence of this conflict and demonstrated the shared experience of the brutality of these wars regardless of military enrolment or civilian status. The meeting of the contemporary with the firearm within the 'cauldron of violence' that was the Italian Wars provides context to the proliferation of firearms and the development of gun cultures in the following chapter, but also provides context to the regular violent practices demonstrated by civilians analysed in the *Torrone* cases in chapters 3 and 4.

[366] *Ibid,* pp.101-102.
[367] Fagel et al, *Early Modern War Narratives*, p.81.

Chapter 2: Gun Culture

Benvenuto Cellini's bombastic account of his life bursts with character. It runs at almost breakneck speeds from the remarkable to the outrageous. Unsurprisingly with a character as vivid as Cellini however, it is likely an embellished account of an unusual life. It feels difficult to square directly with what we would expect of the average experience of a contemporary's working week, and yet, it is situated within a world experience shared by these many others and engages with cultures made popular through their mass appeal. Cellini's account may indeed often focus attention on the exceptional, but it unintentionally reveals a great deal of context of sixteenth century Italian life and popular experience. One such stream of cultural experience that makes repeat appearances and which was a novelty of the sixteenth century in Italy was the encounter between the masses and firearms. Increasingly during this period of mass military endeavour, the predilection for firearms that non-combatants displayed becomes increasingly clear in the historical record. Cellini certainly describes a life moved by gunshot, both in his military experience and recollections of his favourite recreation. In one section of his autobiography Cellini proudly describes the opportunity of a gift given to him by Duke Alessandro de'Medici:

> 'While we were thus talking, his Excellency was in his wardrobe, looking at a remarkable little gun that had been sent him out of Germany. When he noticed that I too paid particular attention to this pretty instrument, he put it in my hands, saying that he knew how much pleasure I took in such things, and adding that I might choose for earnest of his promises an arquebus to my own liking from the armoury…'[368]

Cellini picked out the 'best and finest-looking arquebus' he had ever seen, 'or possessed, and carried it home'.[369] Like many of his contemporaries, Cellini also took an active part in the wars that visited his home country. In this way Cellini's account also makes an example of the pervasion of military

[368] Cellini, *Autobiography*, pp.146-147.
[369] *Ibid,* p.147.

cultures within normal life – Cellini, a goldsmith by trade, made several forays into army life before returning to civilian careers. His account depicts the grey area between civilian and soldier at this time, and it is this vague delineation that was perhaps conducive to the proliferation of firearms outside of the martial context. Cellini makes especially proud mention of his combat effectiveness with gunpowder weaponry, his bravery and skill being linked innately to his masculinity. On one occasion, in response to his friend's retreat in the face of the encroaching enemy, Cellini announced; 'Now you've brought me here, we must show that we're men'. He then directed his 'arquebus' to where he saw 'the thickest and most closely packed part of the enemy'.[370] He later takes full responsibility, and praise, for single-handedly repelling the attack against Rome's Castel Sant'Angelo by killing the Constable of Bourbon and manning several artillery pieces on the city's walls with deadly efficiency – he writes that in his 'work at the guns' he won the esteem of his peers and comrades by through his 'outstanding success' in killing the enemy.[371] While he admits to his reader that his 'drawing' and 'wonderful studies' were 'all forgotten in the music of the guns' he reassured his audience of the 'great things' he did in 'that cruel inferno' that 'would astonish the world'.[372] Cellini's experience highlights the growth of early modern gun cultures – an understudied aspect of early modern lives and a term that, according to Schwoerer, has only been previously used by Lisa Jardine in a study of Elizabethan men's portraits including guns.[373] Before that it was perhaps only Hale's publication in 1965 that covered some of these themes but did not focus on the term 'gun culture' specifically.[374] More recent contributions on the topic have, however, been made by Davis and Fletcher as part of histories that plot the relationship between the military and early modern state with gunpowder.[375] Nevertheless, it remains true that the history of early modern gun culture is largely untouched. Cellini's story also demonstrates another key component of many people's

[370] *Ibid*, p.70.
[371] *Ibid,* p.75.
[372] *Ibid*, pp.76.
[373] Schwoerer, *Gun Culture*, p.5; Jardine, *The Awful End of Prince William the Silent*, pp.85-92.
[374] Schwoerer, *Gun Culture,* p.5; Hale, 'Gunpowder and the Renaissance', pp.389-420.
[375] Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', pp.3-37 and Davis, 'The Renaissance Goes Up in Smoke', pp.398-411.

lives in his time, that is, the experience of warfare and military service. This was an important channel for the spread of nascent gun cultures since the developments on the battlefield and military service 'embedded firearms in society and spread knowledge about and skill in using them'.[376] It also meant that firearms became increasingly accessible and people's fascination with them could be indulged. This chapter will demonstrate contemporaries' attraction toward guns and underline military cultures and experiences as being key conduits of popular gun ownership and a burgeoning gun culture in the early modern world. This is before the cultures of violence and its practice in early modern Bologna are introduced in Chapter 3.

Guns, Gun Culture, and Honour:

One of the greatest tensions inherent within the spread of gun cultures in this century was borne out of gunpowder technology's clash with traditional ideals of chivalry. The notion of chivalry is nebulous, difficult to define, but the sense that these values were under threat was connected to a wider perception of decline and loss in literary circles – historians such as Guicciardini 'looked back with nostalgia' to the prosperity of the fifteenth century, their own 'golden age' before the invasions and beginnings of the Italian Wars.[377] In military terms, a significant part of this chivalric tradition had been the image of the gallant knight. An ideal that squared the brutality of war with honourable conduct, though in fact it often obscured the violent realities of warfare.[378] Nevertheless, it was a belief system that shored up the medieval and early modern social hierarchy by espousing the nobility and the importance of honour. It held an important place in contemporary understanding of the world, both on the battlefield and beyond it, and as a defining feature of masculinity, or a popular tradition for those who sought fame or a good name.[379] As such, the encroachment of

[376] Schwoerer, *Gun Culture*, p.80.
[377] C. H. Clough, 'Chivalry and Magnificence in the Golden Age of the Italian Renaissance', in S. Anglo (ed.), *Chivalry in the Renaissance* (Woodbridge, 1990), p.28.
[378] R. W. Kaeuper, *Medieval* Chivalry (Cambridge, 2016), pp.14-15; p.165-166.
[379] Kaeuper, *Medieval Chivalry,* pp.4-5; G. Ruggiero, *The Renaissance in Italy: A Social and Cultural History of the Rinascimento* (Cambridge, 2014), p.229; P. Burke, *The Italian Renaissance: Culture and Society in Italy* (Oxford, 1986), p.194.

gunpowder onto the battlefield, which promoted the role of the militia and placed greater emphasis on the kill from distance, threatened the established order, anonymised killers and, for many, too easily cut down men who sought glory in the trial of combat. This sentiment is repeatedly expressed by contemporaries already encountered. Monluc complained at the death of the Prior of Capua, being a 'so great a Captain' who perished 'by the hand of a Rascal with his fire stick'.[380] On another occasion he writes of the 'accursed Musquet shot' that downed another French noble before his own son was struck and killed by shot. He bitterly complained about his own gunshot wound and those 'Cowards', 'Poltrons' that 'not dar'd to look those men in the face at hand, which at distance they laid dead with their confounded bullets'.[381] In Germany during the same century, the military book *Kriegs Ordnung und Regiment* by Leonhard Fronsberger opined that 'many a time and oft it happens that a brave and manly hero is killed by a shot from a craven that would not dare look in the face'.[382] Miguel de Cervantes accused the firearm of 'in an instance' putting 'an end to the projects and cuts the life of one who deserved to live for ages to come'.[383] Furthermore, writers pointed at the firearm's user. For Cervantes again, it was a 'cowardly arm' that took the 'life of a gallant gentlemen'.[384] For Monluc, the 'Rascal' was specifically the 'peasant' – a reference perhaps to the greater role given to the militia outfitted with the gun on early modern battlefield, and the perceived social inversion on battlefields facilitated by the adaptability of the gun.[385] While being treated for a gunshot wound by Alessandro Benedetti, the Count of Pitigliano lamented the 'ignoble death in a tent' that he faced – the shame of being shot and the distress from missing out on an honourable death in the thick of battle apparently pressing greater than the reality of his own mortality.[386]

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[380] Montluc, *Commentaries*, p.118.
[381] *Ibid*, p.201; p.9.
[382] Quoted in J. Hale, 'Gunpowder and the Renaissance', p.398.
[383] Cervantes *Don Quixote,* p.393.
[384] *Ibid*, p.481.
[385] Montluc, *Commentaries*, p.118.
[386] Benedetti also describes trying to assess the damage done to the Count's organs by the shot, and found the bullet lodged 'beyond the length of a palm and a half', Benedetti, *Diaria*, p.175.

The apparent aversion to the distance-kill, however, was not a new one. In Euripides' *Hercules Furens*, Lycus claimed that Hercules used bow and arrows – a 'True coward's weapon'.[387]. Archidamus, King of Sparta was attributed as exclaiming, 'This is the tomb of bravery!' at first seeing the catapult.[388] This has proven to be an enduring criticism of ranged warfare that persists even to modern times – Peter Staff has highlighted practice of the US military, which has often distanced itself from sniper teams in modern operations.[389] In the sixteenth century, though, wider literary circles added further damnation to gunpowder technologies by tying black powder to the devil. The myth of the German monk, necromancer and alchemist, Berthold Schwartz, was popularly attributed as having developed the firearm in a pact with the devil.[390] Wicked associations continued in all manner of genre – Guicciardini described gunpowder as more 'diabolical than human' in his history of Italy.[391] Don Quixote's 'curious discourse' on 'arms and letters' hoped that the inventor of gunpowder and artillery was 'in hell receiving the reward for his diabolical invention…'.[392] In fact, this was 'a detestable age defined by the 'accursed machine'.[393] In Italian literature, Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* contained an indictment against that 'foul a84estilentent discovery', through which 'no more shall gallantry, no more shall valour prove their prowess of yore'.[394] Gunpowder weapons were, according to Petrarch, 'an instrument sent from hell' and Erasmus labelled them 'engines of

[387] Hale, 'Gunpowder and the Renaissance', p.396; 'Not he, nor get in spear's reach! bow he bore – True coward's weapon: shoot first and then fly! No bow-an-arrow proves a man is brave…', Euripides, *Aristophanes' Apology: Including a Transcript from Euripides, Being the Last Adventure of Balaustion,* 4th Century B.C., (trans.) R. Browning (Boston, 1875). p.198.
[388] Quoted in Hale, 'Gunpowder and the Renaissance', p.396.
[389] D. Grossman, *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society* (New York, 1995), p.98; similar sentiment has been expressed with the growth of drone warfare, D. Kieran, R. A. Adelman (eds.), *Remote Warfare: New Cultures of Violence* (Minneapolis, 2000), p.607.
[390] Chase, *Firearms,* p.60.
[391] '...piuttosto diabolico che umano', Guicciardini, *Storia d'Italia*, Book 1, Ch.3, p.26.
[392] Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, p.481.
[393] *Ibid*, p.393.
[394] Hale, 'Gunpowder and the Renaissance', p.397; L. Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso* (Milan, 1964), Canto xi, verse 26.

hell'.[395] Medical misconceptions furthered this link with the association of gunshot wounds and poisoning, underlining perceptions of the firearm's underhandedness.[396]

Despite the protestations of Europe's literati, artillery and firearms established themselves as a significant part of people's reality. Monluc, for example, might have continued to profess his enthusiasm for grappling 'collar to collar' with the enemy, but his accounts of battle already highlighted suggest he was perhaps more often using or deploying firearms.[397] In fact, Patrick Burgh has argued that the altered countenance of sixteenth-century warfare challenged European literature to 'compensate aesthetically for the disconnections between what they thought war should look like and what they perceived as its reality'.[398] The suggestion by historians of Elizabethan England that the 'chivalric revival' in these same years was organised in response to the 'impersonalisation' of war and the 'instrumental warfare encountered by Englishmen fighting in continental Europe during the 1570s-80s' might also explain the attitudes of writers already referenced as precious ideas on chivalry were gunned down by the firearm-wielding peasant. Nevertheless, their impact, real and perceived, was significant. Written in the aftermath of the Sack of Rome in 1527, Paolo Giovio placed firearms among the greatest inventions of the time within his *Notable Men and Women of Our Time*. [399] Later in the 1620s, Francis Bacon placed gunpowder alongside the magnetic compass and the printing press as inventions that had 'changed the whole face and state of things throughout the world'.[400] The new composition of armies also had a very real impact on the nobility's ability to wage war given that the costs and logistics associated with

[395] Chase, *Firearms*, p.59.
[396] Richard Wiseman acknowledged the debate over the 'fire and venome' supposedly released in 'Gun-shot wounds' and the 'extraneous Bodies, which are violently carried into the Wound.', in Wiseman, *A Treatise of Wounds,* p.1; p.4.
[397] Montluc, *Commentaries*, p.142.
[398] P. Burgh, *Gunpowder, Masculinity and Warfare in German Texts, 1400-1700* (New York, 2019), p.16.
[399] P. Giovio, *Notable Men and Women of Our Time*, (ed.) K. Gouwens (London, 2003), pp.55-59.
[400] S. J. Nayar, *Renaissance Responses to Technological Change* (Cham, 2019), p.2.

gunpowder provisioning soon demanded resources beyond the finances and influence circles of individual nobles.[401]

Cellini referenced the duality of the firearm's reputation in the sixteenth century when he wrote of the 'splendid things' he was able to do with that 'infernal work of cruelty', acts with gunpowder that would 'make the world stand by and wonder'.[402] Perhaps purposefully teasing and subversive as Cellini was, he nevertheless juxtaposed the popular perception of gunpowder's devilish undertones alongside the enthusiasm they inspired in many of their users. Despite the admonishment found in literary circles, popular sentiments similar to those that Cellini expressed towards his gun (his dear *Broccardo*) are reflected across the social scales and throughout the period under review. Early considerations of developing gun cultures in the early modern period were provided by John Hale, who noted how the gun in these years became a powerful symbolic and physical force in the period and popular objects of fascination.[403] Christianity soon made space for the inclusion of firearms with the introduction of the patron saint of gunners and gunpowder with Saint Barbara (often displayed in art alongside or associated with gunpowder and artillery).[404] Other accounts of gunpowder weapons' effect through the period admit admiration for their effect – Sir Thomas Coninsby recalled the siege of Rouen in 1591 where the gunpowder blast 'were a pleasure to behold'. In popular culture characters relayed a shared fascination with firearms. In *The Scottish Souldier* (1629), George Lawder writes of the noise of exploding gunpowder being 'more pleasing than the sound of any Muisckes consort can be found…'.[405]

In art, firearms and artillery found their place as symbols of virility, ingenuity, and domination. Emperor Charles V's portrait commemorating his victory at the battle of Mühlberg includes a wheel-

[401] E.F. Rice, Jr., A. Grafton, *The Foundations of Early Modern Europe, 1460-1559* (New York/London, 1994), pp.16-17.
[402] Cellini, *Autobiography*, pp.55-56.
[403] Hale, 'Gunpowder and the Renaissance', pp.390-392; pp.402-404.
[404] J. R. Hale, 'War and Public Opinion in Renaissance Italy', in Hale, *Renaissance War Studies*, p.367.
[405] Hale, 'Gunpowder and the Renaissance', p.403.

lock pistol strapped to the horse's saddle, suggesting the monarch's association with cutting-edge technologies and their mastery over it.[406] Charles V was also known for his hobby of tinkering with firearm mechanisms and gunpowder ratios, as was Cellini.[407] Also like Cellini, owners began naming their weapons. Pius II named his cannons Enea and Silvia, while Charles V and Charles VIII boasted a battery called The Twelve Apostles.[408] In military treatises the gun overtook the sword as the quintessential image of warfare, and in drama the gun became a symbol of virility, providing ample opportunity for gun wordplay and euphemism.[409] According to Hale, the playful infusion of gunpowder technology with the language of sex 'is a symptom of its acceptance by a society at large'.[410] Significant, as will be seen, they also became significant markers of masculinity and sought-after expressions of male identity. Nevertheless, their general popularity is further underlined by Arnold, who argues that individuals were now caring for their guns in 'much the same way they cared for their horses and hunting dogs'.[411] In portraits commissioned by the nobility, individuals were more regularly represented with decorated firearms in their hands or at their hips, intending to demonstrate a mastery over technology and express a modern Renaissance identity.[412] In 1546 Niccolò Tartaglia published *Questiti e Inventioni Diverse*, an extensive instruction and advice book on operating firearms, mixing gunpowder ratios and estimating ballistics.[413] Regardless of the

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[406] Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', p.26; Titian, 'Emperor Charles V at Mühlberg', Oil on Canvas (1548), Museo del Prado (https://www.museodelprado.es/en/the-collection/art-work/emperor-charles-v-at-muhlberg/e7c91aaa-b849-478c-a857-0bb58a6b6729) [Date accessed: 22/07/21].

[407] T. Arnold, 'War in Sixteenth-Century Europe: Revolution and Renaissance', in J. Black (ed.), *European Warfare, 1453-1815* (Basingstoke, 1999), p.38; Cellini wrote of manufacturing his own gunpowder and 'discovering the most wonderful secrets that are still unknown to anyone else…When I charged my gun with powder, a fifth the weight of the ball, the shot carried two hundred yards point-blank.', Cellini, *Autobiography,* p.53.

[408] Hale, 'Gunpowder and the Renaissance', p.407.

[409] *Ibid*, pp.408-410.

[410] *Ibid*, p.409.

[411] Arnold, 'Revolution and Renaissance', p.38.

[412] The beginnings of the inclusion of firearms into early modern English portraiture practise is outlined by Schwoerer, for example, Schwoerer, *Gun Culture*, p.116; examples of portraits include, Portrait of Captain Thomas Lee by Maarcus Gheeraerts II, (1594), oil on canvas, Tate, London; and Sir Martin Frobisher (1535?-1594) by Cornelis Ketel (1548-1616), (1577), oil on canvas, Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford. Interestingly, it is difficult to find Italian examples of this in the same century, which might suggest Italians were slower to incorporate firearms into noble portraiture.

[413] N. Tartaglia, *Questiti et Invenzioni Diverse* (Venice, 1546); N. Tartaglia, *Three Bookes of colloquies concerning the art of shooting*, (trans.) Cyprian Lucar (London, 1588), Early English Books Online Text Creation

lamentations of chivalry's decline found in the high-literature of the period, it is apparent in the records of the *Torrone* court in Bologna that beyond even the 'hereditary military class' that Arnold highlights as 'passionate gun lovers', a similar, if not greater, level of enthusiasm for the 'fire stick' could be found beyond the noble ranks.[414]

The proliferation of firearms and the ready reception of firearms into civilian contexts was firstly supported by the culture of warfare that characterised the medieval and early modern periods. Since the medieval period 'war edged closer to representing the normal and acceptable state of things'.[415] This had precedence in the minds of contemporaries given religious teaching that told of war first having happened in heaven between God and Satan.[416] The infamous preacher Girolamo Savonarola, for example, effectively pulled on these themes in his rise to power in Florence in the late fifteenth century, repeatedly calling on his congregation to once again 'return to war'.[417] The necessity of warfare was perhaps also supported by the Renaissance period's 'language of contrariety', which not only sustained common concepts of world and social order, but also no doubt helped 'other' a potential enemy.[418] Not only that, according to Hale the sixteenth century obligated a greater popular interest in war on the part of contemporaries across the social spectrum because of the growth in army sizes, offensive tactics and the reinvention of defensive architecture in their towns and cities. Accompanying these new forces were advances such as the proliferation of print, which carried news of conflict back to an interested public but also provided for an interest in military matters with the publication of military books.[419] Of course the physical proximity of these

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Partnership (2011), http://name.umdl.umich.edu/A13381.0001.001 [accessed 22/11/2023]; Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', p.17.

[414] Arnold, 'Revolution and Renaissance', p.37; Montluc, *Commentaries*, p.118.

[415] Kaeuper, *Medieval Chivalry,* p.161.

[416] *Ibid*.

[417] G. Savonarola, *A Guide to Righteous Living and Other Works,* (ed. and trans.) K. Eisenbichler (Toronto, 2003), p.152; G. Carlo Garfagnini, 'Politica e profezia: l'esperienza savonaroliana a Firenze', in G. M. Anselmi, A. De Benedictis, *Città in guerra: esperienze e riflessioni nel primo '500: Bologna nelle "guerre d'Italia"* (Bologna, 2008), pp.28-29.

[418] Nayar, *Renaissance Responses*, p.163.

[419] J. R. Hale, 'Sixteenth-Century Explanations of War and Violence', in Hale, *Renaissance War Studies*, pp.335-336; J. R. Hale, 'Printing and the Military Culture of Renaissance Venice', in Hale, *Renaissance War Studies,* pp.444-446.

wars to the Italians in particular was enough to press its importance, but on a more superficial cultural level Bartels has also shown how military design and aesthetic influenced popular dress and popular cultures generally.[420] There was a ready acceptance, perhaps on occasion even enthusiasm for war, that also facilitated the popularity of the firearm as a novel piece of military technology.

The popular association with firearms began with war and was made possible by the various routes firearms could take after their deployment on the battlefields into the civilian contexts of the *Torrone* criminal court. The permeable barrier between the civilian and military spheres was a significant facilitator, as was the general culture and experience of war that provided common ground in the lives of nearly all early modern people. According to Schwoerer, the proliferation of firearms from the military sphere would eventually establish 'military and civilian gun cultures' that 'existed easily together'.[421] The growth in militia numbers outlined in Chapter 1 led to a greater familiarity with guns on the part of many ordinary contemporaries who sought an escape from their civilian lives, the opportunity of enrichment promised by city-sackings, or simply cover for seasonal work. The adoption of the firearm was also eased by their accessibility – some historians have argued that warfare in this period initiated a 'deskilling process' for a weapon that was lighter and did not require significant training to use.[422] According to Hall, leaders of Spanish forces deployed in Italy during the sixteenth century indicated no necessity for soldiers to undertake intensive training, such was the ease at which individuals might be able to pick up and use a gun.[423] Hall also argues that the accessibility of the firearm was one of the driving forces behind increasing army forces.[424] Accounts collected by White, however, suggest that the outfitting of firearms was not necessarily a universally smooth process for men who were evidently faced with a weapon they were initially unfamiliar with. In 1568 a Spanish commentator complained of the form of Spanish gunners who

[420] V. R. Bartels, 'Masculinity, Arms and Armour, and the Culture of Warfare in Sixteenth-Century Florence', Ph.D. thesis (University of Cambridge, 2019), pp.232-270.
[421] Schwoerer, *Gun Culture,* p.3.
[422] Hanlon, *The Hero of Italy,* p.82.
[423] Hall, *Weapons and Warfare*, p.170.
[424] *Ibid,* p.234.

'take hold of them half way along the barrel with their left hand and move their arm as far away as they can, to prevent the fire from touching them (as they are so afraid of it)…'. 'Even when they fire', the commentator continues, 'they close their eyes and go pale, and shake like an old house'.[425] Girolamo Cardano wrote of having 'little confidence' in firearms as a youth, admitting 'I actually feared the discharge of a gun as if it were the wrath of God…'.[426] Incidents were common as well. Nehemiah Wharton wrote of the soldiers 'exercisinge' in English fields when one of them 'shot at randum, with a brace of bullets', killing one of his companions.[427] On another occasion he wrote of the soldier within his troop arriving into 'Wendever' and 'forgetinge he was charged with a bullet, shot a maide through the head'.[428] Sir Francis Vere recounts the death of Count Meurs who was 'so sorely burnt' after a gunpowder explosion that 'he died a few dayes after'.[429] Lord Orrey pointed out the dangers of carrying bandoliers of gunpowder, since, 'when they take fir, they commonly wound and often kill him who wears them, for likely if one bandolier takes fire all the rest do…'.[430] The presence of gunpowder in civilian settings is referenced in Luca Landucci's report of youths killed by a gunpowder explosion in 1498:

> '…it happened that some muleteers, with ten mules laden with gunpowder and artillery, were lodging at Ricorboli, some young men wanted to try a shot, and they set fire to the gunpowder and destroyed the house and the mules, five of the muleteers were so badly burnt that they had to be taken to hospital. I believe that some of them died'.[431]

Cellini, a self-professed firearms expert, also blamed an accidental discharge of his gun on the death of an individual, though admittedly neither man was on good terms with the other:

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[425] White, 'The Experience of Spain's Early Modern Soldiers, p.17.
[426] G. Cardano, *The Book of My Life*, (trans.) J. Stoner (New York, 2002), p.25.
[427] Wharton, *Letters from a Subaltern Officer*, pp.332.
[428] *Ibid*, pp.313-314.
[429] Scannell, *Conflict and Soldiers' Literature* p.124.
[430] *Ibid*, p.124; Arfaioli suggests that in the Italian theatre, soldiers were more likely to carry powder flasks than bandoliers however, Arfaioli, *Black Bands*, p.18.
[431] Landucci, *A Florentine Diary,* p.151.

> '…I had the arquebuse ready, but I hadn't lowered it to the extent that it was pointing at him, and in fact it was pointing upwards; and then it went off by itself. The ball hit the arch of the doorway, glanced back, and struck him in the windpipe. He fell down dead.'[432]

The unpredictable reputation of firearms became widespread enough to be referenced in popular literature too. In *Henry IV,* Margaret chastises Suffolk for his cursing, which like an overcharged gun' recoils and turns the 'force of them upon thyself'.[433] Friar Lawrence uses conjures similar imagery in calming a rash Romeo – 'Like powder in a skilless soldier's flask / Is set afire by thine own ignorance'.[434] According to a commentator writing in mid-seventeenth century Spain, only now were the soldiers 'losing fear of their firearms'.[435]

The Militia and the Proliferation of Guns:

Despite the hazards of gunpowder and the risks associated with early modern firearm mechanisms militiamen, now constituting a significant portion of early modern forces, and amply supplied with guns, showed a particular interest in using them. In 1548 Raymond de Forquevaux wrote that 'everyone in our time wants to be an arquebusier'.[436] Another contemporary, Nathanian Nye described those who wanted to become militia gunners – 'men [come forward] at the twinkling of an eye to do [that] service'.[437] Cellini's experience of using artillery and firearms led him to write of his eagerness to do battle 'being perhaps more attracted to soldiering than to my real profession, and as a result I made a better job of it than I did of being a goldsmith'.[438] In some areas of Europe, militia were allured with higher pay if they enlisted as gunners or won the award to bear these arms

[432] Cellini, *Autobiography*, p.243.
[433] Pugliatti, 'Shakespeare and the "Military Revolution"', p.154.
[434] *Ibid*, p.154.
[435] White, 'Experience of Spain's Early Modern Soldiers', p.17.
[436] Arfaioli, *Black Bands,* p.20.
[437] Schwoerer, *Gun Culture*, p.84.
[438] Cellini, *Autobiography*, p.72.

in civilian life after service.[439] Their popularity combined with the growth in militia numbers fed into the perceived ascendancy of the common sort in the armed forces and fed into the narratives of chivalry's decline. Those who saw the loss of cherished disciplines such as archery and horsemanship by the simplicity of the firearm extended their indignation toward the new role of military men who, according to one Florentine theologian, had apparently turned service into 'brigandage', there being no 'faith or piety in the men who pursue military service'.[440] Benedetti wrote of the 'discipline formerly prevailing during campaigns' having been now 'destroyed'.[441] Monluc specifically lamented the decline of archery within his complaints over the rise of the gun, as a 'Discipline' that had now been 'lost and grown degenerate, and all things are turn'd upside down'.[442] Others believed that the time previously needed to train traditional weaponry skills would now be overtaken by gambling and vice now that the firearm presented an easy alternative.[443] Worrying for many, this new technology 'did not culturally belong to any time-honoured group'. The nobility could not claim ownership over the firearm and in many ways, firearms had 'upset the balance of the existing social order' in their mass appeal and availability.[444] According to Rice and Grafton, this same development was to 'influence profoundly the relation of magnates to rulers, and more generally, the development of the early modern state'.[445] Their popularity appears to have increasingly defined war-making as a plebeian pursuit, rather than a noble one, and this became a feasible reference point in literature too. A member of the nobility in Shakespeare's *Henry IV* claims that 'He would himself have been a

[439] Shaw, Mallett, *The Italian Wars, 1494-1559: War, State and Society,* p.322; Tlusty, *Martial Ethic,* p.266. The higher pay received by arquebusiers often needed to cover operating costs of the gun as well though, I. Sherer, *Warriors for a Living*, p.36.
[440] Rice, Grafton, *Foundations of Early Modern Europe,* pp.16-18.
[441] Benedetti, *Diaria*, p.137.
[442] Montluc, *Commentaries*, p.6.
[443] T. Esper, 'The Replacement of the Longbow by Firearms in the English Army', *Technology and Culture*, 6:3 (Summer, 1965), p.392.
[444] Nayar, *Renaissance Responses*, p.163.
[445] Rice, Grafton, *Foundations of Early Modern Europe*, pp.16-17.

soldier' if not for 'these vile guns'.[446] Paolo Giovio recorded a real world example of a similar sentiment:

> '[T]he infantry soldiers jested with [the heavy men-at-arms], asking with pungent words if there was a feast on account of which they walked about so well clad and haughtily, and when they saw a certain horse which was thin or old, they called him a fine colt on account of his fat rump, and one which yet to emit his molar teeth was lauded with laughter. And the men-of-arms had to swallow these affronts, since the laws of war seemed to have been placed in the burning matches of the arquebuses'.[447]

Pezzolo has similarly noted the particular hatred that the military nobility expressed toward the *contadini* infantrymen who assumed a particularly visible role on the battlefield with the introduction of the firearm. The contemporary Luigi Da Porto recalled occasions when fights broke out between army ranks after the *contadini* were mocked for their dress and station.[448]

That the militia organisations might have offered *contadini* a degree of agency and a space for negotiation within social and military structures is suggested by Ongaro, who notes how firearms in particular might be a tool the militia could turn on their peers or employers once outfitted.[449] Nevertheless, the 'indiscriminate killing' and maiming of gunners captured after battle during the Italian Wars attests to the 'hostility and fear their weapons caused' and the perception of the gunner's peasant status. This no doubt contributed to the high mortality rate of arquebusiers relative to their companions in the same wars.[450]

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[446] Sherer, *Scramble for Italy*, p.119.
[447] *Ibid*.
[448] L. Pezzolo, 'L'archibugio e l'aratro. Considerazioni e problemi per una storia delle milizie rurali venete nei secoli XVI e XVII', *Studi veneziani,* vi (1983), pp.64-65.
[449] G. Ongaro, 'Il lavoro militare fra XVI e XVII sec.: contadini-soldato nella Repubblica di Venezia tra subordinazione e *agency*', Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome. Italie et Méditerranée, 131:1 (2020), pp.15-27.
[450] According to Domenico Mora, 20 gunners were killed for every pikeman in the Italian Wars, in Arfaioli, *Black Bands*, p.20.

Nevertheless, the poor reputation of the militia did have some basis and further helps explain one means of firearms spreading from the armies into villages, towns, and cities. Contemporaries such as Benedetti again noted the propensity for militiamen to desert and return home – at Fornovo the farmers-cum-soldiers took an opportunity to remove themselves from danger, much to the chagrin of Benedetti, who noted that the 'rest of the soldiers cast away lances and arms and lightened of this load disgracefully turned their back and fled to Parma.'[451] On another occasions Benedetti spoke of the 'great number of foot soldiers' who departed 'just as if the army had been disbanded' and forcing the commander to prohibit 'all the ferrymen on the river from carrying any soldier across, under threat of death'.[452] Figures within the Venetian state, which at one point was able to called on around 200,000 militia men, of whom one in eight belonged 'to an organisation that allowed him to carry arms', often complained of the unreliability of militia soldiers as well, who were prone to desertion and too ready to return home to tend crops.[453] Beyond desertion, the disbanding of armies was often chaotic and disorganised. Firearms that in theory should have returned to their issuer could instead easily find their way back in the homes of the militia.[454] The link between returning soldiers and firearms will be apparent in the *Torrone* court cases, but case examples such as that from April 1571 when militia soldiers were arrested for smuggling weapons into the city supports that link..[455] The proximity of battles to Italian settlements likely also provided the basis for second-hand trade networks – Brian Sandberg found a 'massive second-hand market that accompanied early modern warfare' in a review of the 17th century French Wars of Religion after the aftermath of battles in areas close to villages, towns and cities became profitable salvage fields.[456] Finally, Fletcher

[451] Benedetti, *Diaria*, p.101.
[452] *Ibid*, p.189.
[453] Mallett and Hale, *Military Organisation*, pp.351-355; White has investigated high desertion rates in early modern Spanish armies, White, 'Experience of Spain's Early Modern Soldiers', pp.4-5; Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', p.19.
[454] Sherer, *Warriors for a Living*, p.35-36.
[455] Archivio di Stato di Bologna, Tribunale del Torrone, Expeditiones, busta 66 (1571), f.46v.
[456] B. Sandberg, '"The magazine and all their pillaging": Armies as Sites of Second-Hand Exchange During the French Wars of Religion', in L. Fontaine (ed.), *Alternative Exchanges: Second-Hand Circulations from the Sixteenth Century to the Present,* (New York/Oxford, 2008), p.76.

has highlighted the ease at which firearms could move from their licit sources into illicit channels via the influences of agents, criminals and the chaos of warfare.[457]

States were also responsible for nurturing firearm ownership. Although practice appears to have altered slightly in areas, it seems that Italian states were regularly providing weapons for their soldiers.[458] In other cases soldiers were paid a higher wage for supplying their own weapons and ammunition.[459] According to Guidi, the Romagnol militia in particular was known for its 'new model', outfitting gunners and light cavalry and given 'the experience gained from factional fights that had raged in the region for decades, the Italians developed specific tactics for this new model of militia'.[460] However, the specifics of state armament of its militia are often difficult to pin down given that documents such as militia registers rarely survive, though Guidi has found one example from Florence in 1508 which does provide some detail on men receiving weapons.[461] Nevertheless, the success of the Brescian foundries in this period indicates that large orders of firearms were being submitted by states in preparation for war. Alongside the aforementioned prize for some militia men to maintain their right to bear firearms after service, the policy implemented by authorities in areas of Germany, where ownership was encouraged as part of a plan to ready an armed populace, was applied in areas of Italy as well. In 1614 Bologna's authorities ordered *contadini* to hold at least one serviced firearm in their house in an effort to quell the licentiousness of the countryside's bandits and local recalcitrant nobles.[462] By 1617 the Venetians were concerned by the number of *contadini* armed by the state now using their wheellocks to kill one another.[463] What becomes clear in the course of the sixteenth century is that guns were a common site not only in military contexts but

[457] Fletcher, 'Agents of Firearms Supply', pp.201-225.
[458] A. Guidi, '"Per peli e per segni"'. Muster Rolls, Lists and Notes: Practical Military Records Relating to the Last Florentine *Ordinanze* and Militia, from Machiavelli to the Fall of the Republic (1506-1530), *Historical Research,* 89:236 (November 2016), p.681
[459] I. Sherer, *Warriors for a Living*, p.36.
[460] A. Guidi, *Books, People, and Military Thought: Machiavelli's Art of War and the Fortune of the Militia in Sixteenth-Century Florence and Europe* (Leiden/Boston, 2020), p.33.
[461] Guidi, 'Muster Rolls, Lists and Notes', p.681.
[462] C. Rose, 'Homicide in North Italy', pp.84-85
[463] Pezzolo, 'L'archibugio e l'aratro', pp.71-72.

among the wider populace as well – the anonymous writer from Perugia felt the regularity of firearms in civilian hands had become a clear threat; 'Everywhere you go, you hear reports of arquebus shots, either from a thicket or a window in a house, or… in the middle of the public streets… no person is safe these days in the country, since there is not a cattle drover or shepherd who does not have his arquebus slung over his shoulder'.[464] Firearms percolated from battlefields and local manufacturing centres and were enthusiastically adopted by those invested in a new culture of gun ownership. The combination of local production, mass adoption in conflict and contemporaries' closeness to the wars raging in the Italian peninsula meant that guns were now common and cheap. In 1571, for example, a wheel-lock pistol could be purchased in the small village of Riofreddo, outside Rome, for four *scudi*.[465] According to Fletcher, by the later stages of the Italian Wars, there were simply 'a lot of guns about'.[466] Despite this, few historians have focused specifically on the development of gun cultures in this period.

Among those few to have followed up on the work on firearm proliferation established by Hale several decades ago are Jonathan Davis, Ann Tlusty, and Lois Schwoerer. Davis made the link between the spread of gun cultures and contemporary cultures of violence a key link to the popularity of firearms. In fact, much more has been made of the cultures and experiences of violence in Italy in these same years, which combined with the backdrop of a brutal war had become 'endemic' and may have 'reached its peak (or nadir) between 1550 and 1600', particularly in the Papal States (including Bologna) where society appeared to be 'on the edge of a complete breakdown'.[467] Guns offered a new means of enacting that violence but also a means of avoiding or defending oneself from it. Cellini remarked on the use of guns for such a defensive purpose when he wrote of readying a gun during a trip to Naples in 1532, his 'loaded flint arquebuse' laid across the

[464] Davis, 'Renaissance Goes Up in Smoke', pp.403-404.
[465] Bartels, 'Military Culture', p.194.
[466] Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', p.18.
[467] Davis, 'Renaissance Goes Up in Smoke', p.398.

'saddle-bow, ready to defend myself'.[468] In fact, the criminal world was another key conduit and catalyst for the proliferation of firearms. Demobilised soldiers and decades of warfare, combined with systems of exile and banishment left the Italian countryside brimming with influential but outcast members of the nobility and a host of propertyless criminals eager to work.[469] A Papal Legate in Perugia again complained of the 'outrages and villainies that the bandits and delinquents commit', 'caused by the ease' with which they were able to 'get a hold of arquebuses'.[470] Bandits appear to have revelled in successes, expressing their temerity with 'braids and little tassels of hair on the right side or left', 'adorned with bunches of feathers', wearing one of their moustaches longer than the other', or wearing their hats backwards or sideways. A finishing touch to this presentation, however, was the firearm proudly displayed in slashes or slung over the shoulder individually or in sets of two or three guns. According to Davis, by the mid-late sixteenth century, the wheellock had become an 'identifying symbol' of the bandit'.[471]

The gun's association with subversion and empowerment among the lower classes in the military ranks was not shaken off in the civilian world either and these factors undoubtedly played a role in firearms' growing popularity. Some have pointed toward the 're-feudalization' of society and the popular turn toward private justice instead of conformity to the centralising efforts of the early modern Italian state. Alongside this, according to Davis, the firearm empowered individuals across the social scale, but also corroded 'codes of conduct and respect for social order'.[472] Peter Blastenbrei pointed toward a contempt felt by contemporaries towards the state legal system, which in Bologna had been recently imposed by a domineering Papal State, and which infringed upon the perceived right of private vendetta and restitution. This inspired a renewed enthusiasm for

[468] Cellini, *Autobiography*, p.127.
[469] Davis, 'Renaissance Goes Up in Smoke', pp.398-400.
[470] *Ibid*, p.400.
[471] *Ibid*, p.401.
[472] Davis, 'Renaissance Goes Up in Smoke', p.408.

private justice.[473] In early modern Germany, Tlusty found firearms associated with 'householding, sovereignty, autonomy, and the right to resist'.[474] Many of the cases from the *Torrone* cases in Chapter 4 will suggest similar themes.

Firearms certainly posed a threat according to contemporary authorities as they largely unsuccessfully sought to toe the line between familiarising a populace with firearms in preparation for war while attempting to maintain security by stemming their proliferation. In the 1570s, aware that the situation was moving beyond their grasp, the Papal States attempted an total ban on wheel-lock guns and there was even suggestion by one contemporary of the need for an international agreement on gun controls.[475] Of particular concern were the wheel-lock firearms that did not need a lit match to fire and thus were easily concealed in clothing, particularly those with barrels that were short or had been shortened.[476] Bologna made repeated attempts to control gun-toting groups of men posing a significant threat to local security, but throughout the sixteenth century, Bologna and other Italian cities' authorities failed to stem the tide of firearm proliferation and their growing role in early modern crime. [477] Brackett has highlighted that firearm regulation was a 'special concern' for Florence as well. After 1547 similarly notable fines for carrying firearms were introduced by Florentine authorities and representatives were allowed to enter homes searching for guns.[478] Ferrara apparently experienced similar struggles and introduced a ban on wheellocks in 1573, while allowing official to search shops and habitations for guns 'that could be carried in breeches or sleeves or otherwise concealed and secret'; a decade prior to this law Ferrara's authorities complained that small wheellock guns were 'multiplied in this dominion and so

[473] P. Blastenbrei, 'Violence, Arms and Criminal Justice in Papal Rome, 1560-1600', *Renaissance Studies*, 20:1 (2006), p.87.
[474] Tlusty, *Martial Ethic*, p.6.
[475] Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', p.34.
[476] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Legato, Expeditiones, 57 (1566), f. 28r.
[477] Examples of directives such as that from April 1566 where soldiers were ordered into the countryside to hunt bandit groups are a common occurrence in Bologna's early modern history, ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Expeditiones, busta 57 (1566), ff.83v-84r.
[478] J. Brackett, *Criminal Justice and Crime in Late Renaissance Florence, 1537-1609* (Cambridge, 2009), p.103

licentiously' carried 'by everyone, not without the danger of many ill-effects that might be born from such arms…'. The Duke of Ferrara was determined, it suggests, to remove this particularly 'dangerous type of weapon'.[479] Like many states in Italy at this time, Bolognese authorities also struggled to deal with the sources of production. Needing both a regular supply of firearms from manufacturing centres and a population ready to be deployed with guns led them to focus on attempts to curtail the end-user rather than the producers.[480] In fact, according to Fletcher, the spread of firearms in the wake of the Italian Wars 'shifted longstanding social structures of power' and presented a new 'site for negotiation between regimes and citizens'.[481] The firearm became a new tool of negotiation, demonstration and expression for the early modern individual. It was an empowering device available across the social spectrum allowing a degree of agency not usually ascribed to this period.

Beyond their power to subvert or their role in criminal circles though, Tlusty and Schwoerer also found a popular fascination with guns at home in the early modern world. As referenced by Cellini, who found great enjoyment and consolation in his time spent shooting for sport with companions, early modern shooting competitions became popular events across Europe.[482] In England, the firearms industry invited the worker into the world of guns and facilitated a knowledge and fascination with them to the extent that women 'of all social standings accepted firearms' and toy guns were introduced as gifts for children, who themselves became an important factor in 'sustaining the domestic gun culture'.[483] Examples of seventeenth-century toy guns are found in the

[479] Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', p.32; 'Et perche vi sono certe sorte di detti *Archibugi* che sonosi curti, et piccioli, che si possono portare ne' calzoni, o maniche on in altro modo coperti, et segreti, qualti tali *Achibugetti,* et simili ad arbitrio del Podestà s'intendano prohibiti talmente, che chi ne terrá in casa o in altro luogo cada in pena de scudi centro, et trati tre di corda...et che ne porterà, cada in pena della Galiera.'; '...et quanto licentiosamente siano portati da ciascuno non senza pericolo di olti mali effetti che possono nascer da arme simili, i quali ragionevolmente deono dispiacer ad ognuno, ha diliberato di rimover et allontanar ad ogni modo dallo Stato suo una tanto pericolosa sorte d'arme.', A. Angelucci (ed.), *Documenti inedita per la storia delle armi da fuoco italiane raccolti, annotati e pubblicati* (Turin, 1869), pp. 356; pp.343-344.
[480] Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', p.22.
[481] *Ibid*, p.35.
[482] Tlusty, *Martial Ethic,* p.190; Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', p.14.
[483] Tlusty, *Martial Ethic*, pp.3-4.

collections at the Royal Armouries.[484] London's very topography was altered by the firearms industry, which increasingly lent its nomenclature to the city's streets, shops and rest stops.[485] Their characteristics shaped common language too – Monluc spoke of distances now being an 'Harquebuze shot' away, and Hale plotted the introduction of English terms such as 'right as a gun' or 'as sure as a gun'.[486] Guns were also, however, associated with modernity and ingenuity, alongside the fact that they 'enlisted both national and professional pride', as Cellini might attest to.[487] These factors, combined with their alluring aesthetic and exciting power have continued to fascinate even into the modern day. The combination of all above meant that guns were pervasive and found in almost all contexts – reports of churchmen carrying firearms, for example, were not uncommon.[488]

The following chapters make Bologna the focus of attention. Firstly, the generality of violence in the Bolognese sixteenth century is highlighted by cases surveyed in various source bases, including those complaints brought to the *Torrone* central court. The context of the violence wrought by the Italian Wars should be borne in mind while considering the violent reactions of contemporaries, but the fact that the Italian sixteenth century had long sustained popular cultures of violence and a fascination with weaponry will be made apparent. This chapter will also highlight the similarities and differences between male and female violent crime. While the brutality of this period was one experienced and shared by both men and women, the weapons used and the contexts within which they were used by individuals was altered by cultural practice. The particular role that men had as crucial conduits for the popular use of firearms in Bologna and its territories will be made clear.

[484] One of several examples is the matchlock toy pistol found during excavations near the White Tower in 1956; The Royal Armouries, 'Toy Matchlock Pistol – About 1600' (c.1600), Study Collection, UK, object number CVIII.125 (https://collections.royalarmouries.org/object/rac-object-46342.html)[Date accessed: 08/10/2023].
[485] Schwoerer, *Gun Culture*, p.95.
[486] Montluc, *Commentaries,* p. 42; Hale, 'Gunpowder and the Renaissance', p.408.
[487] Hale, 'Gunpowder and the Renaissance', p.402.
[488] Davis, 'Renaissance Goes Up in Smoke', pp.407-408.

Ultimately, it becomes apparent that contemporaries enthusiastically leaned into the 'noise and violence' that firearms offered.[489]

[489] Hale, 'Gunpowder and the Renaissance', p.402.

Chapter 3: Violence in Bologna: Women, Men, The *Torrone*.

Figure 3:1 Anonymous, Tavern Scene, c.1500, fresco, Castello di Issogne, Val d'Aosta. Also in E. S. Welch, Shopping in the Renaissance: Consumer Cultures in Italy 1400-1600 (London, 2005). Note the woman in the bottom right corner stabbing a man over the table.

In May 1561 Giovanni Tamborini and his wife Lena appeared before the *Torrone*. They stated how they were recently awoken in the middle of the night by a sudden banging at their door. Outside, a group of eight men claiming to be representatives of the court demanded it be opened. Giovanni and Lena, naturally hesitant, eventually relented when the group started to kick the door in. After pulling the door open, they were immediately set upon by the men, the leader of whom, Marcone Tinarello, used a spark from the wheel-lock of his gun to light a match and began searching the house. Giovanni was tied up and his wife Lena was beaten and interrogated while other members of the group rifled through their belongings, pilfering as they saw fit. 'You can do all you want, I won't tell you anything', was Lena's reply to their fists, kicks and 'great blows' as she was questioned over goods that had been stolen from Lucrezia Tinarello's house in a nearby comune days earlier.[490] Lucrezia's brother, Marcone, was determined to break Lena, taking her to a nearby house and

[490] 'grande bussi', ASBo, Tribunali del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 45 (1560-1602), f.272v.

submitting her to sexual assault and torture. Nevertheless, Lena's defiant voice can be clearly heard in the surviving court records while her husband's drifts in the background. She faced Marcone again, this time in court, calling him out for his lies, claiming even that the very stockings he wore in court that day were a pair stolen from her own home. Marcone replied with more threats, exclaiming that she 'lies by the throat'.[491] It is Lena, however, who remained steadfast and determined to reclaim the honour she says had been stolen from her. She relied on her local network of acquaintances and friends to vouch for her good *fama*, while Marcone cracked under court torture.[492] He eventually confessed his involvement and named his accomplices. His group, made of 'foreign' youths from Ferrara, two male relatives, a bandit and a man called Messer Bagnarotto who seemingly gave the group orders to carry out attacks, is identified and noted by the court; Lena was vindicated and Marcone was sentenced to death by the *Auditore*.[493]

According to the *Torrone* sources, Lena's case exhibits many of the typical characteristics of criminality in this period according to both Terpstra's analysis of the execution records for Bologna and according to the evidence presented by the *Torrone* analysed in this research.[494] Similar themes are also found in the histories of crime in other areas of Italy and have been identified by Lauro Martines, among others, who found young men taking on very visible roles in fighting across the peninsula. Nor was this aspect of violence lost on contemporary writers, who found 'age, marital status, social position, home life, and education' to be factors that informed men's conduct.[495] The *Torrone* courts provide greater detail, and present youths armed with a variety of weaponry but often toting firearms among their arsenal, connected by various blood ties but also featuring a

[491] '...tu menti per la gola', ASBo, Registri di atti processuali, busta 45 (1560-1602), f.293r.
[492] *Ibid*, f.291r.
[493] *Ibid*, ff.291r; 300r-304v; 332r-332v.
[494] Terpstra, 'Theory into Practice', p.122; Niccoli has similarly noted the youthful profile of violence in this period, 'particularly in the relationships between young people'; N. Ottavia, 'Rituals of Youth: Love, Play, and Violence in Tridentine Bologna', in K. Eisenbichler (ed.), *The Premodern Teenager: Youth in Society 1150-1650* (Toronto, 2002), p.78; Niccoli has also highlighted youths' group violence as a defining feature of violent crime in this period; O. Niccoli, *Il seme della violenza: putti, fanciulli e mammoli nell'Italia tra cinque e seicento* (Rome, 1995), p.41.
[495] L. Martines, *Violence and Disorder in Italian Cities, 1200-1500* (Berkeley, 1972), p.142.

contingent of outsiders, perhaps even directed by a senior partner. They are also often described as thin youths, dressed mostly or all in black, either without a beard or with a short, adolescent attempt at growing one.[496]

Such groups were significant sources of threat and held potential to undermine Papal authority as they moonlighted as members of the central government, and it was such cases that were seemingly prioritised by the judiciary. This case also gives an insight into women's criminality in this period, an aspect of history and contemporary experience that has been underappreciated in historiography until recently. While historians' research in the past few decades has exposed the gap between early modern writings on 'what women *should* do' and what women '*could* or did *not* do', women's criminal activities were not given significant attention in their own time and remain understudied in modern historiography compared to male criminal history.[497] In this case, Lena bears the brunt of their lashings, and her voice is one of the loudest in the record as she goes face to face with Marcone. In doing so Lena successfully negotiates the *Torrone*'s inquiry, touting notions of her own honour and *fama* to disprove her accuser, while avoiding questions on her own criminal complicity. Lena's navigation of the court system also suggests that women were not strangers to the violent world of early modern Italy and its criminal justice system.

This chapter will firstly establish the culture of violence that formed part of everyday life in Bologna. It will demonstrate how the power of the state was contested in both urban and rural contexts, consider the significance of demonstrative violence to early modern people, the importance of honour to contemporary selfhood and highlight its role as a catalyst for violence. Secondly, it will add greater depth to the picture of early modern violent crime with a gendered perspective,

[496] Examples of this will be referenced in the cases chosen for this thesis, but a homicide case from January 1560 paints a picture of the young men often found at the centre of investigations. In this example the prime suspect, Domenico Fiorentino was a 'giovenazzo sbarbato', 'vestito tutti di negro con una capetta'; ASBo, Registri di atti processuali, busta 18 (1559), 50v. The image of beardless or short-bearded young men dressed in black clothes often emerges in the *Torrone* court cases.

[497] S. Muurling, *Everyday Crime, Criminal Justice and Gender in Early Modern Bologna* (Leiden/Boston, 2021), p.2.

analysing the differences in women's and men's violence while underlining the shared experience of violent life. Finally, it will provide an insight into the circumstances of male violence in the same period and establish how contemporary male practice might have been conducive toward the spread of the firearm. To do this several source bases will be analysed, including diaries, chronicles, and Bolognese execution records from between 1500 and 1600. These sources will supplement the primary resource of the *Torrone* records, which will best describe the circumstances of violent crime and provide the personal experience of violence in the Italian sixteenth century that this thesis is striving to capture.

Conditions in Bologna:

With the developments in army composition and size, the growing emphasis on siege warfare and longer campaigning seasons, Hale argued that the 'brush-strokes of war in the sixteenth century were broader than formerly, and probably leached out more widely into the fabric of civilian society'.[498] According to Hale, the Italians experienced an 'almost unremitting molestation of normal life'.[499] In fact, Guicciardini, historian and governor of Bologna, wrote that civilians 'saw nothing but scenes of infinite slaughter, plunder and the destruction of multitudes of towns and cities, attended with the licentiousness of soldiers no less destructive to friends than foes'.[500] Pugliatti has also stated that it should be assumed that 'the population was well aware of the cruelty of all new instruments of death when returning soldiers came back with wounds and mutilations that traditional weapons could never have produced'.[501] Within the same theatre H. J. Webb described how soldiers were 'seen coming back home… diseased and maimed, pitiful ghosts and shadows of men whom the wars had broken'.[502] Bernabe Rich wrote of the despair and disillusionment of

[498] Hale, *War and* Society, p.179.
[499] *Ibid*, p.179.
[500] Guicciardini, in Hale, *War and Society*, p.179.
[501] Pugliatti, 'Shakespeare and the "Military Revolution"', p.149.
[502] Webb, *Elizabethan Military Science,* p.171; Pugliatti, 'Shakespeare and the "Military Revolution", pp.149-150.

returning English soldiers in 1578 - 'the warres being once finished, and that there is no need of them, howe be they rewarded, howe be they cherished, what account is there made of them, what other thing gaine they then flounder, misreporte, false impositions, hatred and despite?'.[503] In the mid-sixteenth century, Thomas Harman suggested the importance of support networks for returning soldiers when he wrote of their likely fate, 'if they bee without reliefe of their friends' they 'will surely desperatly robbe and steale, or either shortly bee hanged or miserably dye in pryson…'.[504] Again, the character of Ruzante in Beolco's *The Veteran* illustrates a similarly dour experience and outlook for the returning Italian soldier, whose destitution justifies the character's attraction toward thievery and ready potential for violence.[505]

Amidst the outbreak of the Italian Wars, the experience of uncertainty and volatility informed the atmosphere within the city and its countryside. It informed the characters and behaviours of contemporaries of early modern people and created the context of Bolognese life to which the *Torrone* cases are intimately connected. Bologna's struggles with disease and famine during the Italian Wars was outlined in the introduction of this paper - the 'Horseman' of apocalyptic times as Cipolla first applied to the Italian Wars, and supported by Alfani, would characterise years of warfare, famine, disease and death, and their interconnected nature.[506] The city's struggle with destitution are apparent in the provisions established by the Bolognese government throughout the century.[507] This level of poverty is highlighted by Brackett as being one of the key motivations for criminality in this period, as was 'political alienation or withdrawal'.[508] In the same way, the city's turbulent history and political instability also previously outlined was worsened by the Bolognese experience of the Italian Wars within which the oligarchical Bentivoglio regime was challenged by

[503] Pugliatti, 'Shakespeare and the "Military Revolution", p.150.
[504] T. Harman, *A Caveat or Warning for Common Cursetors, Vulgarly Called Vagabonds* (1573) (London, 1814), p.11; Webb, *Elizabethan Military Science,* p.172.
[505] Beolco, *The Veteran (Parlamento de Ruzante) and Weasel (Bilora)*, pp.67-100.
[506] Alfani, *Calamities and the Economy in Renaissance Italy,* pp.1-5.
[507] For example, ASBo, Senato, Diari (1549-1731), unità nr.2, provisionum (1529-1535), 104v.
[508] Brackett, *Criminal Justice*, p.100.

the machinations of Cesare Borgia and Alexander VI, before they were permanently ousted by the Papal States under Julius II. The 'factional strife' endemic to much of Bologna's early modern history is clear in the years of the Italian Wars as well as economic dislocation.[509]

After taking control in the summer of 1506, papal authorities in Bologna executed over 50 'prominent individuals', including 'a high official of the notaries hanged in his black velvet robes for distributing pro-Bentivoglio propaganda' and four senators invited to dine with the papal governor ended up 'throttled at midnight, beheaded at dawn, and put on display in the Piazza Maggiore by morning'.[510] In February 1508 an old man was hanged having been heard to say: 'It would be better to be a servant of the Turks than of the priests - better for Bologna to have a signory of the Bentivoglio than one of the church'.[511] A bombardier was 'cut to pieces' by the *popolo* after being accused of purposely missing his shots against the enemy in 1506.[512] Another Bombardier, the 'most famous in Italy' was hanged in February 1507 for planning to set fire to Bologna's munitions store in a move to support the Bentivoglio against Pope Julius II.[513] A number of men were hanged in the same year for politically inspired crimes involving posting pro-Bentivoglio posters in the city's square, or conspiring to 'uplift the people' against the ruling order.[514] In fact, Massimo Rospocher has highlighted a lively popular political print culture in the city at this time, which produced a significant text base opposed to Julius II and the papacy.[515] Many were also aware of the foreboding presence of the scheming Bentivoglio (and engaged with it), especially when it was as brazen as that move in 1507 when a force of mercenaries and partisans of the family amassed in the local villages of Bazzano and Casalecchio. This threat agitated their opponents in the city, who went on to destroy the *palazzo grande* on the *Strada San Donato* - symbol and former residence of the ousted

[509] Rose, 'Homicide in North Italy', pp.36-37.
[510] Terpstra, 'Theory into Practice', p.120.
[511] Terpstra, 'Theory into Practice', p.120; BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 16th February, 1508, vol. 4835.
[512] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, November 1506, vol. 4831.
[513] *Ibid*, 26th February 1507, vol. 4831.
[514] *Ibid*, June 1507-January 1508, vol. 4831.
[515] Rospocher, *Il papa guerriero*, pp.177-204.

regime.[516] This was followed in January 1508 by a popular movement against the Malvezzi, whose destruction of the Bentivoglio palace previously inspired a significant number of Bolognesi to pull down the Malvezzi's palace - 70 people were killed in this episode.[517] In February 1520 a student was beheaded for having disseminated leaflets 'contro il Governo'.[518] According to Rinieri's chronicle, five were arrested for having painted the family emblem of the Bentivoglio and sent to appear before the Torrone in October 1537, this after a campaign conducted by the papacy to remove any Bentivoglio symbols from the city streets.[519] A similar crime was reported in September 1560 and led to the hanging of two men for having made 'sigili'.[520] This friction with Bologna's papal overlords continued well into the sixteenth century - in December 1549 two men were hanged for attempting to kill the '*principe*' of the city; they failed but killed two city guards in the struggle.[521] In January 1560 a man was hanged at the Ringhiera of the Palazzo del Podestá for trying to stir up 'il Popolo'.[522] In the same year Angeiollino Sacchetti from the *contado* was hanged for tearing up a government *bando* published in the public square.[523]

Nevertheless, the *Bolognesi* continued to rail against the imposition of this authority throughout the century. In April 1538 a certain Cristofaro Delli Panciacchi felt emboldened enough to burst into the court of Bernardino, *Auditore al Tribunale*, and demand that his case be heard immediately after growing tired of delays. On this occasion the disagreement fell into a shouting match over who was

[516] Ferri, Roversi, *Storia di Bologna*, pp.191-192.
[517] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, January 1508, vol. 4831.
[518] 'A dì 28. Febraro M: Girolamo da Busse scolaro, che dovea addottrarsi fra quindici giorni, fù decapitato p*er* aver sparsi Biglietti control il Governo presente della Città…', *Ibid,* 28th February 1520, 4831.
[519] 'A dì 2 ditto, fu prexo cinque mistri da scudele da Faenza, i quali aveano portado de la maiolicha a vendre a la fiera de misere santo Petronio, e queste scodelle, overo piateli de maiolicha, aveano depinte l'arme di Bentivoglie, zoè la segha; e per wuesto funo prixi e manti in t'el torono', Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.45; Rospocher, *Il papa guerriero*, pp.181-185.
[520] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 14th September 1560, vol.4832.
[521] 'Antonio Orlandi e Salvadore N: da [Reggio] furono appiccati in questo giorno di S. Tom'aso apostolo per ave're in d:to girono sforzato i soldati del Principe p*er* entrare dentro p*er* ucciderlo, avendo am'azzati due soldati.', *Ibid*, 21 December 1549, image 2230, vol.4832.
[522] 'Gasparo N: Garzolaro fù appiccato alla solita Ringhiera p*er* aver tenato, e stimulato alla solevazione il Popolo…', *Ibid*, 24th January 1560, vol.4832.
[523] 'Adi 18. Maggio - Angiolino Sacchetti Contadino fù appiccato per aver levato e lacerato un Bando in pubblica Piazzo nell'ora medesima che era stato publicato d'orine dell'Ill.imo Sig: Card: Carlo Borromei Legato.'; *Ibid*, 18th May 1560, vol.4832.

deserving of the greatest respect; 'I am a good man' shouted Christofaro, entitled to greater respect, to which the judge shouted back 'I am as much a good man as you, and more than you'. The witness to the case grimaced in reaction to the way the judge was being spoken to by Cristofaro, recognising that such a position demanded 'great respect'.[524] Nevertheless, in 1538 Christofaro was still approaching the court on personal terms that precluded any respect for the office or government and continued to target the individual, to challenge reputations. This case, brought to the *Torrone* not only highlights the tensions generated by criminal courts and the unsteady footing of its authorities according, at least, to Christofaro, it also underlines the oft-cited justification for challenge - honour and reputation. On other occasions, disagreements with officials of the court descended into physicality. Gioseffo da Castello had his right hand cut off before he was hanged for having struck the *Auditore* of the *Torrone* in a public square in October 1543.[525] As late as 1571 Niccolo de Maria was conducted through the city on a carriage before he was hanged and quartered for having killed a magistrate of the *Tribuni della Plebe*.[526] Such brutal punishments did not deter others; in May 1588 Antonio Maria Selmi from S. Agostino and Bartolomeo Cattanei were hanged and quartered for killing a servant of the Podestà.[527] In June 1541, Lucio da Guasto was hanged for having shot a gun at the then *Auditore* of the *Torrone*.[528] The Torrone itself obviously stirred up animosity amongst the people its towers loomed over - in 1580 the sigil of the legate was stolen and found hung on the gallows, and the *libri di processi* of that year was found in the Fontana di Nettuno.[529] In April 1546 a notary of the Torrone was killed, as was another notary in December 1546 - whether these were targeted attacks against what could be powerful positions in the local community is impossible to say, but is worth bearing in mind.[530] Even officials of the courts may have

[524] ASBo, Registri di atti processuali, busta 1; 1538, cc.52r-53v.
[525] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 6th October 1543, vol.4832.
[526] *Ibid*, 2nd September 1572, vol.4832.
[527] *Ibid*, 14th May 1588, vol.4832.
[528] *Ibid,* 18th June 1541, vol.4832.
[529] Ferri and Roversi, *Storia di Bologna*, p.206.
[530] Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.139.

found it difficult to avoid compulsion to violence - a certain Francesco, courier (*cursore*) of the *Torrone*, was hanged in September 1590 for killing his own brother.[531] In May 1591 Domenico di Giovanni Battista was hanged for killing the *Torrone*'s courier (*cursore*).[532] In September 1593 Antonio Longhi was hanged for premeditatively murdering the *massaro* of Argelato, showing that the extended representatives of the central courts faced similar dangers. [533]

The uneasy authority of the Papal States over Bologna was a significant factor in the proliferation of violent crime in this period. In fact, Bologna is an ideal case study to support Randolph Roth's theory that 'political instability, perceived legitimacy of the government, the degree of unity and fellow feeling in the community and men's prospects for achieving a satisfactory place in society' were, more than the emotional immaturity of contemporaries or the ritualism in symbolic violence, key contributors to a period's violence rates.[534] Rose has also made a link between the spread of vendetta and personal experience with 'failing' authority structures.[535] Blanshei identified a 'culture of hatred' in medieval Bologna, borne out of political rivalries, in fact, political life 'was virtually devoid of 'unity and fellow feeling' and instead was based on the mortal hatred of 'perfidious enemies', with a winner-take-all mentality that precluded cooperation and encouraged and rewarded aggression'.[536] The option of private justice through vendetta was a popular one for communities split by allegiances and enmity. These clashes also often chose public arenas and involved the community to a degree that inter-familial and inter-faction violence could be classed as '*una causa civile*', a violent manifestation of the 'negotiation of power between sovereign and subject'.[537] It is easy to argue that early modern Bologna had the same issues, that is, until the Papal

[531] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 3 September 1590, vol. 4832.
[532] *Ibid*, 6th May 1591, vol.4832.
[533] *Ibid*, vol.4832.
[534] Blanshei, 'Culture of Hatred', p.114.
[535] Rose, 'Homicide in North Italy', p.ii.
[536] Blanshei, 'Homicide in a Culture of Hatred', p.115.
[537] A. G. Madden, '*Una causa civile*': Vendetta Violence and Governing Elites in Early-Modern Modena', in Davies, *Aspects of Violence*, p.207; p.222.

State was able to fully cement its control through institutions such as the Torrone court. The sixteenth century is a story of this struggle when violence and infighting reached a peak.

Bologna was also the seat of the Council of Trent in the same century, adding to the city's new central role in fundamental politico-religious matters and no doubt adding to tensions. Bologna's relative religious stability, almost remarkable given the significance of Bologna's university and long-held animosities toward papal rule, has been noted by historians.[538] Nevertheless, the city was still not immune from frequent signs of spiritual discontent. The chronicle of Giovanni Battista Marescalchi makes a point of recording those condemned to death in the city for heresy, as he does of news received from the war against the Huguenots in France.[539] He called 1567 an 'unhappy and dangerous year' because of the heretics in Bologna, some of whom were burned, imprisoned, or escaped into the countryside.[540] A small number of these are captured in the *Libri dei giustiziati* from the S. Maria della Morte during the late 1560s - Lutherans who were hanged and burned for their heresy.[541] In all, the multivarious divisions available for alignment for early-modern *Bolognesi* presented ample opportunity and justification for expression and for violence.

Public state punishment and execution were a regularity of life during the sixteenth century in Bologna. This was symptomatic of the regularity of violence and of the low-level compliance of *cittadini* and *contadini* toward the state arm and the Papal government's perceived legitimacy. Rose has plotted the spike in state executions in the late sixteenth century during a 'campaign of repression and execution in the *contado* and a law-and-order push in the city'. In the seventeenth century, however, Rose highlighted a gradual decline in state violence as part of a government strategy of reconciliation with the *Torrone* at the forefront of that approach. Following the brutal repression of

[538] Ferri, Roversi (eds.), *Storia di Bologna*, p.207.

[539] In October 1569, for example, Marescalchi records the some of the notable Bolognese names killed in the war against the Huguenots, as well as the city's celebration of the Huguenots massacre which included fires and the shooting of artillery across the city. Marescalchi gleefully records the supposed 12,000 Huguenots killed in a battle where only 300 Catholics died, G. B. Marescalchi, *Cronaca: 1561-1573*, I. Francia (ed.) (Bologna, 2002), p.82.

[540] Marescalchi, *Cronaca*, pp.57-58.

[541] BSABo ,Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 19th January 1567 – 8th October 1567, vol.4832.

bandits and disobedient nobles in the late sixteenth century Bologna's authorities continued to bring the most damning punishments largely only to the criminals and crimes that were most threatening to government authority and which might impede goals to patch up a community already riven by divisions..[542] Nevertheless, the specific troubles of the sixteenth century are still reflected in the relatively high execution statistics; Terpstra's analysis of capital punishments from 1540-1600 shows that Bolognese authorities executed 917 people - 'more than double the rate that can be gleaned from earlier chronicles'.[543] The examples of *sbirri*, members of the city's rudimentary police force that have been described as being only 'one step removed from the criminals they captured', also being hanged is demonstrative of the government's challenges and approach to establishing authority.[544] In fact, the *sbirri* are emblematic of the contradictory approach to law and order that early modern contemporaries took and more generally demonstrate the enormity of central government struggle in the face of an unruly territory - according to Hughes, this is a problem largely specific to Bologna and the papacy.[545] The *sbirri*'s reputation for corruption, violence, and readiness to undertake acts that early modern people thought most degrading (such as arresting others, which was seen as a reprehensible act) was also deemed to be a useful reputation to employ. It was assumed by their employers that the *sbirri*'s knowledge of the Bolognese criminal underground and their readiness to shirk the weight of honour to carry out the most taboo duties would make them an effective policing force.[546] The strength of this reputation was so widely felt, so universal among all sections of society and for such a significant period of time, that Hughes also believes that they at least 'in part' help 'explain the continued difficulties of the Italian police force, even to this day, to win public favor'.[547] Accounts from the same period present the *sbirri* almost as vigilante groups – an entry in the *Libri dei*

[542] Rose, 'Homicide in North Italy', pp.104-115.
[543] Terpstra, 'Theory into Practice', p.121.
[544] S. Hughes, 'Fear and Loathing in Bologna and Rome and the Papal Police in Perspective', *Journal of Social History*, 21:1 (Autumn, 1987), p.98; C. Rose, 'Violence and the Centralization of Justice in Early Modern Bologna', in Blanshei (ed.), *Violence and Justice in Bologna*, pp.107-108; An example entry recording the hanging of a member of the *sbirri* is in Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.35.
[545] Hughes, 'Fear and Loathing', p.109.
[546] *Ibid*, pp.97-98; p.104.
[547] *Ibid*, 'Fear and Loathing', p.109.

giustiziati describes how the head of Antionio da Burdrio was found on Bologna's main piazza on a Sunday morning in July. The *sbirri* were known to have enacted this sentence, though their justification and legitimacy for doing so isvague.[548] Another example in the same record is that of Pellegrino dalla Rocca di Piriano, *sbirro*, who killed two gentlemen in July 1542.[549] The *sbirri* were also known for extorting the populace, for corruption and opportunism.[550]

The *bolognesi* and the city's *contadini* were also known to make their opposition to the *sbirri*, and perhaps simultaneously their opposition to central government, wholly apparent. On 9th November, 1540 Battista da Marzagaglia was hanged at Castel Bolognese for attacking a *sbirro* with a knife at market-time.[551] In August 1547, Francesco Forlani, 'servitore del Podestà', was beheaded for having shot a member of the *sbirri* in a public square with a 'Pistola'.[552] There are also references to the *sbirri* being outfitted with firearms to fulfil their duties - a case in the *Libri dei giustiziati* from 1539 describes how the unarmed servants left behind by fleeing bandits were injured by the gunshots of the *sbirri*. One of them died from the wounds.[553] According to Hughes in 1987, the *sbirri*'s inefficiency as the early modern equivalent of a police force was also emblematic of the Papal States' 'arrested' development in the face of locals who prized their individual histories of independence and privilege over that of an encroaching state.[554] The *sbirri* were undoubtedly a usefully corrupt force for the urban and rural nobility, but instead of defining the 'arrested' growth of the state, they were arguably representative of that negotiation of power between state and populace that was taking place throughout Bolognese society.[555] These agents of official justice might be just as likely to tap into their own sense of local justice, much like the wider population could utilise both official and non-official streams of conflict resolution, but they also appear as a

[548] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 15th July 1514, vol.4832.
[549] *Ibid,* 21st July 1542, vol.4832.
[550] Rose, 'Homicide in North Italy', p.100.
[551] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 9th November 1540, vol.4832.
[552] *Ibid*, 6th August 1547, vol.4832.
[553] *Ibid*, 1539, vol.4831.
[554] Hughes, 'Fear and Loathing', p.109.
[555] *Ibid*, p.106.

another means for the state to incorporate the wider population into judicial practice and establish an influence within the contested space of legal authority.[556] At the same time, the *sbirri* demonstrate the frictions between state planning and popular agency – these models of state policing inspired greater reactive violence from Italian contemporaries and clearly demonstrate the non-linear path of state development and the agency of early modern people in the history of the early modern state.[557] The potential violence of the *sbirri* was compounded by the vigilantism that was standard practice for Italian states. These states regularly expelled individuals from the city, declaring a bounty on their heads. The record made by Marescalchi of the fate of one Gironimo Gonbrudo in 1568 is an example of this regular practice - his wanted head was taken by 'traitors' to the court in Florence.[558] On 27th June 1548 Rinieri recorded something similar - the head of Barolomìa Capelano was brought to the Torrone and displayed on the *ringhiera* in Bologna. Barolomìa had been killed by three others who had duly brought the victim's head back to the city.[559] This practice is again symptomatic of the insecure footing of the contemporary government and of the widespread practice of acute violence in this period. Nevertheless, Rose has found that the 917 officially executed in these years were significantly larger than those executed in the longer period between 1600 to 1700 - a figure of 556, suggesting that the papal government's attempts to establish its authority in Bologna through structures such as the Torrone court eventually made progress.[560]

The spectre of war and the physical participation on the part of the *Bolognesi* remained and continued throughout the century as well, reinforcing the connections between military experience and cultures of violence. It was noted at the Battle of Cerignola in 1503 that gunners from nearby

[556] Rose, 'Violence and the Centralisation of Justice in Early Modern Bologna', pp.109-110.
[557] T. Dean, 'Police Forces in Late Medieval Italy: Bologna, 1340-1480', *Social History*, 44:2 (2019), p.107.
[558] Marescalchi, *Cronaca*, p.68.
[559] Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.202.
[560] Rose, 'Violence and the Centralization of Criminal Justice', p.114.

Romagnol regions were key to victory.[561] The chronicle of Giacomo Rinieri records the continued active recruitment of the Bolognesi for soldiering throughout the 1530s, like that on 18th January 1537 when 'money was given to make soldiers' to make camp at 'Fiorenza'.[562] In March of the following year Rinieri made note of the numerous *contadini* who travelled into the city to enlist as soldiers in a campaign against the 'Turks', and groups of these newly recruited soldiers were still recorded as leaving in blocks two months later.[563] In early 1544 Rinieri noted that recruitment drives were taking place all over Italy, 'some for the Emperor, some for the King of France, some for Florence…'[564] The spectre of war never seems to have truly left the conscience of the *Bolognesi*. In 1565, Giovanni Battista Marescalchi notes that all gates were closed and soldiers placed on guard at the walls of the city, all of this because of 'a few differences born between the Holy Seat and the Duke of Ferrara'.[565] In 1566 Bolognesi were again being recruited for a war against 'i turchi' in Hungary.[566] When a truce between the Ottomans and the Venetians broke down in 1570, many Bolognesi were again called to 'very cruel war', involving both 'nobles and citizens'.[567] The spectre of war no doubt fuelled tensions and worsened living conditions, but it also meant that the need for weaponry manufacture and contemporary experience in weapon use never went away. There is also little doubt that military channels and the proximity of wars meant that firearms continued to funnel into civilian life.

[561] A. Bazzocchi, 'Servizio militare e controllo del territorio. La milizia romagnola nell'età delle guerra d'Italia', in D. Bolognesi (ed.), *1512: La Battaglia di Ravenna, l'Italia, l'Europa* (Ravenna 2014), p.90.
[562] Rinieri, *Cronaca,* p.32.
[563] 'A dì 18 de marzo, vene' asai contadini a Bologna, li quali erano venuti con li soi masari per andare in canpo contro li Turchi; e così ogni giorno ne arivava', Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.50; 'A dì 5 detto, se partì' de li altri soldati contadini per andare contra il gran Turcho, li quali li mandava' li nostri comuni di Bologna', Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.53.
[564] Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.127.
[565] 'Passò questo anno non senza qualche sospetto di peste e di qualche principio di guerra, conciosia che furno tenute serate alchune porte et messe guardie de soldati alle mura della città et questo per alchune porte et messe guardie de soldati alle mura della città…alchune differentie nate fra la sedia apostolicha et il ducha di Ferrara', Marescalchi, *Cronaca,* pp.42-43.
[566] *Ibid*, p.53.
[567] *Ibid*, p.136.

Fletcher has also highlighted the inevitability of firearm proliferation among returning soldiers as guns might be 'abandoned, sold, or retained in use for more or less legal purposes'.[568] Alongside the repeat mentions of mustering reports recorded by Rinieri, the chronicler also highlights the continual transition of soldiers in and out of Bologna. There are, for example, several records that highlight the Bolognese authorities' attempts to regulate the influx and behaviour of soldiers. Rinieri notes these in examples such as the soldier who was 'put to the rope' with an arquebus still hanging across his back, and the proclamation was issued demanding that all soldiers not from Bologna to be expelled and stopped from entering the city at the gates - underlining, perhaps, the trouble that soldiers freshly armed from battle posed.[569] Other examples of soldiers' violence in the city include the case of the soldier who killed Alfonso da Ferrara on 9th December, 1549.[570] Two soldiers were hanged in 1512, one for stealing a cross and another for having committed an assassination.[571] Civilians also fought back - in October 1543 Battista Nanni de Casio was beheaded for having shot a papal soldier with a 'Pistola'.[572] On 30th August 1508, 15 were hanged for planning to kill the principal enemies of the Bentivoglio and all of the foreign soldiers in the city.[573] Even in moments of relative peace, however, the *popolo* of Bologna still found themselves jostling with foreign forces. Finding itself as a new focal point in international politics of the Papal States, Bologna became the host city for the coronation of Charles V in 1530. The German and Spanish troops stationed in the city during the event quickly became known for their bad behaviour.[574] Contemporary Pompeo Vizzani wrote that the hatred between soldiers and civilians rose 'hour by hour' and the captain of the Bolognese troops warned a Spanish counterpart that here in Bologna 'they make daggers, and

[568] Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', p.19.
[569] 'A dì 15 ditto, de luglio, fu dato de la corda a uno soldato con l'archobuxo atechato a la schiena'; Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.142; 'A dì ditto, mandòno una crida che tutti li soldati che non avesse recapito se andasse con Dia, e che a le porte non lasaseno entrare alchuni dentro da Bologna de' ditti soldati.', Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.146.
[570] Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.246.
[571] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 8th May 1512, vol.4831.
[572] *Ibid*, 21st October 1543, vol.4832.
[573] *Ibid*, 30th August 1508, vol.4831.
[574] R. Righi, 'Carlo V Imperatore a Bologna: l'incoronazione del 1530 nelle cronache del tempo', in E. Pasquini, P. Prodi (eds.), *Bologna nell'età di Carlo V e Guicciardini*, (Bologna, 2002), p.499.

there are people who know how to put them to work'.[575] Many soldiers also found work as mercenaries, and caused the city significant issues during the factional infighting of the 1540s - Rinieri notes that in this time the nobles were hiring mercenaries for service.[576] When a peace was made between the Malvezzi and Pepoli they swore to send their mercenaries away and in their place 800 soldiers were hired to guard the city and 'examine anybody who wanted to enter the city'. The impact that the expulsion of mercenaries into the countryside had on rural localities can only be guessed, but they were soon returning to the city to secretly 'petition' the city's nobility for work, which forced the authorities to re-issue a decree banning mercenaries from the city.Added to this decree was the ban on artisans from holding weapons of any sort in their shops.[577]A general sense of distrust towards soldiers is found in copies of proclamations made by the Bolognese government in the 1500s as well, including one ban against loaning weapons to soldiers and from buying anything from them.[578]

Structures, Cultures, and the Practice of Violence in Bologna:

Alongside the city's experiences of political instability and role in the Italian Wars, Bologna's violent crime rates also followed the unusual uptick (relative to a wider European image) in violence rates that characterised the Italian peninsula in this period. Colin Rose placed the homicide rate in Bologna at 30.2 per 100,000 in the city and 27 per100,000 in the *contado* – in 2005 this was measured at below 1 per100,000 for Bologna.[579] Chronicles, diaries and the records from the Torrone show that the violence in the streets and fields around Bologna was a regular occurrence throughout the entire sixteenth century.[580] All sources referenced in the course of this research also demonstrate that weapons carry was a regular aspect of life in the same years. Knives and swords

[575] Righi, 'Carlo V Imperatore a Bologna', pp.500-501.
[576] Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.241.
[577] Rinieri, *Cronaca*, pp.241-242.
[578] ASBo, Senato, unità nr. 2, Diari (1549-1731), unità nr.2, Provisionum (1522-1528), 91r; 94v.
[579] Rose, 'Homicide in North Italy', p.121; 2005 statistic measured by *United Nationals Office for Drugs and Crime Global Study on Homicide 2011*, taken from Rose, 'Homicide in North Italy', p.121.
[580] Rinieri, *Cronaca*; Marescalchi, *Cronaca*.

are most described and carried casually, but as the century progressed the firearm would take a more regular place in the armouries of many. These weapons were often deployed in disputes over honour and vendetta, which certainly helped drive the justifications of violent behaviour in this period, but violence could be sparked even from more mundane interactions. Friends who move from sharing laughter to killing one another might seem to have fallen victim to the hydraulic violence model, though this interpretation of instinctive human violence that Elias claimed to have marked the medieval age has been largely challenged by historians who see it as part of an outdated view of progressive modernity. As remarkably sudden and irrational that such violence might appear to a modern reader, meaning can often be translated. Blanshei would point towards violence that is 'a learned, cultural response to provocation'.[581] Other historians have pointed towards the stage for violence as holding a key to its interpretation. The scenery often chosen to enact violence, including public streets, squares, churches, busy marketplaces and church Mass, speaks to the public demonstration of violence - an intentionally symbolic and physical presentation.[582] Ottavia has found just as many examples in Bologna of insult and reactive violence simply from 'glances, touches, eavesdropping', and typical cases that can be shortened to: "I ran into a certain person and looked at him because he was in front of me and he said to me 'Why are you looking at me and I said, 'Why, am I not allowed to look at you?' and he drew his sword and came towards me'...".[583]

The acquisition of honour informed the appraisal of character by peers and held significant power in all manner of social exchanges. It was heavily relied upon in finding acceptance in local communities, in operating within the crucial networks of trade and obligation that underlined the survivability of most early modern men and women, and in building vital support networks in localities.[584] It also

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582 C. B. Guarienti, 'Reggio, 28 giugno 1517. Liturgia di un omicidio', *Studi Storici* (Oct-Dec 2008), 49:4, pp.985-999.

583 Ottavia, 'Rituals of Youth', pp.81-82.

584 J. Pitt-Rivers, 'Honour and Social Status', pp.21-22, in J. G. Peristiany (ed.), *Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society* (London, 1965); Weissman, 'The Importance of Being Ambiguous', p.277; Byrne, *The World of Renaissance Italy*, pp.203-205.

appears to have been particularly important to maintaining the outward projection of masculinity. Honour's importance is continually underlined in *Torrone* cases when individuals under question profess their respectability almost before any other facts are taken into account - 'Io sono un'uomo da bene' - and in the reliance on character statements to refute the accusations of their enemies. Professing an honourable reputation as a witness was a means of supporting the credibility of a statement, and for the defendant an association with good living, good friends and religious devotion reflected values that would support a case.[585] importance also applied to women. Lena, wife of Pellegrino introduced earlier in this chapter, relies heavily on her contacts to support her good name.[586] According to her acquaintance Jacopo, Lena was a 'good woman of good condition, opinion and *fama*', that she had always 'kept a reputation as an honest woman and of good life, condition, opinion and *fama*' and that he had seen her take communion.[587] Remarkably, Lena's husband Pellegrino was a 'good friend' of Jacopo's and a 'good man', however Jacopo's statement largely in favour of Lena appears to be integral to the case's positive outcome with his admission that he had seen first-hand both Pellegrino's abusive behaviour towards his wife and his infidelity.[588] For Jacopo, Lena's rightful honour is prioritised over his friendship with a man who had compromised his own. The stakes at risk during trials should also not be forgotten - heavy fines, banning from the city, amputations and even death sentences were all possible outcomes and highlight the importance of demonstrating a credible personality and reputation when under scrutiny.

[585] L. L. Z. Domingues, *Confession and Criminal Justice in Late Medieval Italy: Siena, 1260-1330* (Oxford, 2021), pp.185-187; J, Carraway Vitiello, *Public Justice and the Criminal Trial in Late Medieval Italy: Reggio Emilia in the Visconti Age* (Leiden/Boston, 2016), pp.88-96.

[586] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 45 (1560-1602), ff.37r-38v.

[587] 'Io ho cognosciuta d.ca Lena articulata prima che fosse marittat et doppo che essa marita a d.co pelleg.no et semp' l'ho cognosciuta p*er* donna da bene d*i* bona conditione oppinione et fama…Lei estata tenuta havuta e reputata p*er* donna honesta et da bene di bona vita conditione oppinione et fama et l'ho vista communicar*e*…'. *Ibid*, ff.38r-38v.

[588] 'Io conosco Pelleg.no p.to da diece anni in [la] et no*n* e' mio parent. Ma e' bene mio amico et in quanto a me l'ho p*er* homo da bene p*er* tanto il cognosco', *Ibid*, ff.37v-39.

The necessity to correct any slight to one's honour was eased by both socially and even legally accepted recourse to reconciliation that involved violence and payment. Stuart Carroll has noted how early modern Italian law 'accommodated vendetta' meaning that 'any crime - however heinous - could be satisfied by money' or otherwise by the 'right to revenge'.[589] This was compounded by the ongoing tension between locals and the local government, whose judges were recognised as being 'not independent, or above local politics'.[590] Authorities struggled against a general paucity of trust between civilians and state. This was compounded by the situation in Italy, and cities like Bologna, where invasion meant trust in institutions were undermined 'as the courts became organs of foreign subjugation responsible for legitimating the liquidation of political enemies'.[591] However, not only could legal recourse be expensive, but it might also be another source of dishonour for the plaintiff who sought government assistance in resolving their enmities. As such the 'conviction of offenders came only after a number of decisions by members of a community: by the plaintiff to come forward; by witnesses to testify' and by the court's decision to convict.[592] Cases from the *Torrone* highlight this decision making among feuding families and, at least according to those involved but also seemingly understood by the court itself, individuals were fair game for attacks right up until a 'peace' was made. When peace was established it was noted in death sentences that attacks had been carried out despite the agreement being in place, perhaps underlining the seriousness of the crime.[593] Attacks might even be carried out while a truce was under negotiation, as was evidently the case in a *Torrone* investigation from April-June 1561 when an intermediary between two feuding families described how attempts to ratify a peace were underway when another violent dispute

[589] S. Carroll, *Enmity and Violence in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2023), p.27-28.
[590] Carroll, *Enmity and Violence,* p.28.
[591] *Ibid*, p.29.
[592] Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, pp.86-87.
[593] Examples in the *Libri dei giustiziati* that make specific mention of attacks committed despite a peace being in place, 'sotto la pace', include Ottavio MIlanese who was hanged in January 1576 for firing at Paolo Bello, 'sotto La Pace', BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 14th January 1576, vol.4832; A similar example is presented in a record from May 1591 when six men were hanged for shooting at another 'sotto La Pace', BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 18th May 1591, vol.4832.

broke out between the two.[594] Ruff also identifies feud and vendetta as a key concept of early modern life that 'represented the search for private vengeance'.[595] More dangerous to the fabric of a local community, however, were the feuds between family groups like that of the aforementioned Palantieri and Commuli, the outbreak of which was capable of bringing an entire community to a near standstill. Such cases were more likely to be actively investigated by authorities who found such events to have crossed the somewhat tolerable threshold of common violence.

Honour was the primary motivator for acts of violence. Despite, for example, the clear visibility of and connection between male youths and criminality, Brackett does not accept that 'youth alone was a prime factor', instead 'social values were a more important determinant' and chief among these was honour, which Brackett argues, through reference to statutes and criminal cases, was 'frequently the node of violent behaviour'.[596] Cases from the *Torrone* also suggest that honour-fuelled violence was also not just a pressure felt by men. Just as women were well aware of their own public honour 'rating', they were also aware of the need to defend their own or assault another's by proper action. It was also a 'violence of all social groups'.[597] Violence was a key part of popular cultures and military endeavour a celebrated exercise. It is small surprise that the Italian sixteenth century was marred by violence. In this period the pope's reputation was largely built on his competency for war making and the period's most celebrated artists made much of their means through military design. Within the broader experience, religion and popular cultures emphasised military endeavour – violent pastimes, for example, might find their space after sermons wherein the preacher would call on military symbolism to inspire their audiences. The period was not only marred by violence then, but it also seemingly embraced it..[598] Bologna, in fact, found many

[594] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 45 (1560-1602), ff.247r-248v.
[595] Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, p.81.
[596] Brackett, *Criminal Justice and Crime*, p.133.
[597] Ruff, *Early Modern Violence*, p.125.
[598] At the siege of Mirandola, Julius II's lodgings were close enough to the walls of the city that an arqubus shot passed through the room where he was sleeping and injured on of his grooms, Shaw, *The Warrior* Pope, p.270; Bartels, 'Masculnity, Arms and Armour', pp.19-21; 249-267.

opportunities to celebrate it. In March 1549, Rinieri records the mock battle between the Spanish and Ottomans enacted in the city square - a centrepiece of which was the reconstruction of a castle and its annihilation by 'a great' artillery piece. Wood model arquebuses were lit up with fire and the castle charged by the Spanish, bringing 'laughter to the people'.[599] Similar events were celebrated in Marescalchi's chronicle, which records festivals for other battles against the Ottomans, orchestrated public duels and bullfights, at one of which several people died.[600] The 'murder' ballads that became popular at this time could moralise on the assassination of any figure, high or low, but it is difficult to escape the sense of titillation that drew a popular crowd to read and listen to the latest grisly tale.[601] In other areas of Italian life, violent pastimes also took centre stage - Venice was famous for its vicious fist fighting over the city's famous bridges as part of semi-ceremonalised gang wars with very real injuries, as highlighted by Davis.[602] Joachim Frenk has shown how military exercise blended with popular culture to make some of Europe's most popular sporting pastimes, such as football, also particularly violent ones in the early modern period.[603] The popular access to firearms was also enthusiastically adapted into leisure time with shooting tournaments and practice ranges.[604]

These cultures incorporated and attracted the young as well. Again, Niccoli's study of youth violence in the sixteenth century has illuminated stories of children arranging themselves in organised groups replete with military ornaments and clashing with their peers in the city streets under what Niccoli has called the *guerre di putti*. These battles, seemingly a voluntary pastime for its participants, were brutal - chroniclers throughout the peninsula record the squadrons of children clashing with fists and

[599] 'Et in questo arivò un altro essercito di matacini conaltre infinite mascare che deno molto da ridere a tutta la gente, et portavano la più parte de loro archibusi di canno de legno che trvano di razzi altisimi di fuochi et facento salti mortali et altri atti da ridere…I Turchi sprezzòrno li patti loro, dove subito du dato il fuocho a la arteleria gross butando gran pezo de la mura a tera…', Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.227.
[600] Marescalchi, *Cronaca*, p.36; p.25.
[601] Salzberg, Rospocher, 'Murder Ballads', pp.164-185.
[602] Davis, *The War of Fists,* (Oxford, 1994).
[603] J. Frenk, 'Games', in A. Hadfield, M. Dimmock, A. Shinn, (eds.) *The Ashgate Research Companion to Popular Culture in Early Modern England* (New York, 2016), p.227
[604] S. J. Nayar, 'Arms *or* the Man I: Gunpowder Technology and the Early Modern Romance', *Studies in Philology*, 114:3 (Summer 2017), p.526.

stones, and one record from Modena in January 1527 noted the death of a ten year old boy in one of these battles.[605] Florence was famous for these stone throwing battles as well and adults couldn't help being involved either - in 1536 Marin Sanudo and Gregorio Amaseo recorded the many left dead after an event that involved children and men.[606] The governor of Bologna was forced to publish decrees against these fights in an attempt to stop those 'youths and men of all ages with batons and other weapons'. The heavy penalties for defying this *bando*, which legislated for fifty lashes for children under 16, 3 pulls on the rope and a 25 *scudi* fine for anyone 16-19 years old and two years of galley service for adults - given that similar *bandi* were published in 1585, 1586, and 1588, these penalties do not appear to have deterred combatants.[607] Carnivals and festivals 'presented a constant threat to public order' - Bern carnival in 1513 incited a peasant revolt, rioting in Dijon in 1630, 'a massacre' in Romans, in Dauphinè, in 1580, are examples of the chaos that festivities could invite.[608] Niccoli's work on youth violence in the Italian fifteenth and sixteenth centuries claims to have found the 'seed' of brutality in the roaming youths and children who became 'the instrument of expression and channelling of urban violence' directed toward a community's perceived enemies and given an assumed right to enact 'extrajudicial justice' - Savonarola famously directed the aggressive energies of children in Florence during the 1490s for similar purposes.[609] While speaking to the vibrancy of the period's violent cultures more generally, the instrumental role of early modern children enacting the extrajudicial retribution of a community, alongside their potential to be celebrated by the community as symbols of purity and innocence, also pulls on the symbolic role of violence in the period.[610] Natalie Zemon Davis saw the same role

[605] Niccoli, *Il seme della violenza*, pp.41-43.
[606] *Ibid*, pp.43-45.
[607] *Ibid*, p.45.
[608] Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe,* pp.160-183; p.180.
[609] 'Essi appaiono in primi luogo come strumento di espressione e di canalizzazione della violenza urbana, armi rituali della comunità contro i nemici che identifica…secondo i princìpi che in forma translata potremmo definire di giustizia extragiudiziaria', Niccoli, *Il seme della violenza*, p.xiii.
[610] *Ibid*, p.xiii.

given to children and adolescents in sixteenth century France, where they too were given license to 'act as the conscience of the community in matters of domestic discord'.[611]

The established perception of children's belligerence was targeted by Franco Sacchetti in the fourteenth century when he wished for a 'new Herod' that would kill all children from four to fourteen years old to purge an especially violent section of contemporary society.[612] Giovanni Domenici similarly recognised the necessity to curb children's violence and recommended imagery such as the massacre of the Holy Innocents to warn them away from weaponry.[613] The experience of violence at home contributed to its quotidian practice and acceptance, though the degree to which it was accepted has been contested by historians. Nevertheless, domestic violence 'seems to have been far more common' in the early modern period than it is today, according to Ruff, and included spouses, children, and servants. Such violence fell under the umbrella of 'widespread and often unchallenged violence in the social and legal structures of early modern western Europe'.[614] While guidebook literature suggested that the head of the household should abstain from 'severe' beatings of family members at home, popular print in the early modern period still promoted physical chastisement and spoke to a general experience and culture of justified physicality at home.[615]

More generally, Ruff notes that 'the state found the disorder of youth groups and popular festivities increasingly a problem that required containment' with great emphasis placed on the control of 'Sabbath behaviour', 'wedding feasts, Carnival observances, games, and charivaris'.[616] According to Ruff, early modern violence connects to modern violence in its propensity to occur 'at times of

[611] N. Zemon Davis, 'The Rites of Violence: Religious Riot in Sixteenth-Century France', in *Past & Present*, 59 (May 1973), pp.87-88.
[612] O. Niccoli, 'I "Fanciulli" del Savonarola: Usi Religiosi e Politici Dell'Infanzia Nell'Italia Del Rinascimento', A. Fontes, J, L. Fournel, and M. Plaisance, (eds.), *Savonarole: Enjeux, débats, questions* (Paris, 1997), p.112.
[613] L. Haas, *The Renaissance Man and His Children: Childbirth and Early Childhood in Florence, 1300*-1600 (New York, 1998), p.139.
[614] Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, p.132; p.138.
[615] Haas, *The Renaissance Man and His Children*, p.143; Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, pp.35-37.
[616] C. Carlsmith, 'Troublesome Teens: Approaches to Educating and Disciplining Youth in Early Modern Italy', in Eisenbichler, *The Premodern Teenager*, pp.169-170; Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, p.180.

greatest leisure, chiefly during weekends and holidays'.[617] Niccoli, however, has again highlighted the persistent division between town and country that marked early modern Italian society by showing that young men in urban centres 'proved to be much easier to bring to line' versus those in the countryside and mountainous areas who were 'more difficult to rein in'; for Niccoli's research, however, this means a greater survivability in court records of those 'traditional rituals of love, play, and violence' that characterised youthful development.[618] The combination of the lived experience of wartime, the popularity of violent pastimes, and its regular role in the lives of early modern people meant that violence was a 'routine part of the discourse of daily life', particularly among young men, and accepted as so for many contemporaries.[619] Indeed, it was acceptable in a range of circumstances, even encouraged in others, but it was also a constant fear in the daily experience of contemporaries and a nuisance for governments. The 'developments in law and judicial practice' in the early modern period across Europe, 'reflected the public perception of widespread, violent threats to personal safety'.[620] Tensions and issues of criminality appear to have worsened in the later sixteenth century alongside this penchant for violence. Surmised by Ferri and Roversi, 'the legacy of the great political and religious upheavals of Europe in the first half of the century made itself felt by creating, here as elsewhere, a series of problems affecting all aspects of social life and all the levels at which it takes place'.[621]

[617] Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, p.128.
[618] Niccoli, 'Rituals of Youth', p.92.
[619] Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, p.129.
[620] *Ibid*, p.43.
[621] Ferri, Roversi, *Storia di Bologna*, p.205.

Stages for Violence: The City

The early-modern Italian world, then, was a violent one and the city presented a particularly alluring stage to enact that violence in front of a viewing public. In the same way that Davis sees the shared values and cultures of violent crowds in early modern France informing their action, many sixteenth century *Bolognesi* were not acting in a 'mindless way' (though some did) but instead planned the time, place and means of practising violence.[622] According to Rinieri's chronicle, word in the city regularly carried the news of another assassination committed in the city's streets, churches and piazzas.[623] Despite being seen as a 'most heinous crime' because of the financial transaction involved in the arrangement, work as an assassin was readily taken up by the bloodthirsty or destitute. In his chronicle from sixteenth-century Florence, Giuliano de'Ricci wrote that assassination was common in the city and the price for such work was cheap given the number of poor prepared to undertake it.[624] One of the most prolific killers reported in Bologna's *Libri dei giustiziati* was Giovanni da Torresella who, on 14th November 1513, was quartered by the Bolognese authorities for having killed 32 people for the Bentivolgio family.[625] It should be noted that the accusation of 'assassination' is also a relatively common one to find in the records of the *Torrone* and could often mean an attack on one's name or reputation rather than physical assault, though the same sense of the publicity of that attack is maintained.

Warring groups also appear to have used the city as an arena to act out their grievances. In 1549 Rinieri notes the 'multitude of quarrels' that broke out across the city between the huge number of groups brandishing 'a great number of weapons' and roaming the streets, seemingly inspired by

[622] Davis, 'Rites of Violence', p.91.
[623] For example, Rinieri, *Cronaca*, pp.14-15.
[624] Giuliano de'Ricci in Brackett, *Criminal Justice and Crime,* p.105; Margaux Buyck found that assassination was often punished similarly poisoning, an execution of 'ultra-violence' that for contemporaries reflected the underhand nature of both crimes, M. Buyck, 'The "Enormous and Horrendous" Crime of Poisoning: Bologna, ca. 1300-1700', in Blanshei, *Violence and Justice in Bologna*, p.157.
[625] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 14th November 1513, vol. 4831.

tensions that had broken out between the Malvezzi and Pepoli families.[626] The fallout of violence that appears to have plagued the city in November of that year forced the authorities to issue several bans on weapons and on meeting and 'going in groups' in and around the city. The clash between the two families on 15th December 1549 led to another decree issued by the authorities banning and expelling all '*bravi*' - these were the armed henchmen of any wealthy individual or group.[627] Following one clash between the Pepoli and Malvezzi families on the via San Stefano, one of the principle thoroughfares of the city, the Bolognese authorities were compelled to enforce bans on groups, *bravi*, and closed the city gates to all *contadini*.[628] According to Rinieri's report, the two groups even fought 'valiantly', that is until two were shot by a wheel-lock arquebus and another 'Captain Macharon' was injured in the shoulder. [629] In another entry, Rinieri described the 'horrible and dark' event between the Malvezzi and Pepoli factions. In March 1548, when the city guard began firing their arquebuses, a collection of mortars and ammunition being stored in a busy market square sparked and exploded, killing many.[630]

Some murders did indeed go unwitnessed, though reports of cases without witnesses are less common. Sources nevertheless do speak of bodies found mutilated in their beds, in the middle of roads, or dumped into undergrowth and wells. Statements from a certain Angelica in January 1560 describing finding two dead bodies inside a hostel (killed over a suspected money dispute) shows that some killers believed their situation necessitated a slightly more discreet resolution, however violent.[631] In such cases, investigators needed to lean into the 'surveillance cultures' of the early

[626] Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.243.
[627] J. Walker, 'Bravi and Venetian Nobles, c. 1550-1650', *Studi veneziani*, 36 (1998), pp.85-91.
[628] Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.248.
[629] 'A dì detto, apreso le 22 hore, se fè una gran costeone in stra' Santo Stefano in dritto la Fondaza, quali furno amici di Pepuli che asaltòrno de le amici di Malvizi, e per tre bolte se atachòrno insieme e conbatèrno valorosamente, ma una parte et l'altra erano ben armati de gachi, manneche e sucheti; et fu' scharicato dui archebuso da rotta a li amici di Pepuli, e fu ferito il capitanio Macharon in una spala... arivò da Santa Tecthia, su il cantono del palazo di li Erchulani, il signore conte Guido di Pepuli, con circha 70 homini con le chape, e sotto, le spade e pugnali. et subito anchora dise: "Archibusieri! Archebugieri!"; et fra uno pocheto arivò da cento archebogieri corando drieto el signore conte Guido...', Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.247.
[630] Rinieri, *Cronaca*, pp.193-194.
[631] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, 18 (1559-1560), ff.44r-51v.

modern world to identify suspects - Trevor Dean's research into homicide investigations in Bologna during the fifteenth century has highlighted the effectiveness of this system well.[632] For most cases even in the sixteenth century the weapons of choice appear to have largely been mêlée arms - daggers, swords, axes that reflect an almost universal ownership of bladed weapons or work tools that could be repurposed for killer means. By the beginning of the seventeenth century the firearm would become the most common weapon involved in homicide according to Rose's study.[633] Nevertheless, these silent weapons were also still used in demonstrative kills. The chronicles of Marescalchi and Rinieri both record regular killings in very public spaces using weapons other than firearms. On one occasion from June 1564, Marescalchi writes of an apparently random attack on the public by a man leaving the church of San Petronio. In an act of violence Marescalchi cannot explain (in fact he is perplexed by it), the man is described as having swung his sword at anyone he passed, leaving many injured.[634] Streets were also a point of confrontation, but the crowded nature of the early modern pavement, overlooked and cramped by houses and shops, was a place where an attacker was unlikely to get away without a witness. The records of those executed in Bologna kept by the Santa Maria della Morte confraternity recorded a spate of such crimes in 1540 - '*assassini da strada*'.[635] Many appeared to have killed in public without any intention of hiding the act or their identities, though there was a somewhat regular attempt to claim to be acting on behalf of the 'court'. In November 1543, Lionello dalla Molinella was beheaded for having killed another man in the street 'under the name of the court'. He was also acting as part of a larger group.[636] Records from the *Torrone* court reviewed later describe the same issue. The relative ease at which individuals and groups might have been able to impersonate the authorities is another insight into the challenges to representation and authority faced by early modern Bolognese state.

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[632] Jackson, 'Parading in Public', p.457; T. Dean, 'Investigating Homicide: Bologna in the 1450s', in Blanshei, *Violence and Justice in Bologna: 1250-1700*, pp.83-100.
[633] Rose, 'Homicide in North Italy', p.129.
[634] Marescalchi, *Cronaca*, p.19.
[635] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 22nd January 1540, 6th March 1540, 15th May 1540, vol.4832.
[636] *Ibid*, 24th November 1543, vol.4832.

Churches and Mass were also popular choices to stage a murder. Nicholò da la Mavaxia was one of many remembered by Rinieri to have been killed at Mass in San Francesco with a knife.[637] On 29th March, 1536 Bernardino Paghanini was attacked at Mass in Santo Martino, at the altar of Santa Catalina - this altercation must have grown into something larger since Rinieri notes the many 'great men dead and injured'.[638] The church of San Francesco, removed from the true centre of Bologna, closer to the walls and gates of the city but still located on a main road, seemed to have been a particular hotspot for demonstrative murder. After the record of Nicholò da la Mavaxia, Marescalchi chronicled the assassination of Nicholò Raigosa in the same church by Messer Pandolfo. Both appeared to have been notable enough to have titles and surnames - but Messer Pandolfo was chased out the city nonetheless, with an award offered for whomever killed him or any of his accomplices.[639] Similarly, Messer Antonio, son of Messer Matheo della Lanna, was murdered in the sacristy of Santo Francesco - this time it was discreet enough for Marescalchi to record that nobody knew who had committed the act, but the public stage assumes the killer knew the body would, maybe should, be found.[640] The knight, Corelio di Orsi, was killed at Mass by Lucio Ruini, seemingly after a confrontation caused by Lucio's lack of reverence for the Lord - whether Ruini would argue that this was an impulsive reaction to an offence or a demonstration of justice is difficult to say, but the time, space and means of the act are arguably significant.[641]

Women were not necessarily any safer in these contexts - Teresa Zanbonelli was stabbed twice by a man in the church of San Stefano during a sermon.[642] It is already apparent, given the cases of *frati*

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[637] Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.4.

[638] 'A dì 29 de mazo, fu ferito a morte Bernardino Paghanini in Santo Martino a messa e l'altare de Santa Catelina e fu in lunedì a la prima messa e a quisti dì era' morte de gran gente e ferri' assai.', Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.13.

[639] Marescalchi, *Cronaca*, p.12.

[640] *Ibid*, pp.56-57.

[641] '...venne a dischordia com messer Lucio Ruini, et mettendo mano alle spade, fecero costione insieme. Essendone perhò causa et il primo a ferire ditto messer Cornelio, il quale per non havere hauto reverentia all' Signore, perhò che si celebrava la messa grande fo ferito da ditto messer Lucio Ruini e al sopraditto dì morse…', *Ibid*, p.21.

[642] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati,* 7th October 1542, vol.4832.

who turned to violence, that religion appears to have played little role in the decision making of contemporaries bent on murder or assault - the church stage was, a perfect opportunity to make a visible act. Not only was it a crowded place where tensions could easily bristle, it was also, in practical terms, a place where an individual with predetermined intentions would know their target would be. The Torrone similarly captures a significant number of crimes taking place inside and outside of churches, and during service. A document from May 1586 records the examination of Andrea di Hanni from the countryside for having entered a church armed with an accomplice.[643] Cases such as that brought against Sanctino di Berto Cavara da Vevola, whose attack with a club against two other men at Mass resulted in a 'great effusion of blood', were also fairly common.[644] A large group of intertwined rivalries appear to have chosen the church of San Francesco in Castel Bolognese (25 miles southeast of Bologna) as their backdrop when they attacked two brothers outside its main door - Hercole was attacked with a knife, wounding his head and leaving a 'great effusion of blood'.[645]

Similar could be said of carnival time, where aforementioned events that celebrated violent military culture (such as the recreation of famous battles) also became the stage to commit violence. Carlo di Tiberio Malvezzi was beheaded for killing Ercolesse Zabettubi with a knife while masked at a carnival in February 1515, for example.[646] A larger group were captured in the Torrone court records in February 1561 for having been found armed with 'various sorts of weapons', and an array of bladed arms, in the comune of Barbarolo. On the 3rd of March, just a few days later, another group were denounced by the *massaro* of Barbarolo when he reported, an 'armata', that was, 12 or 14 'persone armati' carrying various weapons, including polearms and firearms, on the Monday of Carnival.[647] The prevalence of violence and the regularity of armed groups during Carnival speaks to the sense of

[643] ASBo, Legato, Expeditiones, busta 97 (1586), f.238r.
[644] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 45 (1560-1602), f.21r.
[645] *Ibid*, ff.240r-264v.
[646] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 13th February 1515, vol.4831.
[647] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 44, (1561), f.90r; ff.91r-91v.

subversive opportunity that Carnival in the early modern world presented. Alongside the 'sexual indulgence' and 'ritualized violence' that often accompanied these transitory periods of inversion, in Bologna the sense of political motivation and the 'struggle of power within the hierarchical order' is also underlined.[648]

The circle of violence is completed by the authorities who put those found guilty to various public corporal and capital punishments - the 'rope', brandings, or hands and ears cut off, alongside those definitive sentences of hangings, being burnt alive, or quartered. Records of these events occur on almost every page of Rinieri's over-200-page record. On 5th March 1549, for example, Rinieri juxtaposes his lively and enthusiastic description of the carnival festivities in the city over several pages immediately against a basic description of the hanging of two thieves.[649] State violence also made a particular effort to utilise the public arena - Rinieri, for example, in July 1536 notes the hanging of the body of a criminal who had already committed suicide in prison.[650] The *Libri dei giustiziati* record the body of a servant hanged at the house of the man he had killed by blowing up a mine, destroying the house in the process.[651] Others were dragged by horses or marched through the streets on carriages along a processional route before arriving at the place of execution, this may also have been the spot they were accused of having committed the crime. On 6th March, 1540, the *Libri dei giustiziati* record the ends of two men from Bazano who were tied to a carriage and taken to the city where they were then quartered alive in the Piazza di San Domenico for murder.[652] In other cases, authorities would lean into symbolism for greater effect on a viewing public – in October 1547 the timbers of a building burnt down by an arsonist were used to create the gallows from where his body was hanged.[653] More often than not though, criminals who had been handed capital

[648] G. Gurarino, 'Taming Transgression and Violence in the Carnivals of Early Modern Naples', *The Historical Journal*, 60:1 (2017), pp.1-2.
[649] Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.228.
[650] *Ibid*, p.16.
[651] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 10th August 1547, vol.4832.
[652] *Ibid*, 6th March 1540, vol.4832.
[653] Terpstra, 'Theory into Practice', p.129.

punishment met their end on display at the Palazzo del Podestá. In March 1542, after three men were beheaded on the Ringhiera at the Palazzo del Podestà their bodies were put on a cart and taken to the house of the man they had murdered, a nobleman and 'padrone' of Poggio de Lambertini. Here, their bodies were quartered and attached to a stand for display.[654] Similarly, in December 1546 Francesco dal Negro and Achille Landi were hanged, quartered and their body parts carried to the various places where their crimes had been committed.[655]

The Rural Stage:

Of the crimes included in the *libri dei giustiziati* that specify locations and origins the majority occurred in the city, but most of those committing the crimes had travelled into the city from its rural areas.[656] Analysis of this source base by Terpstra has shown that the majority of those 'mounting the scaffold in Bologna matched those across Europe', that is, they were 'male "outsiders" who were often young adults, who drifted into crime as they tried to survive in an alien city, and who lacked the financial resources and personal networks that would allow them to negotiate the commutation of their penalties'.[657] This section offers an introductory glance at the differences between the urban centre and rural surroundings, how this informed the experience of contemporaries, violent crime and ultimately, sets up the context for examples of firearm use highlighted in Chapter 4.

There was certainly a clear physical separation between the urban maze and the rural expanse in sixteenth-century Bologna, and Italy generally. The same physical transition can even be felt today in Bologna as you pass through the surviving city gates that even now feel simultaneously imposing and protective, into the open streets, hills, and countryside beyond the walls. The *contado* was largely

[654] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 4th March 1542, vol.4832.
[655] *Ibid*, 13th December 1546, vol.4832.
[656] Terpstra, 'Theory into Practice', p.122.
[657] *Ibid*.

associated with rural labour, even if other professions were included under the *contadini* label.[658] Similarly, however, the living conditions of *contadini* and rural artisans could also differ significantly.[659] The *contado* around Bologna was largely characterised by the share-cropping system which more often than not ensured a certain level of poverty and a propertyless *contadini*.[660] In other areas productive cottage industries developed respectably wealthy communities, as did the communities based around the wealthy noble estates, or even in the urbanised localities that could still fall under the *contado* label.[661] Specialised industries, such as Bologna's silk industry, were too closely guarded and protected to be allowed free practice outside the walls of the city.[662] However, as a category the *contado* could encapsulate a fairly varied reality, including those 'considerable communities of many hundreds or even thousands of inhabitants' and even within urban spaces like Prato.[663] For Bologna the population of its *contado* was over double that of its urban population.[664] Similar numbers are presented by Perugia, as a comparison, which held an urban population of 19,234 in 1582 and counted 57,234 in its *contado* population across various towns and villages.[665] Population disparities such as this between where the government of a territory sat and its *contado* undoubtedly presented a challenge to authority and surveillance. Within this division there was also an inherent tension that 'had been a constant in Bologna for centuries'.[666] At its basis was probably the economic differences between the two zones.This economic difference informed the reputation of its inhabitants and their opportunities that might lead them to be caught in the court rolls of the *Torrone*. The distinction between the two spaces was expressed most clearly in attitudes towards those beyond the city walls. *Contadini* or peasant, still holds similarly derogatory connotations as it

[658] C. Black, *Early Modern Italy: A Social History* (London/New York, 2001), p.43.
[659] *Ibid*, p.61.
[660] C. M. Belfanti, 'Town and Country in Central and Northern Italy, 1400-1800', in R. Epstein (ed.), *Town and Country in Europe, 1300-1800* (Cambridge, 2001), p.313; Christopher Black has suggested this system was more beneficial to *contadini* in other areas, Black, *Early Modern Italy: A Social History*, pp.44-45.
[661] Black, *Early Modern Italy: A Social History*, p.43; pp.60-62.
[662] Belfanti, 'Town and Country', p.313.
[663] Black, *Early Modern Italy: A Social History*, p.43.
[664] Bellettini, *La popolazione di Bologna*, p.25;p.48
[665] Black, *Early Modern Italy: A Social History*, p.43.
[666] Terpstra, 'Theory into Practice', p.122.

did in the past.[667] The assumedly relatable characterisation of the peasantry in Beolco's *The Veteran* again presents a mocking portrayal of simpleton countrymen and women who can hardly control the events of their own lives.[668] *Contadino* are often included in the lists of provisions issued in Bologna during this century that expelled or banned certain groups from the city, suggesting the 'otherness' that could be associated with country folk.[669]

The enduring impression of the *contado* is one of poverty and lawlessness. This is apparent in Frank McArdle's survey of Altopascio which links the destitution of the *contado* with a significant increase in violence.[670] Nevertheless, the potentially large populations that the *contado* label could capture were combined with the geographic dislocation of central authority and the proud independence of comunes that could resist the imposition of urban power.[671] Often this took its most dangerous form in the spread of banditry. Bologna's papal authorities underlined this perceived threat through regular publication of punitive initiatives and public capital punishment against known bandits and their followers. Unfortunately for the *contadini*, bandits were another source of danger alongside the *sbirri* – both groups were regularly accused of extorting money, goods and violently interfering with local rivalries.[672] The geography of the Bolognese *contado* made banditry especially difficult to quell - the 'ruggedness and remoteness' of rural localities were perfect spaces for outlaws to operate. Similarly, they could find refuge and opportunity among the 'multiplicity of communities and towns' that 'allowed dissident barons or comunes to defy central authority'.[673] The figure of the bandit, though much understudied and often exaggerated by local legends, was nevertheless as

[667] Black, *Early Modern Italy: A Social History*, p.43.
[668] Beolco, *The Veteran and Weasel*.
[669] An example of a provision apparently published in the 1520s during the spread of disease in the city, all *contadini* and foreigners were given three days to leave, ASBo, Senato, 1383-sec. XVIII, Diari, unità nr.2 Provisionum (1522-28), 2, 105v.
[670] F. McArdle, *Altopascio: A Study in Tuscan Rural Society, 1587-1784* (Cambridge, 1978); Brackett, *Criminal Justice and Crime*, p.100
[671] Belfanti, 'Town and Country', p.313.
[672] Hughes, 'Fear and Loathing', p.101.
[673] Black, *Early Modern Italy: A Social History*, p.188.

varied as the *contado* they might inhabit.[674] These groups were made up of criminals, unemployed soldiers, the disillusioned or the opportunistic, and significantly, those exiled in contumacy temporarily or permanently depending on the crime.[675] This practice of banishment imposed by early modern Italian governments defined anyone as a '*bandito*'. This included nobles who were then free to leverage their wealth and influence to accrue a following of outlaws in the countryside.[676] Nevertheless, the bandit could also just as easily be a member of lower classes driven into criminality by their environment and circumstances. For others, a similarly vague definition of profession applied as it did between the soldier/civilian relationship considered in Chapter 1 - 'military service, crime and membership of an armed band were interchangeable or alternative forms of employment'.[677] For Ferri and Roversi, in their study of Bologna, it was the dislocation of war, peacetime and the fallout of those now unemployed who used to make a living by arms who now struggled, or even refused, to reintegrate into peaceable occupations.[678] Now, 'armed gangs of troublemakers and desperate people, joined by criminals of every stripe, infested the countryside by committing robberies, imposing bounties and ruthlessly killing anyone who had the courage to oppose them'.[679]

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[674] Carlo Baja Guarienti's history of the 'war' between Domenico d'Amorotto and Francesco Guiccidardini, the governor of Bologna, is also an attempt to differentiate the myth of the bandit in both the historical and popular imagination from the reality of the conflict between the state and banditry, C. B. Guarienti, *Il bandito e il governatore: Domenico d'Amorotto e Francesco Guicciardini nell'età delle guerre d'Italia* (Roma, 2014).

[675] I. P. Fosi, 'Il banditismo nello stato pontificio nella seconda metà del cinquecento', in G. Ortalli (ed.), *Bande armate: banditi, banditismo e repressioni di giustizia negli stati europei di antico regime* (Rome, 1986) pp.70-71.

[676] Black describes the problems caused by nobles directing bandit groups in the Italian countryside, meaning that often the '*contadini* could be caught up in factional fights of elites…', Black, *Early Modern Italy: A Social History*, p.60; Ferri and Roversi, *Storia di Bologna*, pp.205-206; examples of the practice of banishment that contributed to issues of banditry are found in records such as Marescalchi's chronicles. For example, in October 1569, Spilinberto Bartholomeo Dolfi was banned ('bandito') for shooting dead another man, Marescalchi, *Cronaca*, p.81; on the practice of banishment in Bologna's medieval years, S. R. Blanshei, *Politics and Justice in Late Medieval Bologna* (Leiden/Boston, 2010); C. Shaw, *The Politics of Exile in Renaissance* Italy, (Cambridge, 2000), pp.5-54.

[677] N. S. Davidson in Black, *Early Modern Italy: A Social History*, p.190.

[678] Ferri and Roversi, *Storia di Bologna*, pp.205-206.

[679] *Ibid*, pp.205-206.

Above all though, the Bolognese state found those exiled nobles or wealthier members of society to be the most pressing concern. These individuals took advantage of the distance between the urban authority and in their bid to resist encroaching centralization sought to employ those now lost without a cause.[680] Their strength and size varied from problematic troublemakers to large, well-armed and decently organised bodies. Francesco Guicciardini saw first-hand the fallout of Bologna's particularly troublesome experience during the Italian Wars when he was assigned as governor of the city in 1531. Guicciardini took a heavy hand to the armed factions that had sprung up in the mountains and countryside surrounding the city. In 1532 he ordered 300 soldiers into the *contado* in pursuit of a famous bandit, Camillo Sacchi - a 'man of great following in the mountains of Bologna' amid concurrent popular unrest in the city over taxation policies.[681] When Sacchi and his group were found sheltering in a house Guicciardini's men burnt it down, killing 14 and taking a survivor back to Bologna for public execution.[682] The same record is found in the *Libri dei giustiziati* and notes that two cannons were taken as well, in order to break the bandit hold over a settlement, and that the children of the bandits were forced to watch their punishment..[683]

The *Torrone* courts reported many smaller bandit groups and known individuals, but significant forces amassed by powerful men were also known in the period.[684] One such example was Giovanni di Pompeo who in 1582 was claimed to have been able to command 800 men. His uncle, Giovanni Pepoli, was executed in August 1585 for being an accomplice to a known bandit - banditry had essentially been 'a family tradition' for the Pepoli.[685] The banning of families from areas meant that

[680] *Ibid*.
[681] P. Vizzani, *I due ultimi libri delle historia della sua patria* (Bologna, 1608), p.4.
[682] Terpstra, 'Theory into Practice', p.120.
[683] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 1539, vol.4831.
[684] Examples from the *Torrone* records include Pirino de Baldassera da Scanello and his two sons, '*banditi*_ along with at least 2 others seen armed at market time in May 1561, ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 44, no pagination; A license request from April 1566 was granted to two people to counter the bandits and 'sgherri' they faced in the city and in the countryside, ASBo, Legato, Expeditiones (April 1566), ff.83v-84r.
[685] Ferri and Roversi, *Storia di Bologna*, p.206.

bandit groups were often made up of male relatives at their core.[686] Rinieri regularly recorded the reputation and capture of infamous bandits; in November 1535 he penned the news of the death of 'Pudetto', leader of a 'party in the mountains' who was killed, potentially as reward for their own restitution into the city-fabric, by 'Mongorxo'.[687] Pudetto was known for having killed 'men and women and children, and burning houses', of assassinating many others, including 'contadini', 'friends' and 'enemies'. He and his main accomplices were known to have travelled with 'un granda armada'.[688] State justice against these outlaws equalled their brutality - 'Note that all of these leaders of this party died badly…that is killed and burned in a house and hanged, and all the young children and relatives of these are dead'.[689] Bandits might also be motivated by varied objectives. According to Christopher Black, some of these motivations were simple - 'groups formed by evil, criminal men (occasionally women) intent on stealing, pillaging and raping to survive and enjoy life…'.[690] Others appear to conform more closely to Hobsbawm's definition of the 'social bandit' who appear to have been supported by the communities where they made their base.[691] Marco Sciarra's band of men famously operated in the Abruzzo region of Italy between 1584 and 1593 - according to Rosario Villari they were a 'genuine guerilla force' who 'scrupulously followed norms of behaviour which conformed to Sciarra's social ideal'.[692] Others were more overtly political and more often than not tied directly into the intertwining cultures of violence and honour in early modern Italy. These

[686] Examples in the *Torrone* files include those mentioned above armed at a market outside of the city, ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 44 (May 1561), no pagination; and at least one father and son duo who stopped the arrest of their apparent leader in March 1566 near the church at Campeggio, ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 328 (March 1566), ff.236r-241v; ff.354r-355v; f.360v.

[687] Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.5.

[688] '...amazare homini e done e putini, e burgare chaxe e 'ttor trare in terre e sassinare viandate, contadini e amixi e nomixi; et voleano da manzare da per tutto donde andavano e senpre andavano con granda armada tutte quanti quisti montanari…', Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.56.

[689] 'Notta che tutti quisti capi de queste parte sono tutti mali chapitati de mala morte; ch'è stato amazato e ch'è stato brugato in chaxa e ch'è stato appichato, sì chè ancora lì n'è di li altri giuvini figlioli e parenti de quisti che sono morti.',Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.5.

[690] Black, *Early Modern Italy: A Social History*, p.190

[691] *Ibid*, p.190.

[692] *Ibid*, p.190.

were led by disgruntled nobles inspired by vendetta or political histories against their rivals.[693] Others also claimed allegiance to long established Guelph and Ghibelline factions, though their motivations were likely able to splinter along the myriad political lines made available to them through the transformations already outlined.[694] Shaw, however, has also underlined the continued significance of the Guelph and Ghibelline divisions in particular, both of which, despite having their original definition becoming somewhat looser over time, remained 'living forces in the life of large areas of the Papal States, generating passions and loyalties that the papal government could never hope to arouse'.[695]

Bandits were also an opportunity to demonstrate the power of state justice. Marescalchi records the violent execution of Gionimo di Tumesani, 'leader of bandits' in the countryside of Bologna, and 'one of the greatest murderers that one can find'. He was tied to a carriage through the city, 'pinned' by the executioner, and quartered alive in the city square. His body parts were carried to the places where he had 'committed his evil works'.[696] Rinieri made a similar note in September 1537 when a 'montanare', a killer and leader of men in the mountains, was quartered in the city.[697] In April 1557 the *Libri dei giustiziati* record the death of Giovanni dalle Canove, 'bandito capitale', who had been killed by the *sbirri* and his body hanged on forks in the city's main piazza.[698] Another 'bandito capitale' Vincenzo Cavalari, nicknamed *Mezzanotte*, was hanged on a pole in the piazza and then burned for also attempting to break out from the *Torrone* prisons.[699] The fact that some criminals could rely on their influence even when imprisoned is evident in the case of Gasparo Salaroli, who was imprisoned and eventually hanged for various homicides (including killing members of the

[693] *Ibid*, p.190.
[694] Ferri, Roversi, *Storia di Bologna*, p.198.
[695] Shaw, *Julius II: The Warrior Pope*, p.4.
[696] Marescalchi, *Cronaca*, p.48.
[697] 'A dì 22 ditto, fu squartado un montanare, el quale avea 'sassinato de la gente; e quelo che 'l mandò pregono a Bologna fu el Bontadino, el quale era capo de parte in montagna, a benchè lui starebbe ben squartado.', Rinieri, *Cronaca*, p.44.
[698] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 26th April 1557, vol.4832.
[699] *Ibid*, 24th January 1560, vol.4832.

church). Before that he had called on at least two of his accomplices to help him break out of the *Torrone* prisons.[700] The threat bandits posed to both the actual control and the perceived legitimacy of the Bolognese state is apparent in the demonstrative shows of force that the authorities organised against bandits. Nevertheless, the chronicles suggest that this battle continued for most of the century and in doing so reveal the uneven footing of papal control.

The firearm also became synonymous with the bandits operating in the peripheries of the Bolognese state. The Venetian authorities had made the same association between firearms and bandits in the same period while similarly struggling with the proliferation of both bandits and guns. In response they imposed increasingly stringent regulations over their possession and stricter sentencing in the criminal cases that involved guns.[701] According to the Venetian government, the 'spread of firearms' alongside the 'abuses and arrogance' of the nobility, often labelled as 'banditi', explained the significant 'social restlessness and the emergence of criminal behaviour' in the mid- to late-sixteenth century.[702] Laven's study of banditry and lawlessness in Venice depicted a similar image to that apparent in Bologna, with the 'inadequacy of the republic's efforts to control organized crime' and ultimately the state's 'losing battle against the violence of gangs' in the sixteenth century. The connection perceived by the state between firearm control and quelling issues of banditry was also highlighted by Laven.[703] Davis's evocation of the moustachioed, feather-tassled bandit carrying a wheellock arquebus 'in their hands, under their arms, slung over their shoulders, or as staffs when standing around talking' took its place within a general proliferation of firearms in the countryside. Bandits, though, leaned into the aesthetic of the firearm, adopting them not only as killer weapons but also as 'a fashion statement'. They might similarly holster three or four guns at the same time or display double-barrelled models to emphasise the intimidation - though having several shots ready

[700] *Ibid*, 30th November 1563, 4832.
[701] C. Povolo, *L'intrigo dell'onore: Poteri e istituzioni nella Repubblica di Venezia tra Cinque e Seicento* (Verona, 1997), p.154; p.181; p.312.
[702] Povolo, *L'intrigo dell'onore*, p.181.
[703] P. Laven, 'Banditry and Lawlessness on the Venetian *Terraferma* in the Later Quattrocento', in T. Dean and T. Lowe (eds.), *Crime, Society and the Law in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge, 1994), p.247; pp.221-222.

to fire offered obvious practical advantages in a time before magazines and widespread availability of breech-loading firearms[704]

Bandits also lived a double-edged life by guns - in October 1569, Marescalchi writes of the death of Spilinberto Bartholomeo Dolfi, himself a bandit since killing Fillippo Seghizello three years prior, was found dead having been shot by an arquebus.[705] While Bologna had been fighting the issue of banditry since the early sixteenth-century, with Francesco Guicciardini playing a pronounced role, it was not until Italian powers cooperated to rid their connected *contadi* of the bandit scourge that any real progress was made. It was the later sixteenth century that saw the most active anti-banditry policy in Bologna, too.[706] In sum, the explanations for banditry were varied - be they 'part of strategies of conflict, landlord-peasant relations, or governments' law-and-order politics', or simply 'personal greed, dire necessity, or original sin' - but they were also a product of cultures of the day involving vendetta, honour, military culture, the cultures of violence, and significantly, gun cultures.[707] The history of the Italian bandit has attracted little attention so far, and the figure of the bandit remains ill-defined, however their presence in the Papal States in particular were felt long after the sixteenth century.[708] According to Fosi, the execution of big names did not eradicate banditry, instead it became an 'endemic element of society', 'tolerated and fuelled' by the Papal State, 'ready to explode again' with the arrival of economic or political crisis.[709] Nevertheless, the mid-sixteenth century has been identified as the 'worst period of banditry', a period which also coincided with the rise of the portable firearm.[710]

[704] Davis, 'The Renaissance Goes Up in Smoke', p.403; p.401.
[705] Marescalchi, *Cronaca*. p.81.
[706] Black, *Early Modern Italy: A Social History*, p.190; Terpstra, 'Theory into Practice', p.119.
[707] Black, *Early Modern Italy: A Social History*, p.189.
[708] Carlo Baja Guarienti's history of the 'war' between Domenico d'Amorotto and Francesco Guiccidardini, the governor of Bologna, is also an attempt to differentiate the myth of the bandit in both the historical and popular imagination from the reality of the conflict between the state and banditry, C. B. Guarienti, *Il bandito e il governatore: Domenico d'Amorotto e Francesco Guicciardini nell'età delle guerre d'Italia* (Roma, 2014).
[709] Fosi, 'Lo stato pontificio', p.85.
[710] Black, *Early Modern Italy: A Social History*, p.190.

This section has established the regularity of violence in early modern Bolognese life amid the experience of war, shared cultures of violence, and a recently established state. It has shown the importance played by these larger structures of experience in informing criminal practice within both the city and in the countryside around Bologna. It has highlighted the myriad allegiances available to the early modern individual, and the opportunity for contemporaries to take justice into their own hands despite available state recourse. Violence in this period, though, remained a justifiable political and social exigency. This chapter has also suggested that violence in Bologna sought the stages of the city and of the countryside to contest power and demonstrate intentions, while also highlighting the weapons often used by contemporaries to dispatch or threaten their foes. The next section will take a closer look at individual cases using a gendered perspective to establish the shared lived experience of violence in this period, the 'view from the street'.[711] Firstly, using an overview of capital crime cases held in the *Libri dei giustiziati* it will challenge the traditional image of historical gendered crimes before pointing out the shared values that drove both men and women to justify violent actions against others. Most importantly, it will establish the key differences between male and female violence with particular attention paid to the weapons used and the role of firearms.Chapter 4 focuses on the use of firearms in the city and countryside specifically.

[711] Tlusty, *Martial Ethic,* p.5.

Gendered Criminality and Violence in Bologna:

Women in Bologna:

Historically, the women and the crime of infanticide has long been established. This is something that is reflected in the criminal court records of early modern Bologna and has more recently been suggested by Gregory Hanlon as 'routine' in early modern European 'reproductive practices'.[712] Nevertheless, there was also a broader picture of women's role in criminality and within the period's cultures of violence has been argued by several historians in recent years. Among those to have drawn attention to gendered violence is Lansing, whose research on girls in late medieval Bologna acknowledges both the regularity of horrendous violence enacted against girls, but also cases where girls and young women chose to run away from home, thieve as part of groups, carefully manipulated opinion, the court system, and generally demonstrated remarkably lively independence and resourcefulness beyond the limits of contemporary law.[713] Blanshei, Cucini, Lansing and Dean have contributed to an avenue of research that has found women 'not only as victims, particularly of domestic abuse, but as litigators in property disputes, as perpetrators of violent crimes, and as key figures in marital, inter-class and political conflicts'.[714] Scott Taylor and Susannah Lipscomb have found women in other areas of Europe pulling on the same themes of, and justifications for, violence that have long been assumed to be male prerogatives, using, in particular, notions of honour to undo their accusers or legitimate their own attacks.[715] In fact, Lipscomb has underlined women's 'latent violence' in the early modern period.[716]

[712] G. Hanlon, 'Routine Infanticide in the West 1500-1800', *History Compass*, 14:11 (2016), pp.535-548.
[713] C. Lansing, 'Girls in Trouble in Late Medieval Bologna', in K. Eisenbichler (ed.), *The Premodern Teenager: Youth in Society, 1150-1650* (Toronto, 2002), pp.293-310.
[714] Blanshei and Cucini, 'Criminal Justice and Conflict Resolution', p.352.
[715] S. K. Taylor, 'Women, Honor and Violence in a Castilian Town, 1600-1650', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* (Winter, 2004), 35:4, pp.1079-1097.
[716] S. Lipscomb, 'Crossing Boundaries: Women's Gossip, Insults and Violence in Sixteenth-Century France' *French History*, 2011 (25:4), p.424.

Nevertheless, there are clear disparities in court representation across the period. Sara Cucini has found that women in *contado* communities were significantly underrepresented in legal processes. In most cases where women's trials are recorded they are concerning those crimes deemed most serious by contemporary authorities, often those stereotypically female crimes outlined above.[717] Rose's analysis of the Bolognese 17th century has found that the 'large majority of homicides in seventeenth-century Bologna were committed by men, against men, and in public areas, if not in broad daylight'.[718] Only 2.5% of Rose's 701 homicide trials involved women guilty of murder, even if those cases appeared 'in a variety of contexts'.[719] Importantly, their involvement in capital crimes was still treated by the court as an 'aberration'.[720] Women's relatively low appearance-rate in court records was also identified in the more extensive statistical study undertaken by Casanova and Angelozzi, though only a single sample was used to represent the sixteenth century under focus in this thesis. Nevertheless, in a sample of 2337 cases between 1583-1587 (which included only one register in every ten available) Angelozzi and Casanova found an almost equal split between litigants representing the *contado* and the city, but only 7.8% of cases involving women. Of those women 128 lived in the city and just 55 lived in the *contado*.[721] The wider scope of their investigation, however, shows that from the late sixteenth century onwards the number of complaints brought to the *Torrone* grew, as did the number of those originating from the *contado*. This gives numerical backing to the premise that the influence of papal governance grew steadily over time through institutions such as the *Torrone*. Of the crimes committed by women compiled by Casanova and Angelozzi, 42.3% were categorized as assault, 29.5% as verbal assault, and 29.5% as property crimes. Only 7.6% of these crimes fell under those traditionally used to describe and generalise historical female delinquency; including infanticide, witchcraft, and others already outlined as being well known.[722]

[717] Cucini, in Blanshei, *Violence and Justice*, p.xviii.
[718] Rose, *A Renaissance of Violence,* p.141.
[719] *Ibid*, p.141.
[720] *Ibid,* p.155.
[721] Angelozzi, Casanova, *Donne Criminali*, pp.68-70.
[722] *Ibid*, pp.73-85; Blanshei, *Violence and Justice*, p.xviii.

Statistical studies such as this have shown that women were less likely to appear in criminal court, that their representation from rural areas was limited, but also that the array of crimes they committed was more varied than often assumed.

Sanne Muurling's research into 17th- and 18th-century Bologna makes the strongest argument for the potential of historical sources to obscure the deeper undercurrents of women's criminality. Muurling similarly argues that the source's propensity to focus on the same sense of 'aberration' that Rose identified has largely obscured the wider picture of female criminality. In general, given the greater circumscription over their lives and contemporary attitudes towards women, female criminals were rarely seen as a threat to wider society. The dismissiveness toward women's crimes was also compounded by the state's preference in most cases to implement reconciliatory outcomes between aggrieved parties – given the attitude toward women's criminality these cases were likely the easiest for the authorities to quell with agreements or ignore entirely. For these reasons female delinquency may have been even less likely to show itself in sources.[723] Nevertheless, according to Muurling the 'contours of women's urban criminality in the early modern period were more multifarious than commonly believed' and 'historical patterns of female involvement in crime are far less static and uniform than was previously assumed'.[724] I would extend this statement to the Italian countryside as well.

The *Torrone* cases hold great potential to establish an image of women's experience of the cultures of violence that were so prevalent in early modern Italy, as well as demonstrate their greater participation in early modern criminality. The cases reviewed in this section will show that women in sixteenth-century Bologna enacted violence and justified its public demonstration using many of the same themes and notions considered important to men. They were often also drawn into violent altercations and criminality as parts of a network of male relatives and associates who they felt

[723] Muurling, *Everyday Crime,* p.1.
[724] *Ibid*, p.215.

compelled to protect under the surveillance of Bologna's streets and village paths. In sum, women's justification for violence was informed in part by their duty to uphold the honour of themselves, their relatives, and their households. The key differences in male and female participation in early modern violence will be drawn by a consideration of the weapons used.

The cases recorded by the *Torrone* court generally represent either accusations of theft, insult, or violent conduct. In all categories women make regular appearances, more often as part of a larger group with ties to men through association, friendship, or family, but also sometimes seemingly as individuals. There are many cases of women's involvement in theft but they are often described alongside male associates; take for example Domenico de' Gottis's complaint in January 1560 against Thomaso and Benedetta who he claims had stolen his chickens and were selling them days later in the markets.[725] In fact, another case from February 1560 uncovers a regular trade in stolen goods that sustained the livelihoods of the culprits and of the local community who survived by buying such second-hand items - women were key figures in this crime circle as well.[726] In other areas they are found publicly berating others. The coarse and belligerent language highlighted by Lipscomb is found in cases such as that involving Joannis, mother of Andrea de Landino, who shut her front door in the face of Thomasino after shouting various expletives.[727] In July 1582 Catherina Vezzana shouted several sexually-charged insults at Camilio over his involvement with another woman.[728] Donna Lucretia brought an insult case against a group of men (and the two women who had apparently directed this group of men) after they threw buckets of excrement in and against her house followed by much swearing and name-calling.[729] In much the same way as men, women made public assaults on the honour of other men and women, an action that often led to violence or litigation in a world where *fama* and reputation held significant currency in communities reliant on

[725] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 18 (1559), ff.72-73v.
[726] *Ibid*, ff.91r-93r; ff.122r-139v; ff.148r-149r; ff.154r-157v; ff.194r-197v.
[727] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 18 (1559), f.25r; Lipscomb, 'Crossing Boundaries', pp. pp.408-426.
[728] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 1550 (1582), ff.73r-76v.
[729] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 18 (1559), ff.65r-69r; ff.78r-80r.

obligation and social security in place of financial power.[730] In a society where the judgement of others 'seemed to constitute one's very self' honour evidently also empowered individuals with this sense of an audience in mind.[731] Much like Lena Tamborini's case already uncovered, many of these cases were also connected by the common theme of violence, deployed either as a solution or manifested in an outcome.

There is no doubt that women had a shared experience with men in the violence of the Italian sixteenth century and in the violent cultures that both fed and were a product of it. Women were raised in the same communities where violence was a regular public demonstration and where children were called on as ritualistic arbiters of judgement and brutality.[732] Later in life women took on roles in army baggage trains, became both symbols and agents in the defence of settlements against invading forces. They were also often victims of violence directly or indirectly, committed by a range of sources including strangers, relatives, and lovers, via a variety of means. In July 1575, for example, a woman appeared before the *Torrone* to satisfy the debts of her deceased husband, who had recently been killed in a gunfight.[733] Examples such as Domenico Leinferro being ordered to pay a fine of 25 *scudi* for punching Donna Lucia Vedova (widow) are a regular occurrence.[734] Women were established as valuable witnesses to violence and were fairly often called upon by the court to

[730] Elizabeth Cohn surmises honour as both 'a set of practices and a logic', it was 'at its core a social quality, the distillation of reputation…It existed in the thoughts of casual onlookers, who appraised you, as well as in the judgements of the perduring circle of family and friends who monitored your doings.'; E. S. Cohen, *Daily Life in Renaissance Italy* (Westport/London, 2001), p.90; In terms of honour's practical and real world ramifications, many sources in the *Torrone* cases highlight a world of trade, lending and financial obligation that were evidently important to survival and to shoring up support networks within a community, see for example the disagreement that rose out of a debt and the lending of some cloth between Donna Margaritta and a youth called Domenico in July 1582, ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 1550 (1582), ff.84v-87v.

[731] Cohen, *Daily Life in Renaissance Italy*, pp.90-91.

[732] See for example, the phenomenon of children dragging the bodies of those condemned to death by the state or community through the city streets, an example being that of Jacomo de Pazzi in Florence, and other examples such as Savonarola's *fanciulli* who broke up gambling tables and groups of drinking adults; inspiring 'fear in any place where they were seen…', Niccoli, 'I "Fanciulli" del Savonarola', p.108; Fra Timoteo Bottonio, previously attributed to Fra Pacifico Burlamacchi, *La vita del Beato Ieronimo Savonarola*', in G. Savonarola (author), D. Beebe, A. Borelli, M. Pastore Passaro, G. Mazzotta (eds), *Selected Writings of Girolamo Savonarola: Religion and Politics, 1490-1498* (New Haven, 2006), pp.218-219.

[733] ASBo, Legato, Expeditiones, busta 72 (1576), f.27v.

[734] *Ibid*, f.115r.

give a statement, or even were quoted by others in the court as having provided key information on violent altercations that had taken place around them. It is evident in the cases reviewed here that women were regularly present on the contested early modern streets, often within an arena for violent acts.[735]

Violence was also a regularity at home, though the courts offered an opportunity for women to challenge violent partners and demonstrate the strength of their own local networks. In February 1561 another woman named Lena was able to overturn her manipulative husband's charges against her in court, using her own reputation and connection to the community to prove that she had not committed adultery, and, in fact, the inverse was true. Those who knew Lena substantiated her good reputation and the notorious *fama* of her husband. Incidentally, this case is also demonstrative of the *Torrone*'s potential influence among the lower classes, since a certain Jacopo, a poor labourer (with goods valued at only 100 *lire*) served as the local *Massaro* and gave a character statement in favour of Lena to the court, even if that meant undermining his long-term friendship with her husband.[736] Nevertheless, recourse to the courts was a less than imperfect solution for Lena who was tortured by the *Torrone* officials as a means to verify her testimony. Her anguish in these moments is particularly vivid in the record, once again highlighting the utilisation of violence by both official and unofficial sources.[737] Men's jealousies and masculine anxieties in the presence of women were also often prime motivators of violence. In March 1561, for example, Filippa and a merchant called Pasino were attacked by Filippa's husband after he found them together in the family home. Filippa was given no time to explain that Pasino was a passing merchant who was selling her jewellery before her husband pulled a knife on both.[738] Evidently, extreme violence was seen by many as a justifiable reaction to threats to reputation and relationships. While men might have been

[735] M. Pluskota, S. Muurling, 'Street Crimes', in D. van den Heuvel, *Early Modern Streets: A European Perspective* (Abingdon, 2023), p.197.
[736] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 45 (1560-1602), f.37r-38v.
[737] *Ibid*, f.17r; 40r.
[738] *Ibid*, f.91r-94v.

careful to avoid being seen striking women in public, they felt equally pressed by the pressures of communal judgement that would have seen a lack of action as a similar admission of weakness.[739]

The case of May 1561 involving Michele de Losso de Pisa and Marchino de Tanio present similar themes – both were denounced by the local *Massaro* for fighting with swords, knives, a pickaxe, and even a spade in a comune under Bologna's jurisdiction over women one of the men had secretly 'received in his house'.[740] Insecurities drove Julino and his son to the house of Hieronimo Vezzano in the comune of Barbarolo with their wheel-lock guns aimed at his face over suspicions of Hieronimo's son being in love with one of their wives.[741] A case from April 1561 introduces another common circumstance of women found in the *Torrone*'s records – the sex trade. When three men fell into a dispute in the presence of Madonna Lucretia over a small vase a fight ensued and spilled out into the streets. Andrea di Matthia unsheathed a sword when the others began attacking him with stones.[742] A similar scene played out in a village near to Bologna in May 1561 when Vincenzo de Barnardo appears to have had a heated argument with Madonna 'Zanna. He was lambasted and slapped by another Bartolomeo for having no respect for the woman. Evidently unhappy that this was not enough of a chastisement, Bartolomeo pulled out his sword and cut Vincenzo. Two other men reacted to this by pulling out their own blades, demonstrating how relatively minor disagreements could quickly turn into bloody brawls.[743] Women working as sex workers also appear to have wielded a degree of autonomy within their networks. This might also explain their regular appearance in the courtroom and their association with violent altercations. In April 1538, Margarita caused a buzz in the quarter of San Giorgio in Bologna when she was seen mounting a carriage laden with goods and driven by Angelo da Monte Pulciano. Statements reveal that Margarita was a sex worker escaping a

[739] Pluskota, Muurling, 'Street Crimes', pp.192-197.
[740] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 45 (1560-1602), f.196r.
[741] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 1550 (1582), ff.82r-82v.
[742] '…p*er* conto d*i* un' vascello d*i* una corba…', ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 45 (1560-1602), ff.175r-175v.
[743] *Ibid*, f.181v.

violent marriage and stealing the household valuables with her lover Angelo.[744] In a case from January 1560 a certain Valentino was accused of stealing a bag of money from another man in a house of sex workers. According to Valentino's testimony, it was Madonna Gianna who had prompted Valentino to steal the money, persuading the would-be thief that it 'would be good to steal them [the coins]'.[745]

Women working in the sex industry also apparently established a degree of influence amongst their customers. This is demonstrated by Madonna Vittoria, a 'cortigiana', in February 1561 when a certain Hercules appeared before the *Torrone* complaining that he had been attacked and beaten by a group he suggests were connected to Vittoria. This was after their relationship had broken down.[746] 'Magaritta' Magnana was mentioned in the complaint brought to the *Torrone* by a local official who had been ordered to go to the Margaritta's house in February 1560. The official described how he was ordered to take her and the other women working there to the *Bollette* – when Magaritta replied that she would not go there, or send her women there, Spanish students frequenting the establishment attacked the official with *bastoni* and swords before chasing him off.[747] These examples suggest that relatively influential women could direct men to commit criminal acts on their behalf. However, in other cases, this trade brought violence itself. In February 1561, in a familiar case of armed men appearing outside of a house at night, Magdalena and Domenica Lambertina were attacked by a group of youths. Magdalena, mother of Domenica, demanded retribution from the court, citing that their honour had been stolen. Interviews reveal that both women had previously been sex workers ('in order to not die from hunger') and the men involved evidently felt their past and their own male revelry justified their assault.[748] In all cases, violence was never far from being utilised as an appropriate tool for problem solving.

[744] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 1 (April-June 1538), ff.107v-138r.
[745] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 18 (1559-1560), f.17v.
[746] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 45 (1560-1602), ff.31r-33r.
[747] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 18 (1559-1560), ff.72r-72v.
[748] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 45 (1560-1602), ff.48r-88v.

The *Torrone* also highlights women who personally inflicted violence on others with a range of improvised weaponry, and sometimes apparently without male accomplices. In December 1559 the court heard of a fight breaking out between Giovanni Baptista, Peghino and Peghino's wife Francesca in the village of San Pietro over a debt and the collection of two handkerchiefs. When Francesca saw Stefano approaching the house she retreated inside, and her husband in turn emerged with a metal spit to attack Giovanni. When the weapon was wrestled off Peghino, Francesca reappeared and tried to pull the spit away from Stefano – he nevertheless managed to hit her with it and drive her off.[749] Debt collection also appears as a fairly common cause for violence involving women; in January 1560, for example, Madonna Magdalena, wife of Vincenzo, attempted to reclaim a debt from another Christoforo in the comune of Vedegheto. When he refused, she threw a stone at his back and Christoforo replied by slapping Magdalena to the ground, leaving her with a badly injured arm and an 'effusion of blood'.[750] In other cases women were more forthright in provoking violence, such as in the example involving Donna Catherina from 1582, who threw a tirade of public expletives towards a man while brandishing a wooden club. While the relationship between the two is vague, it is suggestible that Catherina felt the man's honour was up for public, verbal, and physical interrogation given his involvement with another unnamed woman.[751] Donna Lucia was reprimanded by the court in January 1560 for attacking another woman, Donna Maria, with a 'paletta di ferro' at the same time as Maria was holding her nine-month-old baby.[752]

Much like those presented by the *libri dei giustiziati,* however, the *Torrone* records most often present women not as individuals but within networks of male friends, associates, or family. In July 1582, for example, the court heard of a disagreement between two families over grazing land and cattle that again escalated to significant bloodshed. It started with the beating of Domenico de'Mazzanti before Antonia, his mother, was attacked by five of the opposing family. This five

[749] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 18 (1559-1560), ff.12r-14r.
[750] *Ibid*, ff.33r-33v.
[751] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 1550 (1582), ff.73r-76v.
[752] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 18 (1559-1560), ff.23v-23r.

included both the wife and daughter of the family patriarch, all of whom joined in on the beating of Antonia with a range of wooden clubs and farming implements.[753] According to the statement given by Antonia's husband, she suffered great blows across the head, nose, and eyes.[754] Interestingly , the description of the injuries sustained by Domenico are underlined by court while those sustained by Antonia are not. The notaries of the *Torrone* often underlined parts of a testimony deemed most pertinent to the case, such as names, weapons involved, and injuries sustained – that Antonia's injuries are not given such treatment may be indicative of where the court's priorities lay. Regardless of the prioritisation of group male violence, some individuals naturally tried to hide any sort of weapon they might be brandishing. Donna Francesca brought a complaint to the *Torrone* in July 1582 against Pietro Muratore, who she claimed had publicly offended her husband before attacking her in her own doorway. Later statements suggest that Francesca had moved out of the house to confront the man, carrying a *bastone* with her as she did so. That detail was left out of her own statement to the court.[755] These cases demonstrate women's physical engagement with honour culture. In the same way that men used the public arena to castigate their adversaries in front of a public audience, women pulled on notions of honour and utilised public spaces to defame their targets. Gender and social historians have recently argued that women partook in demonstrative violence, something previously only considered as part of the male lived experience.

Muurling and Pluskota similarly found women 'reported to the authorities for fighting', fighting 'outside their house, in spaces of sociability, such as the street, and some of them did also act out a performance when assaulting or insulting someone in the street'.[756] The aforementioned Donna Catherina who was accused of insulting and threatening a man in front of his house demonstrated an acute awareness of contemporary behaviour codes and an implicit understanding of unwritten social rules when she accosted her target. This would also have been perceived as an act of violence

[753] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 1550 (1582), ff.78r-79r.
[754] *Ibid*, f.79r.
[755] *Ibid*, ff.146r-149v.
[756] Muurling and Pluskota, 'Street Crimes', p.195.

given its impugnment on the honour of Catherina's target and compounded by the action outside the entrance to the man's house. Francisco Luis Rico Callado recognised this act of 'lurking with a weapon' near to someone's house as a particularly offensive act in early modern Zamora and Elizabeth Cohen called this same practice 'house-scorning', a 'form of ritualized revenge', evident in early modern Rome. This assault on the honour of the victim, which both sullied the individual but also contravened the near sacred boundary of the household, facilitated a justifiably violent response in the eyes of early modern men and women.[757] Laura Gowing has identified similar acts in early modern London representing a 'staged' practice of 'public defamation' intended to have a 'strong impact' on observing neighbours.[758] Other researchers have argued that in much the same way that men used demonstrative violence to substantiate their honour in the eyes of others, women similarly used public violence and insult with the intention of 'performing for an audience'.

Despite the regularity of this practice, there appears to have been limits to women's participation compared to men. When cases present mortal vendetta violence centred around military-grade weaponry – 'killing weapons' – women are more likely to appear as passive witnesses or removed from the scene entirely.[759] The repeat mention of women sheltering indoors during protracted cases such as the Palantieri versus Commuli mentioned in the previous chapter suggests that women were removed from certain theatres. This case involved the deployment of blades and firearms in a confrontation fuelled by a long-running enmity between two parties. In fact, women appear rarely, if ever, in the *Torrone* court identified with firearms or blades, and often do not appear to be present when such weapons are deployed by men. In both the *libri dei giustiziati* and the cases from the Torrone consulted during this research, only one woman was reported as having been found with a knife, and only one tantalising glimpse at women's engagement with firearms was found in the

[757] *Ibid*; E.S. Cohen, 'Honor and Gender in the Streets of Early Modern Rome', *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 22:4 (Spring 1992), p.597.
[758] *Ibid*, p.195.
[759] Montluc's described an arsenal of military weapons as 'the most furious and killing weapons of all other', Montluc, *Commentaries*, p.142.

Torrone. After returning from having dinner with a neighbour in early February 1560, Donna Joanna returned home to find her door broken down and several of her possessions stolen. Joanna lays her suspicions at the door of another Donna Lucretia who she believes may have been the prime instigator of the crime. Not only was she known for 'having bad hands', that is, being a thief, Joanna also suggested that Catherina may have been harbouring resentment toward her over an 'arcobuso' that had been lent in Joana's name to a soldier.[760] Over a lengthy interview process the court appears uninterested in the motivation for the theft or the role of the firearm, suggesting that the trade of this weapon amongst women was not concerning enough to warrant investigation. Despite that, Bolognese authorities had felt compelled to ban the selling of weapons to soldiers by civilians earlier in the century.[761] This case might sit, then, within the context of regular trading of weaponry during a century of warfare that was identified by Sandberg. .[762] Perhaps, for these two women the firearm was just another item of potential value to be traded, loaned, and pawned in exchange of goods or obligation. It appears not to have held the means of personal utility for women and while the two women's casual admission of this trade demonstrates a familiarity with firearms, it suggests that guns had already fallen under the cultural purview of men, along with other military-grade weapons.

It is difficult to imagine that women did not have a knowledge of the weapons that were becoming a regular sight in war and in their streets, likely also stored in their homes and workplaces. It also seems that in times of emergency they could be outfitted with firearms, much like they were able to take on support roles in defensive sieges – evident in those records from Ferrara in 1552 which detailed 18 women among the city's defensive provisioning plans, with six guns available to them.[763] The industries that supported the gun trade also likely employed women at some point in the manufacturing process or even in the maintenance industry that serviced firearms for their many

[760] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 18 (1559-1560), 91r-93r; 127r.
[761] ASBo, Senato, Diari (1549-1731), unità nr.2, Provisionum (1522-1528), f.91r.
[762] Sandberg, 'Armies as Sites of Second-Hand Exchange', p.76.
[763] Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', p.18.

owners.[764] However, the stark difference in female representation with firearms in the criminal court records compared to the regular appearance of men and firearms suggests that women were not engaged to the same extent with the wider popular gun cultures and, perhaps most importantly, did not have those same need, or opportunity as men to posture with their weapons. Nor, it seems, did women seek to commit the same murderous violence as often as men – their violence more often appears as an extension or accompaniment to the reputation of their male relatives. The most common backdrops to women's participation in serious assault are those closer to homes and interiors, which falls in line with our understanding of women's more restricted mobility in the early modern world and men's greater cultural compulsion to be seen, heard, and interacting on the public streets.

When women are involved in violent crime, they are often victims in their own homes or in the buildings they worked, regularly as sex workers. According to the *Torrone* in their public outings women are most often found close to their homes, at the homes of their immediate neighbours, or directly outside residential entrances. This analysis is comparable to a similar investigation into the geography of violence in Bologna in the seventeenth century, where women were similarly found involved in crimes close to 'the immediate neighbourhood around the house' and men were 'more active in the streets, piazzas and taverns'.[765] However, the spaces women moved through were rarely entirely private and above cases have demonstrated how women might use shared, accessible or even contested spaces to threaten or act violently. Women were also not averse to protecting their own reputation or rectifying wrongs they received with violent means. In this case blunt, or improvised weapons are more likely to have been found amongst their arsenals. Despite those differences, women appear to have been just as familiar with the violence of sixteenth-century Bologna as men and understood its rational and utility in resolving problems. Much like men, women

[764] Fletcher, 'Agents of Firearm Supply', p.219; Belfanti, 'A Chain of Skills', p.268.
[765] S. Muurling, M. Pluskota, 'The Gendered Geography of Violence in Bologna, Seventeenth to Nineteenth Centuries', in D. Simonton (ed.), *The Routledge History Handbook of Gender and the Urban Experience* (London, 2017), p.161.

were capable of violently defending notions of honour, their possessions, the livelihoods of their relatives, and engaged with the city's criminal scene, often seeking an audience as they did so, even if this capacity to participate was not equal.[766]

Male Violence in Bologna:

Much more has been made of the regularity of violence among men in the early modern period and its particular visibility in Italy. For early modern men it seems that violence held a particularly important cultural and symbolic potency as a key part of the outward expression of masculinity. Rose has demonstrated how the 'performance of 'masculinity's many forms' was common to men across classes 'and accounted for a great deal of their violence – which formed an integral part of masculine identities'.[767] Indeed, the maintenance of honour and reputation necessitated 'physical bravery and a forceful response to insults'. [768] For Carroll, the concept of male *virtù* had 'a social and political function' and especially during the dislocation of the sixteenth century 'toughness had to be displayed'.[769] The relationship contemporaries felt toward the projection of masculinity, the honour status of manhood and the action of violence also informed the weapons they owned and deployed, as will be seen in the cases analysed. What becomes clear is that men leaned into performative violence and justice more so than women, partly because gendered and cultural rules allowed them to, but also because those rules compelled them to. The firearm will be seen to offer a greater means of underlining that role and its demonstration under the scrutiny of the early modern public.

Violent practice is once again demonstrated early in life for men. Youths' potential for 'extraordinary' and 'well noted aggression' in this period has already been established, but boys and young men were taking on a particularly notable role in its demonstration amid the era's

[766] Muuling, Pluskota, 'Gendered Geography', p.161.
[767] Rose, *A Renaissance of Violence*, p.28.
[768] P. Spierenburg, 'Masculinity, Violence, and Honor: An Introduction', p.2, in P. Spierenburg (ed.), *Men and Violence: Gender, Honor, and Rituals in Modern Europe and America*, (Columbus, 1998).
[769] Carroll, *Enmity and Violence*, p.98.

glorification of violence.[770] A certain degree of this might have been conditioned by the experience of war even at a young age. Kelly De Vries argues that extant sources, including early modern muster rolls, show that there is 'no doubt that throughout history youths in their teens fought in wars' and 'even beyond those recruited in early modern armed forces as musicians (pipers, buglers, and drummers) and as logistical personnel in armies or as ensigns in navies, many teenagers chose to enlist among those actually fighting'.[771] Soldiers such as those returning from the War of Parma (1551-51) might, for example, bring with them first-hand experience of the weakness of the papacy in its reliance on the Charles V. Resentment towards papal governance from this and other experiences might explain the violence of returning soldiers found in crime records across the century.[772]

Beyond military service popular cultures reinforced the centrality of violence to early modern life from a young age. There were also the regular small-scale group rituals that offered youths an opportunity to exercise their raucous energies and highlight their own presence in the community. The early modern charivari or Italian *mattinata* was one such performance that targeted newlywed couples and involved making loud noises and 'rough music' outside the home. It was an accepted performance that nevertheless often carried a threatening tone when youths carried guns and fired them into the air.[773] Ruff has highlighted the use of the firearm in such events that 'forced the cooperation of their victims in their own humiliation'.[774] The authorities of Tridentine Bologna took renewed focus on the behaviour of young men and increasingly made the curtailment and control of their behaviour a priority. Grendler and Carlsmith identified this in the treatment of the notoriously troublesome student population in the sixteenth century. In these years student violence appears to have been getting worse and 'probably' had 'the most debilitating impact on the daily life of the

[770] Niccoli, 'I "Fanciulli" del Savonarola', p.112.
[771] K. De Vries, 'Teenagers at War During the Middle Ages', in K. Eisenbichler (ed.), *The Premodern Teenager: Youth in Society 1150-1650*, (Toronto, 2002), p.208.
[772] Shaw, Mallett, *The Italian* Wars, pp.242-245.
[773] Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, pp.161-162.
[774] *Ibid*, p.162.

university'.[775] Part of this was inspired by student backlash against the' precipitous decline' of their authority as 'both Church and civic officials strove to expand their respective control over students and townspeople'.[776] In March 1560 four hundred students marched against the Governor's office after one of their own had been arrested on suspicion of possessing prohibited weapons. The fight between students and police that followed left two students dead, one of whom was shot.[777] According to Carlsmith, there was even a remarkable potential for students to kill their own tutors, something which Marescalchi notes in his chronicle with a description of the foreign student who killed a doctor of law in Bologna.[778] Maggiuli has also investigated a violent clash between students in December 1564, the records of which are stored in the files of the *Torrone* court. Within this story is the description given to students 'dressed like soldiers' with armour and weaponry.[779] However, given the importance of the student population to the university and economy of the city, the student population often received generous concessions when they threatened to move (by the mid-sixteenth century over 50 nations were represented in the University colleges and the student population reached nearly 2,000).[780] The *Libri dei giustiziati*, in fact, records an incident in April 1560, when a member of the *sbirri* was hanged for having thrown a stone at a student from the Palazzo del Podestà - the hanging was carried out almost immediately so as to 'calm the disquiet' and prevent a student population from rising up.[781] In 1573, the right of German students to bear arms was renewed as part of an invitation to them to return to Bologna.[782]

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[775] P. Grendler, *The Universities of the Italian Renaissance* (Baltimore, 2002), p.500.
[776] Carlsmith, 'Student Violence', p.216.
[777] *Ibid*, p.217.
[778] *Ibid*, p 217; p.213; 'Anchora in questi giorni fu da uno scholaro forestiere ucciso messer Pomponio Urbani da Tolentino, di pochi innanti nelle leggi adottorato…', Marescalchi, *Cronaca*, p.48.
[779] I. Maggiulli, '"Li scolari per il più vivono et vestono à guisa di soldati, con grande licenza...": 1564, un episodio di violenza studentesca a Bologna', *Annali di storia delle università italiane*, 18 (2014), p.315.
[780] Carlsmith, 'Student Violence', p.212.
[781] 'Vittorio N: Sbirro fú appiccato alla solita Ringhiera alle ore 23 per aver [egli] nell'istess' ora gettato un sasso alli Scolari pubblici dal Palazzo del Podestà, e ciò fú fatto per quietare il seditoso tumulto, che poteva nascere nella città con solevarsi tutta la scolaresca ascendente al [ro.]: di quindici milla.', BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 26th April 1560, vol.4832.
[782] Carlsmith, 'Student Violence', pp.217-218.

Grendler has also pointed out the developing association between students and firearms during the sixteenth century. The University in Siena felt compelled to ban carrying of firearms in 1542, and cases of Paduan students shooting one another start in 1559. The investigation into two murders in Pavia in 1590 linked forty students and several firearms to the case. In 1611 students carried firearms into lecture halls at the same university. Grendler's research shows that long and short variants of firearms were a 'constant problem through the seventeenth century' and that student violence 'became more deadly' than before with the uptake in firearms.[783] In Bologna, much like in other university cities, authorities were reluctant to crack down too hard on students out of fear that they would move elsewhere, meaning that once again, violence was able to flourish, and early modern authorities appeared to flounder.[784] It may also suggest that young men, already prone to committing acts of violence, were also particularly attracted to the firearm.

The weight of honour and reputation, built as it was by an individual's perception by others and through an audience's interpretation of that individual's actions, appears to have been a pressure felt by all early modern contemporaries as outlined above. In fact, according to Ruff, the 'great concern for honor was characteristic of all early modern Europeans' in 'cities as well as villages'.[785] Alexander Shepard, however, has pointed out the gender differences and rightly underlined the limitations of women's agency. Shepard suggests that values attached to masculinity afforded men greater expression and potential to subvert social structures while questioning Mark Breitenberg's concept of the 'anxious masculinity' of the early modern male psyche.[786] The patriarchal system 'was a patriarchy nonetheless' that did allow men far greater room for deviation and independence.[787] The greater freedom in men's lives and the greater choice in occupation, identity and movement in

[783] Grender, *Universities of the Italian Renaissance*, pp.501-505.
[784] *Ibid*, p.505; I. Maggiulli, "'Tu ne menti per la gola": scontri tra scolari dello Studio bolognese nella seconda metà del XVI secolo', *Annali di storia delle univerità* italiane, 1 (2016), pp.44-45.
[785] Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, pp.76-77.
[786] A. Shepard, 'Manhood, Patriarchy, and Gender in Early Modern History', in A. E. Leonard, K. L. Nelson (eds.), *Masculinities, Childhood, Violence: Attending to Early Modern Women - and Men: Proceedings of the 2006 Symposium* (Newark, 2011), pp.82-85.
[787] *Ibid*, p.83.

part explains the lower appearance of women in the courts (in combination with factors already outlined), but it also more clearly explains the weapon selections made by women, as we have seen in the previous section. Blades, firearms, and other weapons intended to kill appear to have been largely a male preserve and closely tied to notions of masculinity, particularly as tools to protect family, identity and to demonstrate a ready potential to defend oneself in public.[788] These were the weapons regularly deployed on Bolognese streets. However, the 'profound costs' of maintaining the notion of masculinity that Breitenberg argues defined the male experience of the early modern period are entirely evident in the *Torrone* cases examined here; even if Shepard would avoid placing too much emphasis on 'male hardship'.[789] The *Torrone* cases demonstrate that the necessity for Bolognese men of the sixteenth century to defend the vital currency of honour often drove them into greater, bloodier violence. The end of Jacobo Jacobi Barbatis in March 1560, whose final moments bleeding out in the street with 12 or 13 stab wounds as he pleads for help, is an example of a violence particular to the men using killing weapons and public spaces to act out their grievances.[790] There was, though, an apparent limit to the reach of men's honour transactions largely restricted by categories of class and station. As Ruff points out, violence 'only rarely crossed social barriers' and as the *Torrone* records also exhibit, most assailants 'were of approximately the same social status as their victims'.[791]

Underneath the veneers of youth and male public criminality one sees the primary role of honour at play. Consideration of honour also informed the spaces in which violence was chosen to take place. Youths found fighting and committing in violence in the street may speak to the agency of men in the early modern period and the greater propensity for violence among men, but it also demonstrates the contemporary significance placed on being seen and heard acting upon enmity or laying claim to contested public spaces. The early modern reading of certain spaces such as the

[788] Bartels, 'Masculinity, Arms and Armour', pp.90-101.
[789] Shepard, 'Manhood, Patriarchy, and Gender', p.83.
[790] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 18 (1559-1560), ff.146r-147v.
[791] Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, p.125.

public street, for example, allows an insight into a world where place held significant but often unrecorded meaning. Research such as that by Marion Pluskota and Sanne Muurling has uncovered a world of hidden geography inherently understood by contemporaries. Their recent work has shown in the first case the multifarious designations of the early modern street - they could be acknowledged and traversed as 'residential streets, commercial, of mixed-use, highly permeable or on the contrary difficult to reach, with a more or less segregated facture', the character of others changed according to time as well, with some 'deemed safe during the day but dangerous at night'. Interpretations of the same street space could also depend on 'personal experience' and expectation.[792] The significance of the early modern reading of geography and environment has also been underlined by Eckstein, who explores the relationship between contemporaries and 'places, people, buildings, and objects', the 'connective fibres' of 'place in which neither the human protagonist nor the spaces being described make any sense without the other'.[793] An aspect of this not readily apparent to modern eyes was also the contemporary interpretation of the street as a contested space - youths saw this place as an area to 'experiment and test their identities and challenge adults' control' of public arenas; by 'looking for a crowd, they were also challenging and defending their right to be in the streets'.[794] This idea is evident in cases such as that presented by the *Torrone* in 1566 involving two men and a disagreement over street access, or more specifically, the claim to the street space laid down by Marcantonio who had set about digging a ditch in the street, versus that of Bartholomeo Buonfigliolo who sought to challenge this presumption. Violence was averted, but not before both men aimed firearms at one another.[795] The sense of tension in public space is also implied by Fabrizio Nevola's discussion on sixteenth-century urban renewal in Italy. The building plans designed by several Italian states were an intentional means of imposing

[792] Pluskota and Muurling, 'Street Crimes', p.186.
[793] N. Eckstein, 'Prepositional City: Spatial Practice and Micro-Neighbourhood in Renaissance Florence', *Renaissance Quarterly,* 71 (2018), pp.1265-1266.
[794] Pluskota and Muurling, 'Street Crimes', p.195.
[795] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 328 (January – March, 1556), ff.212r-213v; ff.242r-[259r].

'centralised control on the public space of streets'.[796] The notion that streets presented an arena for the contestation of individual or group authority and that of the newly established state should be nowhere more apparent than Bologna and the attempted consolidation of the Papal State.

Practical consideration still applied to criminality in the streets in some case - before the 'nocturnalisation' of the public street (so termed by Craig Koslofsky) via public lighting and regular policing, the early modern street was often dark enough and sparsely populated at night to present a fitting stage for crimes an individual may want to commit discreetly.[797] There were certainly a number of crimes that did take place at night and often remarked upon in the chronicles. The contemporary association with the devil and the night time similarly saw a connection between the night and criminal activity.[798] Theft, for obvious reasons, was a crime often reported to have taken place in the dark.[799] Nevertheless, more apparent in the *Torrone* records are those very public crimes, which often speak to the 'theatre' and 'spectacle' of a public thoroughfare, and also to the 'rituals and rules' of the street.[800] For obvious reasons, these crimes are most likely to be reported which accounts for their regular appearance in the court roles, however the use of public buildings as a backdrop to violence are an insight into the period's social and political rupture. Nevola's argument that the 'heightened visibility afforded to particular buildings' during the sixteenth-century urban renewals that had sought a sense of control over the street, also suggests that public buildings became another emblematic point of contention between communal agencies and the will of the state.[801] As such, violent altercations were also often intentionally relocated onto streets, into marketplaces or outside of busy churches by their actors. It might also be worth considering the origins of those involved in public or private acts of violence. In one of the few cases in the *Torrone*

[796] F. Nevola, *Street Life in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven/London, 2020), p.113.
[797] Pluskota and Muurling, 'Street Crimes', p.189; C. Koslofsky, 'Court Culture and Street Lighting in Seventeenth-Century Europe', *Journal of Urban History*, 28:6 (September, 2002), p.746.
[798] Pluskota and Muurling, 'Street Crimes', p.188.
[799] Nevola, *Street Life in Renaissance Italy*, pp.115-116.
[800] Pluskota and Muurling, 'Street Crimes', p.193.
[801] Nevola, *Street Life in Renaissance Italy*, p.113.

where a violent act did not involve public spectacle, the man suspected of killing a man and woman in a hostel near to Bologna in March 1560 was a foreigner from Florence. In this case he perhaps reckoned to have gained no benefit from a public resolution to his sense of enmity in a place where he held no network of potential supporters.[802]

The necessity to practice violence as one of the many 'concepts' of early modern manhood meant that most men saw honour in flagrant violence.[803] Christopher Corley has found in early modern Dijon a majority of violent acts taking place during the day, on the streets, and with the aim to maximise their honour credit, concluding that the 'sense of urban space' was 'crucial' to youths' 'identity development'.[804] The symbology of violence was also at play in the very act itself. Common reports of blows against men's heads and similar attacks against women specifically in the midriff or areas around the womb and sexual organs reflective of a symbolic code of meaning specific to contemporary understanding. These areas of the body were targeted to confer dishonour and shame on the victim beyond the pain or shock of an attack.[805] While pulling on the many codes and rituals of society in violent acts, contemporaries were constantly aware of their surveillance by peers and while violence was a regular part of life it could also be interpreted variously. Muurling and Pluskota have characterised the street as a 'judicial arena' where the acts of others were appraised by a 'public gaze' that 'became the upholder of society's expectations and could overturn the result of a fight by turning against the winner' if any confrontation was deemed unfair on one part or the other.[806] However, these rules may also have been open to interpretation. It may have been the case that 'a man beating a woman in the street was often seen as unmanly' - an unfair fight – but that did not stop individuals such as Vita and his son from publicly threatening Lisa, wife of Parise, with strangulation in August 1582 over a broken wooden pole. Vita's rage over the broken pole, which

[802] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 18 (1559-1560), ff.44r-51v.
[803] G. Walker, *Crime, Gender and Social Order in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2003), p.33.
[804] Pluskota and Muurling, 'Street Crimes', p.193; C. R. Corley, 'On the Threshold: Youth as Arbiters of Urban Space in Early Modern France', *Journal of Social History,* 43:1 (Fall, 2009), p.151.
[805] Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, p.123.
[806] Pluskot and Muurling, 'Street Crime', p.197.

was used to access water from the public well, appears to be incited by those same competing factors of honour and public space noted above. Not to allow a public insult to tarnish their name, Lisa's relatives took a challenge to the other two men and the ensuing fight left several with severe injuries.[807] The street, then, can be seen as a stage and an arena potently mixed with contemporaries' very real awareness of their social credit that offered both opportunity and great risk to one's name - this goes some way in explaining how seemingly trivial issues became bloody encounters.

For many men, however, the street on certain days and under certain circumstances might not be entirely removed from the battlefields they might have witnessed. This was a 'well-armed society' which meant that fistfights often escalated, and it was a consideration many contemporaries likely made when traversing the spaces between homes. In April 1560, for example, the *Torrone* heard of the case of two brothers who were attacked by two others armed with knives and polearms while driving their cart down Bologna's *Strada Maggiore* - Mattheo claims that if it was not for the armour he was wearing one of these polearms would have pierced him straight through, from one side to the other.[808] This also took place in a rural comune around 30 kilometres east of Bologna, demonstrating that similar tensions manifested themselves in both urban and rural contexts, and the street, for example, remained an indefinite space. The cases reviewed in this chapter and Chapter 4 will highlight how the practice of violence remained much the same across urban and rural contexts in contemporaries' choice of locations within villages or cities.

The *Torrone* court records are replete with aggressive or violent encounters between men that appear to have often sought out an audience within these public spaces. These confrontations might not always have been in the street, however, but often involved several witnesses, many of whom would also play a key role in the elaboration of that event in the following judicial process. There

[807] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 1550 (1582), ff.171r-179v.
[808] '...et se no' haveva il piastrino mi passava da banda a banda…', ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 18 (1559-1560), f.249r.

were witnesses to the aforementioned report of Christofaro dell'Panziacchi's tirade against the judge of the Rota court in April 1538 which eventually descended into a back and forth arguing who was the better man and who could prove it where - 'I'll show you outside of here [the court] that I am as good a man as you'.[809] Shops were similarly busy environments fit for fighting according to early modern dictates. Given that early modern men and women found little compunction in escalating confrontations in view of a wider public it is little surprise that fights would regularly begin in shops that could often 'encourage sociability' for waiting customers, furnished with benches and areas to socialise.[810] As spaces that were relatively more controlled than the wider public of the open street shops were likely to guarantee an audience. At the same time, they may even guarantee one that was particularly invested in the outcome of a confrontation between individuals they knew. Cases such as that from April 1558, when a bloody fight broke out between two men over a disagreement in one of their shops, fit under a common theme. One of the men was forced to give his statement from a sickbed and claimed that his arm had been rendered useless after the fight, such was its ferocity.[811] In late 1576 a certain Clemente was ordered to pay a security of 200 *scudi* for having gone to the shop of another man, Niccolò, armed with a knife and with malicious intent.[812] In May 1561 Sebastiano Masteletta gave a statement concerning the fight between Filastro and Francesco outside a knife shop that had started over an apparent insult. Both men were going at one another with knives when Sebastiano evidently decided the fight was not worthy of a victor as he waded in with his own sword to interrupt the altercation. The court summons for statement from the men involved appear to have gone unheeded, perhaps because a peace was known to have been made between the two men under the witness of a third party - once again highlighting the strategies of reconciliation that might be favoured over recourse to government

[809] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 1 (1538), f.55v.
[810] J. Shaw, E. S. Welch, *Making and Marketing Medicine in Renaissance Florence* (Amsterdam, 2011), p.31; p.38.
[811] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 1 (1556-1558), f.154v.
[812] ASBo, Legato, Expeditiones, busta 73 (1576-1577), f.85r.

routes.[813] An intentionally public accusation of theft between two shop owners in March 1560 descended into a violent altercation after one of the men threw a carpenter's plane at the other's face. The fight was then moved from inside the shop onto the public street as *bastoni* and hatchets were brandished. This transition from a semi-private sphere to the open view of the street may have offered more space to fight but it also guaranteed a public judiciary. One of the witnesses called to report to the court admitted that he did not see much beyond this point, since his view was blocked by a throng of people moving toward the brawl.[814] Both men thus had their crowd and the opportunity to publicly defend their accusation.

Indeed, the crimes reported to the *Torrone* give an insight into the places regularly visited by the Bolognese as they satisfied their routine needs and tasks - the mill, for example, was another regular theatre of contention assumedly because of its regular place in most lives.[815] Here too, an individual might be likely to find their target, but they could also guarantee witnesses and lay a certain claim to a public space. Similar considerations may have been taken into account in the remarkably high number of cases where churches were chosen as a place for men to indicate their animosities. The church is a common backdrop to violent crime across both the *Torrone* records and the *Libri dei giustiziati*. The use of churches smacks of criminality that sought ostentation and impact. It also speaks to an emulation of two of the most famous assassinations in early modern Italian history - that of Giuliano de' Medici and the attempt against his brother, Lorenzo, in 1478 in what came known to be the Pazzi Conspiracy, and the assassination of Galeazzo Maria Sforza, Duke of Milan, in 1476 in San Stefano, Milan. Both took place in churches central to civic and religious identities.[816] In 1494 the *Libri dei giustiziati* recorded an event with similarly political overtones where three bandits

[813] '...bottega di quelli che fa il pungali. .. incarcao da lui', ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 45 (1560-1602), f.150r.
[814] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 18 (1559-1560), ff.241r-244v.
[815] For example, the report of a fight in March 1560 involving blades between three men at a mill near or in Bologna – the injuring of the head and face was another feature of this fight, ASBo, 18 (1559-1560), ff.210r-210v.
[816] Fletcher suggested that these events likely lived long in popular memory and may have influenced decisions to use churches as a backdrop to violence on a popular level, [19th April 2023, email.].

guilty of killing a member of the controversial Malvezzi family during mass were later killed by the Bolognese authorities. Their heads were displayed around various parts of the city.[817] Other homicides in church were more personal - we have already encountered the case against a certain Bartolino who was beheaded for stabbing Teresa Zanbonelli in a church in Bologna, though no motivation is given, but the very public murder of a woman in a religious building demonstrates no reverence to the more obvious guidelines around contemporary honour and the great weight of spirituality. These may have been overridden by Bartolino's need to demonstrate and exact whatever grudge he needed publicly witnessed.[818] Giovanni Pellegrino Poggioli was beheaded in March 1565 for another homicide seemingly committed in a church in Bologna.[819] Men also appear to have had confrontations with members of the church that likely had relatively visible roles in their local communities. Domenico Castioni was evidently unable to allow the priest who slapped him to get away with an insult that spoke to the same physical shaming mentioned previously concerning aims to the head or midriff - in response Domenico shot the priest in a public Piazza, killing him immediately in September 1544.[820]

In other places churches obviously became potential points of combustion - the *Torrone* heard of the denunciation of several men fighting with firearms and blades outside a church in the commune of Monte Ferdente in April 1561.[821] In fact, the *Torrone* presents several cases of firearm violence taking place around churches, which will be explored further in the following chapter. These locations again represent areas of daily significance to contemporaries and areas of congregation for crowds of locals, where an assailant might more reliably find their victim. Undoubtedly, churches and religious events around them attracted a significant number of people. By their nature they

[817] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, September 1494, vol.4831.
[818] *Ibid*, 7th October 1542, vol.4832.
[819] *Ibid*, 9th March 1565, vol.4832.
[820] *Ibid*, 24th September 1544, vol.4832; conversely, Fra Avreglio Abrosini was hanged in 1593 for having slapped a member of the *sbirri*, underlining the significance of the slap across the face as an insult of great import; *Ibid*, 23rd January 1593, vol.4832.
[821] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, 44 (February 1561-May 1561), ff.148v-149v; ff.178v-179v.

increase the likelihood of violence breaking out in a society already riven with various competing tensions. In the case of group violence presented to the *Torrone* in November 1563, the religious festival in the comune of Calderara had attracted a 'world of people' onto the streets.[822] The example of violence in religious buildings and during religious events speaks to Elizabeth Cohen's description of the clash of opposing early modern social forces - 'Conflicting moral codes give elbow room to agency… agency thrives on contradictions' and early modern behaviour reacted to competing 'rules' in a 'mixed' and 'nuanced' way. Honour provided much of this room given its relatively undefined nature, neither 'formally encoded or written down' it dictated 'everyday morality' compared to religion's clearer definition but often situational nature. Nevertheless, religion offered a safety net, a potential to halt the excesses of honour-based violence by appealing to the spirituality of early modern people. Its power was not always enough to halt the practicalities that drove most of the interpersonal violence in this period, however.[823] Carroll has acknowledged the practicalities of the church as an arena of confrontation since it was a 'place in the community where it was impossible to avoid an enemy', but it was an area of 'social as well as spiritual' occasion. For Carroll, such focal points of the community offered the nobility especially a means of symbolic demonstration and communication to the wider neighbourhood. Guarienti has similarly seen allusions to 'human and divine punishment' in the contemporary's choice to enact violence in religious spaces.[824] The cases reviewed in this study will demonstrate how that practice extended beyond the higher ranks of society and for all levels of society such communal sites were seen as points of contestation and defiance. The cases in Chapter 4 will also show how firearms were increasingly used to underline these concepts.

[822]'...ci andava un mondo di gente che andava a q.lla festa', ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 186 (July-September 1563), f.253r.
[823] Cohen, *Daily Life in Renaissance Italy*, pp.89-90; pp.104-105.
[824] Carroll, *Blood and Violence*, pp.121-124; Guarienti in S. Carroll, 'Revenge and Reconciliation in Early Modern Italy', *Past and Present,* 233 (November 2016), p.114.

Finally, male violence according to both the *Libri* and the *Torrone* cases is characterised by one more factor, that is male group violence. Male sociability at this time often revolved around revelry in groups that also fed into the necessity for early modern youths to demonstrate their masculinity to peers. According to the demographics presented by the *Torrone* cases, it was common for these groups to be composed of friends, associates, and family members. These often combined with those aspects of the everyday too. Cases such as that from March 1560 show groups of men congregating around mills again, as though laying claim to it. In this case a fight between two brothers and another man broke out at a local mill. Their seemingly intentional swipes against one another's faces with their swords again speaks to the sense of honour-related wounds.[825] In many other cases groups of young men are reported wandering in revelry around Carnival and religious festivals, armed and apparently threatening. These cases will be further developed in the following chapter, but it should be acknowledged that denunciations such as that from March 1561 of three men wandering around armed at Carnival in the nearby comune of Pizano portrayed a familiar scene in the *Torrone* courts.[826]

These groups were also mobile and used an understanding of their local geography to fulfil their needs and wants outside of work. They often transition from urban spaces to rural areas where they were often then caught in trouble. In April 1556, a group of men were described as having left through the gates at the comune of Crevalcore and stood at a bridge in wait for their target. When their supposed target arrived, they set to beating him, only to realise that they had the wrong man. Making peace over dinner was enough to assuage the insult between the group and the unfortunate individual in this case, however, their move away from the surveillance of the community was

[825] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 18 (1559-1560), ff.210r-210v, one of the men, for reasons unknown, declared to the other that he wanted to 'fare questione'. The man delayed until his brother appeared and the fight started. On the wounds inflicted; '...detto Troilo tiro' de una stoccata alle volto del detto Benedetto et gionseli nella nasella diritta et venne ferito nella massella…con grande efuussio' de sangue…detto Benedetto gionse de una cortellata susa la testa a detto Troilo et li taglio la boretta...', *Ibid*, ff.201r-210v.

[826] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 44 (February 1561-May 1561), ff.94r-97r.

assumedly intentional, though whether their original issue with the unknown man hinged over a question of honour or enmity is not provided by the surviving case record.[827] There are certainly examples where honour and demonstration does not appear to have been the primary motivation for criminal activity. The group of men who broke into the house of the aforementioned Madalena Lambertina and kidnapped her daughter had left Bologna together and travelled a relatively short distance to Ponte di Reno, less than 10 kilometres from Bologna, for a weekend of drinking. One suspect described their outing as a 'walk' starting outside the gates of San Felice and involved 'joking like youths do'.[828] After eating and drinking they set out at night to find women and were directed to the house of the unfortunate Domenica. Evidently, the city gates were a potential point of transition from a watchful community where men and women were more likely to be known entities to quieter rural spaces where committing such crimes might have fewer quantifiable consequences, or simply where youths sought a break from the rigours of urban life. The potential of the rural space as an area of greater licence, impropriety, and debauchery fits with Niccoli's assertion that the difficulty of policing the stretches of countryside outside of urban centres contributed to the durability of violent ritual.[829]

The composition of these groups was underpinned by another major component of early modern male life - familial solidarity, 'networks, friendships, and contacts central to the male world' the time period.[830] The contemporary story of the *Fat Woodcarver* shows how these male friendship groups could be tied by a rather cruel fraternity but that the connections of male sociability reinforced identity and place in the early modern streets.[831] The specific mention of brothers in groups from the *Torrone* also highlights the solidarity between male siblings and their propensity to undertake joint

[827] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 1 (1556-1558), ff.229r; f.293r; f.294r; f.295r.
[828] '...burlando come fanno li gioveni…', ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 45 (1560-1602), f.59r.
[829] Niccoli, 'Rituals of Youth', p.92.
[830] G. Ruggiero, 'Mean Streets, Familiar Streets, or the Fat Woodcarver and the Masculine Spaces of Renaissance Florence', in R. J. Crum, J. T. Paoletti (eds.), *Renaissance Florence: A Social History* (Cambridge/New York, 2006), p.301.
[831] *Ibid*, pp.305-310.

endeavours in the public arena, largely supporting and reinforcing one another. This also speaks to the sense of their shared honour credit as representatives of a family. This was not always strong enough to hold internecine violence at bay however, as a case from February 1560 shows when two brothers attacked one another with *bastoni* over a cow for sale, resulting once again in a 'broken' head and an 'effusion of blood.[832] Nevertheless, the same sense of enduring networks among men will also be seen in cases of soldiers returning from war and continuing to fraternise with those they met while away. Despite the general sense of disdain for 'foreigners' frequently suggested by laws and proclamations at the time, it appears that youths from outside of Bologna and its territories also regularly made up the numbers in groups of men caught committing criminal acts. This again speaks to Terpstra's assertion that most capital crimes in this period were committed by young men from outside of Bologna. However, urban centres such as Bologna were also an attraction to youths looking for work, licit or otherwise, moved by war or escaping prosecution and looking for new networks to establish. [833]

Conclusion:

In summary this chapter has underlined how contemporary cultures and experiences informed understandings of violence and the ability for early modern people to quickly move to violence as a logical resolution to many problems. Above all, however, this chapter has highlighted the centrality of honour in sixteenth-century Italian society and its role as a catalyst, justification and explanation for violence committed by Bolognese contemporaries across social and gendered categories. While random acts of violence were not irregular and dishonourable violence was certainly not unknown, in the cases surveyed in the *Torrone* it is more often the sense of being watched and the

[832] According to the denunciation by the *massaro*, 'Menghino faiono di detta capella e venuto a parole con Matheo faiono suo fr.llo per conto de una vacca et il detto Menghino prese uno Bastone et dete suso la testa a detto Matheo et gli la ruppe con effusion' di sangue…', ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 18 (1559-1560), ff.68r-69r. Matheo actually appeared to make his complaint against his own brother before the *massaro* did.
[833] Terpstra, 'Theory into Practice', p.122.

vulnerability of honour within that 'surveillance culture' that appears most often to explain both the outbreak of violence and where it broke out.[834] Violence was for both men and women intentionally public and demonstrative with reputation and honour primarily in mind. It necessitated balancing, restoring, or proving by display. Women were expected to act upon honour as well. They often appeared in violent situations as part of familial groups and were called upon to defend the honour of their own households and family names. They were also judges of locals' behaviour and were emboldened to publicly confront individuals who had fallen short of standards.

However, the differences in violence between genders is perhaps most apparent in the details of cases, and perhaps makes itself most clear in the differentiation of weapon types and users. In the cases surveyed in this chapter women are most regularly found using household- or work-related, often improvised, weapons. Despite their proximity and experience of knives, swords, polearms and even firearms, they appear to have been limited in their use of them and prohibited from doing so by contemporary social and gender dynamics. However, the fact that women's criminality was overlooked in the period, as was their perceived threat to the social fabric in terms of their ability to rally groups to violent means, suggests that the depth of female criminality in the early modern period remains largely undefined. The cases included here demonstrate a lively and varied participation for women in local communities and they appear to have shared a greater degree of experience with honour and violence cultures alongside men than has perhaps been appreciated in historical research.

According to the *Torrone*, the male domain was characterised by a greater degree of movement and mobility that often centred around very public spaces. Streets, government buildings, religious centres of communities and drinking houses were the stages for meeting enemies and demonstrative violence. Their propensity to carry 'killing weapons', a veritable arsenal of polearms, swords, knives, maces, axes and firearms and their association in groups opened honour conflicts up

[834] Jackson, 'Parading in Public', p.457.

to becoming bloody, tragic, murderous occasions.[835] In this sense, honour weighed very heavily upon men and held potential to exact a very hefty price. The presentation of male groups also speaks to male sociability along with family ties and the listlessness of 'foreign' youths searching for income. The relatively youthful countenance of most who appear in the courts also suggest that young men found it particularly important to be seen acting and establishing themselves in local communities, often alongside their siblings, but also that youth cultures at the time encouraged group outings and brandishing of weapons associated with masculinity. The importance of honour to contemporaries explains how seemingly relatively minor slights became bloody spectacles and highlights the difficulties faced by early modern authorities who had to combat the widespread honour-based justice system preferred by contemporaries to regulate their communities and their place within society. The following chapter will demonstrate how these ideas and practices welcomed the introduction of the firearm and its attendant gun cultures into early modern Italian society. While the gun had not yet taken over as the most common weapon used in violent crime, the sixteenth century witnessed the rise of the firearm which, with increasing regularity, found itself in the hands of the *popolo*. In particular, the gun very quickly became a particularly masculine preserve and was incorporated into established languages of threat, demonstration and publicity centred around honour and representation as established above. This final chapter will also suggest that it was not necessarily the killing potential of the gun that made it a popular choice in this period. The firearm in the sixteenth century might not appear overwhelmingly in homicide statistics simply because it was often not shot at all.

[835] Blaise De Montluc writes of 'killing weapons' being swords, pikes, and polearms - those that allowed a man to get in close, 'grapple collar to collar' and to 'rid any work'. Interestingly, this is a reason for his disdain of using firearms that relied on 'alwais fighting at distance'. This even though he often deployed firearms in his military career, Montluc, *Commentaries*, p.142.

Figure 3:2 Porta San Felice, Bologna's western gate. Taken from WikimediaCommons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Porta_San_Felice.._Bologna.jpg [Accessed: 19/07/23].

Chapter 4: The Contexts of Firearm Crime in Bologna

On 16th May 1561, while standing on guard at the town gates on Sunday morning shortly after Mass, Bernardo di Agamennone Carnevale suddenly found himself staring down the barrel of the gun - 'Let me leave or I'll kill you' threatened its owner. Evidently, Bernardo allowed the man to pass, because eight days later he was recounting the events that led to that showdown to the *Torrone* judges.[836] He recalled how he had taken his place on guard duty that day at the gates of Castel Bolognese, a relatively small comune around 40 kilometres south-east of Bologna. The walls he guarded bore all the marks of the Italian Wars, having been destroyed by Cesare Borgia in 1501 and later rebuilt by a triumphant Papal State looking to cement its hard-won authority. Bernardo, proud of his 'bona guardia' of these walls, explained to the court that, among his many obligations, he was to promptly close the gates at the sign of any trouble.[837] This is what Bernardo did as soon as he heard noises coming from the marketplace. The cause of that noise was Sancto Palantieri who had just attacked another man in public and then made his way to the gates. Despite Bernardo's apparent dedication to the job, it was not a duty he was prepared to die for. Sancto marched up to the gate armed with a wheel-lock arquebus, wearing a breastplate and chainmail, aimed the gun at Bernardo's face and demanded an exit. Bernardo and his two colleagues, armed only with polearms, relented, and watched as Sancto left the town, fired his gun into the air as a signal to his companions, and 'went with God' alongside his brother, Cesare, and another man called Baptista.[838]

The realities of this close-knit world are often underlined in these cases, and this was no different – a relative of Sancto, another Palantieri, was also on guard duty that day and may have influenced the

[836] '...se no' che io te amazzaro'; ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 45 (1561-1562), 234r-245r; An interview from one of the men injured in the confrontation, Hercules di Commulis, noted the time as being just after he left Mass, '...fu domenica a matina a hor' nove incirca et fu ferito…', *Ibid*, f.241r.
[837] *Ibid*, f.243v.
[838] '... et havendo pauara d. questo dubitanto che no' volesse sparar' quello archibugio io lassai uscire il quale poi che fu fora d.lla porta sparto il d.co archibugio…insieme se ne andanno co' dio.', *Ibid*, ff.243r-245r; The use of a firearm as a signal has been highlighted by Guarenti as well, who discovered the plan to kill the governor of Reggio at church in 1517. A gunshot was used to signal to waiting conspirators that the plan had been executed, Guarienti, 'Liturgia di un omicidio', p.986.

decisions made to let Sancto leave. However, the gate guard confessed to the court that if Sancto had had any weapon other than the gun then he would not have opened the gates for him. Instead, he explains how with the firearm aimed at him, all present were too afraid to do anything other than to accept the man's demands.[839] Bernardo's testimony is perhaps another reminder of the fear that firearms could instil in the early modern period. Sancto's ability to use said weapons and push his way through guarded government gates was also another reminder that papal authority was still very much contested. A man and a gun could make town walls look very small and render guardsmen essentially obsolete. Having established the importance of contemporary experiences of war, the introduction of firearms, cultures of violence and the significance of honour and demonstration amid the socio-political tumult of the sixteenth century, this chapter makes the use of firearms its focus. It first outlines the Bologna government's attempts to curtail firearm proliferation. After which, this chapter will show how firearms were enthusiastically used within interpersonal confrontations as a novel tool to accentuate the practice of demonstration and public threat. However, within the realm of local politics and group vendetta firearms were also favoured not just for their potentially deadly effect but evidently as a loud and brash means of presenting vendetta to the public and the strength of private justice to the authorities.

Bolognese Attempts at Gun Control:

Despite it now having been established that contemporary Italians regarded violence 'as a routine part of the discourse of daily life' the firearm evidently posed an unacceptable threat to early modern society according to authorities.[840] Bologna found itself grappling with the proliferation of firearms even in the early 1520s according to a record of proclamations passed in the city. The city's authorities were evidently committed to curbing their widespread proliferation. In July 1522

[839] 'Sig.re se Sanctis havesse havuta altra arma che archibugis no' [saria] uscito fora ma havendo quell'arme noi [aln'i] ne havessimo paura.', ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 45 (1561-1562), f.244v.
[840] Ruff, *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, p.129.

'schioppietti' were among a small selection of weapons 'specifically' prohibited in the city.[841] It seems that two years later 'archibuxi' were added to this list.[842] In September 1527 authorities felt compelled to address those who were now found in groups, both during the day and at night, carrying prohibited weapons, included 'schiopetti' once again.[843] In a later proclamation in 1528 the problem with groups was underlined again, and now those found in groups of more than 4 carrying prohibited weapons were faced double fines.[844] In a proclamation passed under the governorship of Bernardinus Castellarius in early 1530, arms carrying was tightened up to address the 'scandals' and 'inconvenienti' often happening in the city, countryside, and districts of Bologna. Strict penalties for carrying weapons in the city were established, regardless of 'condition'. Those found contravening these laws during the daytime would face a fine of five *ducati d'oro* and 'three pulls of the cord'. Those found doing the same at night would face double the pecuniary punishment and 5 pulls on the '*corda*'.[845] Evidently these penalties were structured in tiers and already firearms were occupying the highest category – 'anyone found carrying an *Archibuso,* o *schioppo*, either day or night, either loaded or with the fire' (likely differentiating between a wheellock and matchlock), 'incurred double the above fine'.[846] The difficulty in controlling even the licensing system is evident within the same proclamation, which states that all licenses, both those given in writing or in word were hereby revoked. The fact that licenses might have been given in person and not in official writing is suggestive of the issues that authorities faced in pinning license owners down.[847] Interestingly, the same proclamation included the call to exclude all 'foreigners' in the city serving or acting as soldiers, again suggesting a link between soldiers as potential conduits for firearms into civilian

[841] ASBo, Senato 1383-sec.XVIII, Diari 1549-1731, unità nr.2, Provisionum, 1522-1528, ff.12v-14r.
[842] *Ibid*, ff.104r-104v.
[843] '[Intendo il R.mo Mons. Vicel. che alcuni Cittadini et altre persone presumeno tanto de di qua/to de' notte porart' per la Citta di Bologna armi' inhastati schipoi et Balestre et piu di andar' in congregatione di [ho'i] armati de simili et altre arme…', *Ibid*, ff.114v-115v.
[844]'Et i quell ch' ritrovati essere in congregatione oltre il numero di quattro comè detto ch. havesseno le Dette Arme prohibite cadano in pena di Ducati Dieci per ciascuno…', *Ibid*, ff.122r-122v.
[845] *Ibid*, f.37v.
[846] *Ibid*.
[847] *Ibid*, f.39r.

contexts.[848] The gaps were already apparent however, since this proclamation was followed by a long list of exemptions. Those who were travelling outside of the city into the countryside were permitted to carry the above-mentioned weapons, as were some officials or notables of the city, along with their family members. Soldiers under pay of the Bolognese government, as long as they didn't 'accompany gentleman or any citizen', were also permitted to carry firearms.[849]

Francesco Guicciardini, famous historian and governor of Bologna from 1531, felt compelled to re-affirm these orders on his presumption of the governorship. Once again nobody of any 'grade, status or condition', from the 'most excellent' to scholars, to citizens and peasants, were permitted to carry prohibited offensive arms in the city, countryside districts, or territory of Bologna day or night under of 5 gold ducats and three pulls on the rope, with greater punishments once again set in place for those found illegally carrying '*scioppi*' and *'Archibugi cum foco*'.[850] Similar lists of exemptions followed though, as Guicciardini was evidently compelled to allow individuals and groups to carry weapons for practical, social and political reasons. It should be remembered that the right to bear arms in this period was integral to the honour projection of the city's elite and this now included the right to carry firearms, or have an entourage carry them. However, this intertwined with practicalities of negotiating a world at times riven with vendetta; Catterino Zen wrote of the importance of being armed in self-defence, if one's enemies were similarly eqiupped.[851] This compulsion was felt across the social spectrum – witnesses providing statements to the *Torrone* across the century under review present their casual carrying of weapons 'as is usual'.[852] Guicciardini

[848] *Ibid*, f.39r.

[849] *Ibid*, ff.37v-39v.

[850] *Ibid*, f.56r.

[851] Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', p.30.

[852] While explaining his altercation with another man in the comune of San Martino in Argine (c.30km east of Bologna), Marcantonio Bolognini spoke about the polearm and the arquebus he was carrying at the time. He explains that these weapons 'are those that are usually' carried by people. In ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 328 (1556), 255r. In the city it seems that people were less likely to casually carry guns given the greater penalties for doing so within the walls, but knives, swords and *bastone* were not remarkable sights on the streets. In a report of a fight between two men on the Via Caldarese in Bologna a certain Julius suggests his carrying of a dagger was casual and unremarkable – '…una daghetta che son solito di persone.', ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 18 (1559), ff.58v-59r.

also made repeat announcement of the revocation of all hitherto granted weapons licences, perhaps as a means to establish his rule by using licensing as a political tool to rebuild networks, or as an attempt to gain control of an unwieldy system and situation. That at least three examples of these revocation of licences are found in a record of decrees passed under Guicciardini within the first few years of his tenure suggests that the new governor was at least trying to gain a handle on the popular possession of firearms.[853] These initiatives also went hand in hand with Guicciardini's heavy hand against bandits in the same period and, in fact, a general sense of instability that can be perceived in records from the period. As the Italian Wars waged and amid a backdrop of uncertain food supplies, city authorities sought to remove supposed malcontents from within its walls – the official banishment of 'scoundrels' from the city in July 1533 also included women and children, or those deemed surplus to requirements in a city under strain.[854] Alongside these notices the evident struggle against those armed and wearing masks, particularly at carnival and festival events should be noted. The 'dishonest licence' of wearing masks while carrying weapons was an obvious threat to security and these proclamations highlight themes that will recur during this chapter.[855] Similarly, events such as 'sede vacante' – a period of papal vacancy when a new pope was elected – invited revelry and dangerous behaviour and called for another ban on weaponry, which Guicciardini issued in October 1534.[856] These laws were examples of a regular practice of reissuing controls over firearms by the Bolognese government throughout the course of the sixteenth century. In fact, states across Italy were also compelled to do so. Fletcher has found bans against short *schioppi* from

[853] ASBo, Senato, 1382-Sec.XVIII, Diari 1549-1731, unità nr. 2, Provisionum (1529-1535), ff.57v-58r; 73r; ff.130r-132r.
[854] *Ibid*, ff.103v-105r.
[855] *Ibid*, ff.113v-114r; in a proclamation from February 1535 it is stated that; 'Et per obviare alli scandali et disordini che fa[llimento] potriano intravenire per lo portare de l'arme su le feste, come pare s'intenda siano molti, che hbbino tale ardimento, per lo similie si prohibisce, et command ache nissuno [eccetuati] li privilegiati, ardisca p. quale si voglia modo et causa di andar' et stare su le feste et balle con arme durati il Carnevale sotto gravissime pene…'; *Ibid*, ff.136-136v.
[856] *Ibid*, ff.127v-128r.

1532 in Venice, given that they were being hidden under clothing. The same law had to be published again in 1545.[857] Bolognese authorities had singled-out short wheel-locks for banning by 1550.[858]

Despite the purposeful attempts of Guicciardini and others to gain at least a semblance of control over the spread of firearms, the gaps were apparent. Firstly, the licensing system which gave individuals under certain circumstances permission to carry guns outside or even within the city was still open to manipulation and corruption. Certainly, some licensing examples appear justifiable and practical. Although no specific mention of guns is made, an example of April 1566 held in the *Torrone'*s record of *expeditiones* granted the carrying of offensive and defensive weapons in the countryside and even into the city in order to offer the applicants protection from the bandits and '*sgherri*' they claim to have been vulnerable to.[859] Other examples, however, demonstrate that the spread of firearms into the city was not stopped. In 1544 a *bando* called on those who had received unofficial weapons licenses to report their issuers.[860] In 1552 another proclamation annulled all licenses previously granted 'in writing or orally', and suggested that licenses were available through informal routes.[861] The *Libri dei giustiziati* also present cases of those found guilty of smuggling illegal and presumably untraceable weapons into the city, or more vaguely acting as illicit 'agents'.[862] In June 1561 authorities were still wrestling with the proliferation of firearm use and, significantly, the innovations of their users. A *bando* from that year underlined a ban on short-length firearms in response to the innovations in shortening them. It decried 'those who have found small firearms

[857] Fletcher, 'Firearms and State', p.21.

[858] *Ibid*.

[859] According to Florio's *World of Words*, 'Sghèrro' refers to a 'murtherer, a robber a highway theefe, a bloudie-minded swagrer', J. Florio, *Queen Anna's New World of Words or Dictionarie of the Italian and English Tongues* (London, 1611), Project Gutenberg [https://www.gutenberg.org/files/56200/56200-h/56200-h.htm; date accessed 18/09/2023]; ASBo, Legato, Expeditiones, busta 57 (1556), ff.83v-84r.

[860] Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', pp.23-24

[861] *Ibid*, pp.23-24.

[862] '...dilazione d'armi proibite a mal fine', BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 13th October 1540, vol.4832; Pellegrino detto Savone was hanged in August 1549 for 'dilazione d'armi corte.', Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 31st August 1549, vol.4832; Giacomo de Santi da S. Antonio di Savena was hanged for 'dilazione di Carbino corto', *Ibid*, 3rd February 1560, vol.4832.

without wheel-locks, hidden in various ways'.[863] In the following year the *Torrone* proclaimed a death penalty to those who shoot at one another with any sort of firearm, specifically not just wheel-locks – suggesting variations were still in circulation. The fact that this proclamation also stipulated that anybody found harbouring or aiding an individual planning to commit or having committed an act of homicide would also be tried against the death penalty puts murder and guns together once again.[864] It was necessary to issue another *bando* in 1563 against those 'many insolent people who dare to carry both arms and armour without license…from which arise many troubles and scandals'.[865]

Laws intended to curb the use and ownership of firearms, however, continually left gaps for exploitation. In 1555 Bolognese authorities once again were obliged to close a loophole on concealed small matchlock arquebuses, but inconsistent policies allowed longer wheel-locks and matchlocks under condition of use, i.e. for hunting or defence from bandits, on geography, specifically allowing ownership of firearms in the *contado* but not in the city, or city-carry licences that restricted where they were allowed to be carried – markets, churches or public festivals were often specifically named as areas and events where firearm carry was not permitted.[866] The *Expeditiones* records from the *Torrone* present a common trend of illegal weapons ownership late into the century. An example from June 1576, seemingly in the city itself, details a certain Bartolomeo who was arrested and paid a security of 100 *scudi* for carrying a wheellock arquebus without licence.[867] In June 1576 a security of 200 *scudi* was paid by another man involved in a shootout, apparently in the city again.[868] Policy throughout the century, however, appeared

[863] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 45 (1560-1602), no pagination.
[864] *Ibid*, f.268r.
[865] Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', p.24.
[866] *Ibid*, p.23.
[867] ASBo, Legato, Expeditiones, 72 (1576), f.89v; Securities appear to have been regularly used as a form of financial guarantee. Fletcher has noted the imposition of securities arms exporters to ensure that they were 'not deceived and tricked' and that the weapons arrived in the place intended, in the correct quantity, Fletcher, 'Agents of Firearms Supply', pp.213-214.
[868] *Ibid*, f.101r.

confused, but specifically struggled to balance the imperatives of daily life and the circumstances of the period. Those in the countryside were positively encouraged on occasion to maintain firearms, as they were in a proclamation from June 1614 that ordered *contadini* to hold at least one loaded firearm in their house to keep bandits and recalcitrant nobles in check.[869] Alongside the exemptions of independents or individuals tied to organisations in the city, for large parts of the century longer variants of firearms were still legal. In December 1566, Hercole Boretti was released by the city's authorities after it was found that his wheellock arquebus was on the right side of legal length.[870] In the same year, however, Thomaso di Giovanni del Pino was arrested and tortured for having an illegal length wheellock arquebus, before having to pay a security deposit for release.[871] An example from 1571 reaffirms the military connection with the case of two militia soldiers arrested for possession of a firearm and returning to their houses with them. They were later released after paying a security deposit and, assumedly, depositing their firearm with the authorities.[872] In another example, a certain soldier called Alessandro, was arrested for threatening another with his gun ('*schioppo da fuoco*') apparently during a muster or military review in Bologna. The authorities were serious in handling even the threat of violence with firearms and acknowledging the new demonstrative aspect of firearm violence that was communicated through acts of 'lowering' a barrel or the hammer of a firearm. In this case Alessandro had adopted this language of threat and posturing with a firearm to make his intentions clear.[873] Caught between needing to admit to the realities of rural living, of outfitting soldiers and militia, and perhaps most importantly, of needing to do business with gun manufacture centres in a period of almost continual conflict, the Bolognese authorities found the spread of guns essentially impossible to block.

[869] Rose, 'Homicide in North Italy' pp.84-85.
[870] ASBo, Legato, Expeditiones, busta 57 (December 1566), f.28r.
[871] *Ibid*, f.28v.
[872] *Ibid*, (27 April 1571), f.49v.
[873] *Ibid*, (17 October 1571), f.77r.

Firearm crime appears in source materials across the Italian sixteenth century to varying degrees. Some of these contain interesting, if not macabre moments. In March 1541, for example, Damiano Cosmi da Medelana was beheaded for killing his father with a 'schopetata' – a gunshot.[874] Firearm violence against family members were not necessarily remarkable cases – in December 1583 Antonio Franchini da Bologna and Antonio Vascon from Monte S. Pietro were hanged for killing Bernardo Bartoletti, a 'cugino' of theirs.[875] The sense that these weapons might emphasise a disdain for representatives of institutions is evidenced by cases such as that from July 1568 when Angelo Strella was hanged for the premeditated murder of a notary of the 'Foro Civile' with an arquebus.[876] The beheading of a public servant of the *Podestà* in 1547 for killing a member of the *sbirri* in a public square with a 'pistola' speaks to similar themes.[877] As does the case from 1611 when Angelo Roversi da Bologna and Francesco Vechietti dal Comune di Bagno were paraded through the city on a cart before being 'slaughtered' and quartered for shooting the guards 'Guardiano del Turrone' and breaking into the prison.[878]

They are regularly deployed in direct confrontations between the individual and the state. In a case from April 1565 two men, Camillo da Brescia and another named only as Ugo were hanged together for having shot 'at the court', meaning the *sbirri* trying to arrest them for robbery.[879] A similar case appears in June 1575 when a man named only as Domenico and another called Antonio di Santo Giuliani were also hanged for 'archbuggiate date alle Corte'.[880] Also in January 1588 Alessandro Brighetti da Bologna, Domenico Lasi da Caste Bolognese and Lorenzo Graziosi da Bologna were

[874] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati,* 26th March 1541, vol.4832; Catherine Fletcher suggests that the *schioppo*, or smaller *schiopetto*, 'was sometimes distinguished from an arquebus by the fact that the latter had a trigger while the *schiopetto* did not, although usage was not consistent.', in Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', p.9; Also in Malett and Hale, *Military Organization of a Renaissance State,* p.382.
[875] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 14th December 1583, vol.4832.
[876] *Ibid*, 14th July 1567, vol.4832.
[877] *Ibid*, 6th August, 1547, vol.4832.
[878] *Ibid*, 27th August 1611, vol.4832.
[879] *Ibid*, 28th April 1565, vol.4832.
[880] *Ibid*, 4th June 1575, vol.4832.

hanged for having shot 'alla Corte'.[881] At the same time, cases continually present the trouble that *sbirri* themselves caused – in a case from November 1583, two men, apparently *sbirri*, were hanged for having killed one of the Pope's soldiers with guns.[882] These weapon's potential to loudly underline subversion and social disruption is suggested in cases such as that from January 1553 when Giacomo da Nonatola was apparently accused of shooting a gentleman, though unnamed, in an act of premeditated murder – '*appensatamente*'.[883] Colin Rose found a similar case in 1631 when Signore Hippolito Ravaglio and his servant were shot by a local blacksmith – the gunfight broke out because Ravaglio was offended by the blacksmith's refusal to doff his cap.[884] A less bloody episode occurred in Sant'Agata (a small comune around 30km NE of Bologna) in July 1563 but demonstrated similar potential for cross-class tensions to flare with firearms playing a noticeable role – in this case Messer Lactantio 'Barechini' went on horseback with one of his servants assumedly to check in on his 'possessions' (perhaps property) when both were stopped and insulted by Antonio Sguazza, who proudly displayed a polearm on his back and a gun hanging from his belt. Antonio was quick to specifically deny he had a gun in the questioning that followed, perhaps aware of the heavier sentence this fact would have invited.[885] In March 1556, both Filippo Pisa and Messer Virgilio Nobili were hanged for shooting (*'archibuggiata*') the lawyer, Messer Paolo Dusi.[886] Such crimes evidently necessitated visible symbolic and very public punishment – in February 1565 Pietro d'Araldi had his right hand cut off and was hanged at the *Ringhiera* in the centre of Bologna for shooting a certain Marco Antonio Banzi.[887] Particularly shocking crimes might have called for very swift judgement, as did Cesare di Domenico Scardoello's crime in 1596. Cesare was hanged 'with great swiftness' after having shot the son of a *Massaro* on the morning of 27th May.[888] The fact that Cesare was a soldier

[881] *Ibid*, 23rd January 1588, vol.4832.
[882] *Ibid*, 12th November 1583, vol.4832.
[883] *Ibid*, 7th January 1533, vol.4832.
[884] Rose, 'Plague and Violence', pp.1000-1001.
[885] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 186 (July-September 1563), ff.4r-7v; f.39r.
[886] BSABo, Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 4th March 1556, vol.4832.
[887] *Ibid*, 13th February 1565, vol.4832.
[888] *Ibid,* 28th May 1596, vol.4832.

and his target was close to an elected representative of local government, suggests that this case reaffirms themes already becoming familiar.

The appearance of firearms in Bolognese chronicles in the sixteenth century similarly suggests that they played a regular role in the lives of contemporaries. Marescalchi's note on the assassination of Pietro di Fabiani in 1568 suggests that firearms were being chosen as weapons to commit premeditated murder and in locations now familiar to us. In this case, however, it seems the killer did not want to be identified, choosing to take his shot at night, though the execution was still public – the killer made an escape despite the shot in this case being fired from the pavement of the *Strada Maggiore* in Bologna.[889] The circumstances of this case might speak to a detail of assassinations in particular, when a killer may have been hired with monetary incentives rather than having any familial vendetta motivation.[890] An example from October 1569 re-affirms the links between firearms and military service when Horatio Binnarino, captain of the militia, was shot and killed by Vincentio Buso with an arquebus. Vincentio escaped from the city and found refuge in the greater anonymity of the countryside.[891] Despite their potential to misfire, their inaccuracy, and their propensity to give away an assassin's position, firearms were evidently sometimes chosen as a suitable means to dispatch a foe. This has already been seen in reports from contemporary chroniclers and in the records of those who faced capital punishment already considered, as well as in the cases selected above from the *Torrone*. The fact that they were used relatively regularly in violent acts is further by the other, numerous records of the *Torrone* court. In fact, the negativity surrounding the use of firearms found in literature from the same period does not appear to have affected their popularity, though admittedly they are overwhelmingly associated with the working

[889] 'A dì 14 de dexembre circha una hora de notte fu amazzato Pietro di Fabiani, dalla selecata di stra Magior et glu fu scaricato un <ar>chobusio nella vitta et ferito a morte non scampò megia hora, ma mai puotè parlar per il che non sia ha potuto saper certo chi fosse l'ucciditore, ma lui morto…', Marescalchi, *Cronaca*, p.81.
[890] As noted previously, Giuliano de'Ricci wrote in his chronicle from the same century that assassinations were common and the incentive of payment for killing was a powerful enough incentive to attract a number of the poor or aimless, in Brackett, *Criminal Justice and Crime,* p.105.
[891] 'A dì detto messo Vicentio Buso con uno archibusio uccise messer Horatio Binnarino, capitano di militia, et fugendo fori della città salvosi…', Marescalchi, *Cronaca*, p.81.

classes according to the *Torrone* records. This might be because the city's elite were more likely to own permits for weapons carry, be included in the lists of exemptions, or simply not prosecuted.[892] Reports of firefights in drinking places, such as that reported to the *Torrone* in 1566, another wheellock being reported as been discharged at a 'bacchanal' in the same year, or the man arrested at the hostel outside the gates of Bologna in 1576 suggest they were being casually carried in socialising spaces, as knives and blades had long been already.[893]

However, compared to the protestations of the period's *literati* already outlined, the relative paucity of firearm cases found in chronicles and the *libri dei giustiziati* presents a significant gap. The previously mentioned complaints from writers across the period against the apparent throngs of firearm-toting Italians is not necessarily reflected in records such as Bologna's *Libri dei giustiziati*, for example. In a sample covering 120 years, guns are mentioned in only 32 cases of those condemned to death out of a total of 791 cases. It should be noted that the *libri dei giustiziati* records firearms making a more regular appearance from the mid-century onwards. This would chime with the aforementioned findings of Rose, who notes firearms supplanting all other weapons in homicide cases in the Bolognese seventeenth century. By 1608 the Modenese diarist (situated just north of Bologna), Giovanni Spaccini was able to claim that 'no one cared about it, as if it were a trifle', as he complained about being kept away at night by the sound of gunfire.[894] The disparity in these descriptions versus the relatively small role ascribed to firearm criminality in the capital punishment records of Bologna in the 1500s can be partly explained by the nature of those sources. The *Libri dei giustiziati*, for example, present only one window into criminality in these years by including only those who faced capital punishment for criminal acts. It should also be remembered that *libri*

[892] Laws passed throughout the century in Bologna often include a lengthy list of those exempt from the latest regulation on weapons carry, including firearms.
[893] ASBo, Legato, Expeditiones, busta 57 (1566), f.45r; *Ibid*, (1566), ff.92r-92v; ASBo, Legato, Expeditiones, busta 72 (1576), f.55r.
[894] Rose finds that in an 11-year sample from the 1600, in all but two years the weapon of choice in homicide cases was the wheel-lock or flint-lock arquebus. 39% of the 51 homicide cases studied by Rose included firearms as the killer weapon, Rose, 'Homicide in North Italy', p.129; Carroll, 'Revenge and Reconciliation', p.107.

present only one source base, from one section of the confraternal society in Bologna. However, beyond those factors and despite the killing potential of sixteenth century firearms, the records from the *Torrone* highlight that in firearm confrontations, it was more common for the gun to not be shot. Instead, sixteenth-century contemporaries, placed the firearm use into their established practice of demonstrative threat and violence. Much like Bernardo's confrontation with Palantieri that introduced this chapter, contemporaries sought to use the shape, reputation, and contemporary fear of the gun to shame an opponent or diffuse a situation. In situations where the firearm was shot, it appears they were used to underline meaning and significance of the act in a public space, particularly in cases of vendetta, and not because of their killing efficiency. The inaccuracy of the sixteenth century firearm amid variable conditions meant that a blade was likely more effective at dispatching a target if one could get close enough, but not necessarily an obvious choice.

Giuseppe da Cremona and Demonstrative Vendetta:

Figure 4:1 Aerial view of Le Due Torri in Piazza di Porta Ravegnana, from S. Blanshei (ed.), A Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Bologna (Leiden/Boston, 2018), p.65.

On the evening of 4th June 1549, at the time of the *Avemaria*, that is, sometime around sunset, Domenico left the shop where he worked in the Piazza di Porta Ravegnana and stepped out onto the street. As the bells rang at the end of the day there were likely a number of people finishing business and closing shops in one of the city's main marketplaces. This market sat underneath Bologna's iconic *Due Torre*, the medieval edifices associated with the city's historic factionalism.[895] Despite the hour, Domenico evidently had time to make some final purchases and began moving to the market stalls to buy foodstuffs ('insalate') when he suddenly heard a loud smack, crack or bang that rang across the piazza.[896] Alexandro Cassano was also in the square on the same night. Alexandro tells the

[895] G. Milani, 'From One Conflict to Another (13th-14th Centuries)', Blanshei *A Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Bologna*, p.240; F. Bocchi, 'Shaping the City: Urban Planning and Physical Structures', in Blanshei, *A Companion to Medieval and Renaissance Bologna*, pp.64-67; N. Miller, *Renaissance Bologna: A Study in Architectural Form and Content* (New York, 1989) p.26; See figure 4:1.
[896] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 3 (1549), ff.21r-21v.

court of seeing a bright flash of light – a 'splendour'- that lit up the marketplace.[897] On the same evening, at the same time, Donna Joanna explains how she was leaving a market stall, 'la bancha di Ludovico da Picena', and began walking home when she too heard 'a great smack' so loud and terrifying that she fell to the ground. In her 'great fear' she called to St. Mary for help, and frozen by fright she could not bring herself to get up and see what happened.[898] Donna Helena heard the same noise, but with her back to the street she saw very little. Helena, however, appears to have immediately known it was the crack of an 'archibugio, near to me'.[899] Helena identified a man as being key to the commotion, but was nevertheless unable to provide much of a description of his appearance or the 'quality of his person', given how quickly events unfolded.[900] The first witness, Domenico, returned with a better description of what had happened. He described spinning around and seeing the crumpled form of Alberto de Cento fall to the ground, outside of the *Palazzo dei Cavaleggieri*, and nearby a local cobbler, known as Giuseppe da Cremona, stood, momentarily motionless with smoking gun in hand, before he ran off down the *Strada Maggiore*, turning left and

[897] *Ibid*, ff.40v-41r.
[898] *Ibid*, ff.41v-42r.
[899] *Ibid*, f.43v.
[900] '...no' poddi veder [di] che si fosse vestito per la brecita del tempo che gl'occorse ne [tempo] che considerar' le qualita' della persona...', *Ibid*, f.43v.

disappearing down the narrower *Via Caldarese*. Alberto, still alive, cried out 'you have killed me' and the wails of 'traditore' rang out across the piazza.[901]

Figure 4:2 Le Due Torri as focal points of the city. Giovanni Antonio Magni, Piano del Territorio di Bologna in G. Magini, Italia di Gio. Ant. Magini: data in luce da Fabio suo figliuolo al serenissimo Ferdinādo Gonzaga duca di Manoua edi Monferrato etc (Bologna, 1620).

The number of witness statements provided to the court by various onlookers and associates of the men involved speaks to the publicity of the act, as do the details of the statements themselves. A Jewish man, named only as Emanuel, describes seeing two men running in the same direction with swords bared.[902] Another man, Marcantonio Machiavellis also reported a group of men running down the main street.[903] Andrea de Cento describes being visited by a porter in his shop the following morning, who also described seeing 'many people' running down the streets that evening.[904] News of events appears to have spread quickly through the local community as well. Naturally, bystanders were keen to share their version of events with acquaintances and locals, if not always with official channels. The sense that the crowd played an important role in the interpretation of these apparently intentionally public acts seems to be evident in the regularity of

[901] *Ibid*, ff.21r-21v.
[902] *Ibid*, ff.39r-39v.
[903] *Ibid*, f.40r.
[904] '...haveva visto correr' gente assai...', *Ibid*, f.37r.

phrasing that refers to the proliferation of second-hand news: 'I heard it said', or 'I understand that…' is a common phrase proffered by interviewees who were filling in the gaps for the investigation.[905]

The involvement of a firearm was widely reported, and some witnesses were close enough to give a description of it. A certain Francesco detailed a 'long wheellock', about a 'mezzo brazzo' in length. This might refer to the *braccia* form of measurement, in which case the firearm should have been half an arm's length.[906] Another, however, described it not as a 'long' firearm but as a 'small wheellock'.[907] Others more vaguely describe only an 'archubugio', while one person called it a 'schioppo'.[908] Alternative descriptions of an 'archubusino' proffered by other interviewees might suggest a shorter variant once again, but one witness uses both 'archibugio' and 'archibusino' interchangeably.[909] In either case, this would have been a noticeable weapon, though potentially concealable given its wheellock mechanism and relatively smaller size. Nevertheless, from personal experience of firing a replica matchlock arquebus based on a model from the sixteenth century but of a longer length, these firearms were relatively powerful, cumbersome (though Giuseppe's might have been wieldier) and very loud – the sound of the shot in this case would have been amplified by the stone paving and shape of the piazza, delivering a particularly raucous effect.[910] Miraculously, however, Alberto appears to have survived the attempt on his life, which speaks either to Giuseppe's poor shot, the quality of the gun or the average expected accuracy of a single shot in a period where

[905] There are many examples of 'inteso dire' used by interviewees, which suggests that information about crimes was quickly shared among circles. In the investigation here a man says he understood that the figure at the centre of the gun crime case in the Piazza di Porta Ravegnana was known to have stolen a 'cappa' on another occasion. This man's statement in fact presents a damning character reference of the individual in question; *Ibid*, f.85v. The above-mentioned Emanuel also 'heard' the following day that a man had been shot; *Ibid*, f.40r. As did the also mentioned Marcantonio, who 'heard' that a man had been shot in the head, *Ibid*, f.40r.

[906] '...archubusino da Ruoda longo mezzo brazzo in cc.a.', *Ibid*, ff.21r-21v. 'A *braccio* is approximately an arm's length', Fletcher, 'Firearms and the State', p.14.

[907]; '...un' archibusino piccolo da roda in mano...', *Ibid*, ff.30v-31r.

[908] An example being the 'archibugio' described by Domenico, *Ibid*, ff.21r-21v; *Ibid*, (1549), ff.40v-41r.

[909] *Ibid*, f.68v; Domenico refers to both an 'archibugio' and an 'archibusino' in his statement; *Ibid*, ff.21r-21v.

[910] See figure 4:3. Author's photo. Firing of a replica 16th century matchlock arquebus at 15 metres. Replica provided by the Royal Armouries, Leeds (May 2022). Model based on an original sixteenth-century arquebus manufactured in the Gardone region.

volley fire was relied upon to negate inefficiencies. Either way, Andreas de Cento claims to have spoken to Alberto in the piazza the following day, who explained he had been shot at, but that it missed and only 'burned his hair'.[911]

The case against Giuseppe da Cremona is one of the earliest cases in the collection surveyed during this research where a firearm played a central role in the unfolding of events. This case is also an unusual example given that its casebook is entirely dedicated, over nearly 200 pages, to the attempted murder of Alberto de Cento.[912] All other casebooks from the archives of the *Torrone* court include several different cases, often haphazardly collected over several hundred pages assumedly written down as plaintiffs and witnesses arrived at the court during the working day. This means that most cases are difficult to follow and often end abruptly, sometimes to never be concluded. Giuseppe and Alberto's stories, however, are relatively easy to follow in this regard, and offer a fascinating insight into the criminal world of sixteenth century Bologna, and the lived experience for contemporaries navigating daily life in the city's streets. This case also brings together some of the themes already outlined as being significant aspects of Italian life in this century. The interviewees in this case gradually unveil a web of connections with each statement. They speak of the common experience of war, poverty, and violence. Finally, they retell the story of a vendetta whose

[911] '...Alberto mi disse che gl'era stato tratto d'un'archinbusio co'tra esso et gli'haveva busciato i capelli, o, la barba...', *Ibid*, f.38r.
[912] *Ibid*, ff.1r-99r.

participants sought to demonstrate its continued relevance on the urban stage using the loudest weapon available to them.

Figure 4:3 Authors photo. Firing of a replica 16th century matchlock arquebus at 15 metres. Replica provided by the Royal Armouries, Leeds (May 2022). Model based on an original sixteenth-century arquebus manufactured in the Gardone region.

The length of this firearms is longer than that used by Giuseppe, at 1.3 metres, and weighs nearly 4.5 kilograms. In this case the gun was accurate at 15 metres, but the replica cannot account for the lack of standardisation in barrel, shot, or gunpowder in the sixteenth century. The barrel of this firearm was also machine drilled, and therefore manufactured with a more precise finish than could likely be expected in the early modern period.

Giuseppe da Cremona, was described by one onlooker as a 'large man' with a 'round beard', mostly dressed in black running 'like a deer' down the main street from the direction of *Via San Vitale*. In other accounts he is described as a black-bearded youth and as questioning continues a network of associates, including both family, friends, and apparently local wealthy notables is illuminated.[913] It also soon becomes apparent that he is a known quantity in Bologna and in surrounding areas. Domenico identifies Giuseppe as a local cobbler who worked on the *Strada Maggiore* in the city; he

[913]'…voltandomi viddi un'giovine grande co' u.a barba negrea [ne] rossa...', *Ibid*, ff.21r-21v.

had also seen him visiting the houses of local sex workers.[914] Some associates of his tell the court that they had recently become suspicious of Giuseppe's behaviour, especially when he started buying items well beyond his normal means.[915]Another cobbler who knew of Giuseppe only through their shared profession described seeing him in expensive clothes, a velvet cap for example, which struck the cobbler as odd given he knew Giuseppe was a poor man.[916] On another occasion he was seen wearing what appears to have been armour, or defensive coverings – in the record a 'tacco' seems to be referenced, which might be a 'gunner's undergarment'.[917] When asked why he was wearing such things Giuseppe was reported to have replied that it was because he had '*inimicitia'* (enmity).[918] The number of witnesses brought to the court who could comment on aspects of Giuseppe's behaviour regardless of their degree of association, however, underlines the surveillance nature of the early modern Bolognese streets.

Character statements from others suggest why he was the target of enmity by painting a damning picture of Giuseppe. One man said he was a known gambler, blasphemer, liar, and general troublemaker.[919] Others detailed a more pathetic figure. A man called Pompeo admits that it had previously been known publicly that Giuseppe had stolen a pair of chainmail gloves. Pompeo was hesitant to be seen talking to him when he appears to have been called over to Giuseppe from a prison cell. He relented as the 'miserable' figure of Giuseppe, in grey clothes, begged him 'for the love of God and for the love of his wife' to speak on his behalf to the complainant whose property Giuseppe had stolen. Giuseppe was lucky on this occasion – he was released when the *maniche* were

[914] *Ibid*, f.22r.

[915] In an interview, Francesco the Calciolarius states that he marvelled at the money Giuseppe planned to spend on clothing, given that he knew he was a poor man; '...et io mi maravigliai di quei danari che lui haveva essendo povero come e.'; *Ibid*, ff.25r-25v.

[916] *Ibid*, f.59v-60r.

[917] 'Tacco - 'a shore, a prop, or under-layer that Gunners use'; in Florio, *Queen Anna's New World of Words.*

[918] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 3 (1549), ff.59v-60r.

[919] '…lo viddi giocar' grandeme'te et sentetilo biastemar' crudelme'te dicendolo ladro, dio traditor' et altr' simile e...gran bastemie homo bugiando che no' diceveva mai vero...no' era mai da creder; a cose che dicesse...', *Ibid*, f.85r.

returned to their rightful owner, but, as the existence of this casebook proves, Giuseppe was to find himself in far deeper trouble down the line.[920]

When Giuseppe himself was brought into the *Torrone* courtroom for questioning he presented himself akin to the miserable figure suggested by the testimony of Pompeo above. The record of questioning penned by the court's notary on 17th June, 1549 quickly established his supposed circumstances. He was married but had no children, for example, and was originally from Cremona. He had travelled some distance to find himself in Bologna, starting in Cremona over 150 kilometres north-west of the city before he moved to Cento, around 30 kilometres north of Bologna. Though apparently working as a cobbler in Bologna his profession in Cento was that of a '*calziolaro*' – a hosier – but poor business and poverty motivated his move to the city. This was an experience and move shared by many of Giuseppe's contemporaries.[921] He professes to the court that he owns nothing other than the goods his wife brought with her, totalling no more than 100 *lire.*[922] Further questioning reveals other themes of Giuseppe's life pertinent to this research and which are demonstrative of the lived experience of the Italian sixteenth century.

His network of associates is slowly revealed under questioning, and he appears to have travelled between Cento and Bologna on various occasions with them. He also reveals that he met several of these men while serving in an army under the Count of Pitigliano. Asked about his experience of the wars, seemingly directed by the nature of the weapon used in the assassination attempt at the centre of the case, Giuseppe admits that he carried a gun for a time while serving in the army. When specifically quizzed on his competency with firearms he responds, 'I shoot as well as I know…and will shoot well as long the arquebus is right'.[923] However, Giuseppe then downplays his association with firearms, saying he only used a gun for about a month while at war in Hungary after it was issued to

[920] *Ibid*, ff.23r-23v.
[921] 'io son' calciolaro…per il tempo penunioso io mi pari p.che. le are no' guadagnavano niente...', *Ibid*, ff.6v-7r.
[922] *Ibid*, f.7r.
[923] 'io tiro al meglio che so...et tirarai bene secondo che l'archobuso fusse justo.', *Ibid*, f.14v.

him by his captain. He specifically recalls experience with 'archobuso da ruotha longo' – a similar firearm is described above by Francesco above, as a witness to the assassination attempt against Alberto in central Bologna. Nevertheless, Giuseppe claimed to have never liked the gun and shortly returned it to his captain. Since then, he had never used a gun again and, 'as you lords know well', he said as he addressed the court, 'he who keeps an arquebus at home faces a sentence of beheading'.[924] He qualifies his disassociation with weaponry by claiming that he had been 'disarmed' (assumedly when he was disbanded), apart from a pair of 'maniche' – likely mail sleeves and classed as defensive arms – that he still carries. The military connection is also found in the figure of Alberto (his target) as well, who is described as being a *cavaleggiero*, a light-cavalryman.[925] Giuseppe also admits that this wasn't his first run-in with the authorities. In Cremona he had been arrested for being found masked in public wearing similar defensive arms, 'giaccho et maniche', but he was only imprisoned for a few days before he was absolved. It was his only previous offence, he claimed.[926] Despite his claims of a relatively clear track record, when asked why he needed to carry armour Giuseppe admitted that he has 'people who want bad' for him; 'they are my enemies' he added.[927] He tied this vendetta to his association with a certain Andrea, whom he met while at war. According to Giuseppe's account, this mere association with Andrea was enough for him to also become a target as he explained that Andrea was wanted for killing a sibling of the 'brothers' from Vergato, another small comune around 30 kilometres south-west of Bologna.[928] Whether true or a means of diversion from the true vendetta at the centre of this case in Bologna, the investigation of the *Torrone* reveals a web of enmities and alliances that connect the case's protagonists and the regularity of vendetta fuelled violence. Giuseppe's attempts to navigate the obstacles of enquiry

[924] '…che essendo alla guerra il cap.no me dette uno archbobuso da ruotha longo che lo tenni c.a uno mese che glile lo rendette p.che no' mi piaceva tal arma...et di poi io no' ne ho mai piu visto ne havuto in mano perch. la s.v. sa bene che ci e pena la testa a chi tiene detti archibusi in casa p. quanto si ho inteso dire.', *Ibid*, 14v.
[925] *Ibid*, f.54v.
[926] *Ibid*, f.16r.
[927] *Ibid*, ff.15v-16r.
[928] *Ibid*, f.16r.

presented by the court and ability to quote laws back to the judges is also demonstrative of the legal literacy of medieval and early modern people. Giuseppe and his accomplices add to the picture established in recent studies that have shown how contemporaries 'had a greater familiarity with legal institutions and understandings of their logics than was assumed in the past'.[929]

The key to the assassination attempt in the centre of Bologna appears to have been the relationship between the Pasqualini family and the target of the assassination, Alberto. Interviewees had already placed a relationship between a Julio Pasqualini and Giuseppe. Another associate of Giuseppe's, a chemist who had also first met Giuseppe at war several years previous, had seen Giuseppe and Julio together on occasion. This friend had even apparently attempted to warn Giuseppe away from Julio's company, telling him one day outside his shop that 'almost all of Julio's enemies had been killed' recently.[930] He was evidently a dangerous man. It soon becomes known to the court that the Pasqualini enmity with Alberto was public knowledge – a 'inimicitia mortale' according to one witness – that stemmed from another brutal episode two years before the attempt on Alberto's life. Shortly after Giuseppe's introduction to the court, Francesco di Pasqualini, the cousin of Julio Pasqualini, was interviewed – he claims to know nothing about the specifics of the events in question but knows he had also been implicated in a crime by Giuseppe himself, who gave away his connections in questioning. Nevertheless, Francesco admits to the enmity between his family and Alberto, explaining how Alberto had previously found one of the Palantieri brothers in a shop and stabbed him in the mouth, killing him immediately.[931] According to another witness, this enmity was known in Bologna, Cento and 'in surrounding places'; demonstrating the liveliness of vendetta culture and the importance contemporaries ascribed to knowing where ties of enmity existed.[932]

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[929] Domingues, *Confession and Criminal Justice*, p.178.

[930] 'Io ve diro io no' so altro se no' che uno di che [fu] esser' da tre settimane passando per dinanzi la botega di m.ro Andrea speciale all'angelo in le [chiavadure] mi chiamo et disse o Joseps tu no' sai che li nemici di m. Julio [sonno] quasi amazzati hiersera', *Ibid*, f.34r; ff.11r-11v.

[931] 'io [scio] che Alberto di [Merciani] amazzo' da traditor' che era in bottega [de scriveva/scrimeva] et li detti u.a stoccata in bocca et morse subbito', *Ibid*, f.69r.

[932] '…come di q.o pubbl.te si sa, et n'e, pubblico [notono] in Cento, et in altri luogi [circonnirai]...', *Ibid*, ff.50r-50v.

Perigrinnius de Cento also told the court that Alberto had arrived and stayed in the house of Signore Hercole Malvezzi – the Malvezzi being a name synonymous with the turbulent history of Bologna – just before he had killed a member of the Pasqualini family.[933]

Giuseppe's involvement in this vendetta appears to have been primarily motivated out of monetary gain, which is referenced in the above witness statements that suggest Giuseppe was wearing clothes beyond his usual means and spending money with unexplainable origin. While he at first entirely denies his involvement in these dealings and especially his presence in the piazza on the evening in question – calling those who placed him at the scene liars, without 'faith or soul'- Giuseppe eventually cracks under torture and interrogation and describes the arrangement. In doing so he also places the Pasqualini at the scene.[934] Interesting here is the choice of a firearm as apparently being the best weapon for the 'job'.[935] He explains that he, and a good friend of Julio Pasqualino, named Vincenzo, were tasked with killing Alberto. Again, Giuseppe also knew this Vincenzo from 'the war', underlining the shared military experience that brought these lives together.[936] Both were informed of Julio Pasqualino's wish to 'facesse le vendette'. Here Giuseppe claimed that it was Vincenzo who was armed with 'un zacho', (which might be the 'tacco', or gunner's undergarment already encountered), a pair of 'maniche' and the 'archibusino da roda' which he claims had been unanimously agreed by the group as the best weapon for the task.[937] Giuseppe also refers to the potential ease of using such weapons, which might have been a contributing factor to its selection. He tells the court that Vincenzo initially had no knowledge of loading or shooting a gun, so they took him out of the gates at San Mamolo and 'taught him'.[938]

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[933] *Ibid*, ff.50r-50v.

[934] '…che o' hanno ne fede ne anima.', *Ibid*, f.48r.

[935] The interviewees refer to the 'l'off.o.', which might translate as 'officio', being office, duty, or role in this context. *Ibid*, f.54r; f.55v.

[936] *Ibid*, f.53v.

[937] *Ibid*, ff.53-55v.

[938] '…p.che Vin.co no' sapeva ne' caricar' ne discarigar' gl'archibusino ci conduceva fuora della porta di S. mamolo, et ivi di isegnava come haveva a far' et le discargava et cosi Julio ci disse che no' dubitassimo...'; *Ibid*, f.55v.

Whether true or not, Giuseppe evidently thought this a believable account of events. Later, they arrived at the piazza and positioned themselves outside the meat-market before Vincenzo decided it was time. Giuseppe said he expressed some concerns, but Vincenzo waved them away – 'Don't doubt anything'. Giuseppe claims to have stood a 'half-pike' length away from Vincenzo before Vincenzo took the shot. Both watched Alberto fall to the ground before they fled.[939] They returned to the Pasqualini base, believing the job was done. News arrived the next day that Alberto still lived.[940]

Despite the apparently unsuccessful attempt, a degree of planning was evidently put in place by the Pasqualini. It seems that Alberto was also pointed out to Giuseppe before the attempt was made to confirm the target.[941] The gun itself was tested and it was decided that two men should execute the plan since 'people always run', assumedly after the culprit of a gunshot, and so that they could split up. It was important, they were told, that they were not discovered, given that there appears to have been a 'security' between the Palantieri and Alberto. This likely refers to a peace brokered between the two groups and might have been established through official or unofficial channels. Any contravening of the terms of peace set between two parties would result in the forfeiting of this security and the loss of the financial bond.[942] Francesco Pasqualini later confirms that there was a 'truce' between the Pasqualini family and Alberto, while denying that he or his cousin, Julio, had any connection to Giuseppe and the events in question.[943] Nevertheless, it is clear that at least certain members of the Pasqualini evidently now felt a stronger compulsion to override the dictates of a peace and conclude their business with Alberto.[944] Breaking peace under such circumstances was not necessarily irregular in this period. The *Libri dei giustiziati* once again provide similar examples,

[939] *Ibid*, f.56r.
[940] *Ibid*, ff.54r-55v.
[941] '…et cosi detto vinc.o mi mostro' q.o Alberto la da casa di Malvezzi...'; *Ibid*, f.56r.
[942] '…dicea che no' bisognava che loro si discoprissero p.che tra loro et q.o alberto gl'era le sigurta gra'dissimi...'; *Ibid*, f.55r.
[943] '...tra Alberto da cento, et noi ci, e, la tregua.', *Ibid*, ff.69v-70r.
[944] *Ibid*, ff.54v-55r.

such as that of Ottavia Milanese who was hanged in early 1576 for shooting at another 'sotto La Pace'.[945] In May 1591, the *Libri* also record the hanging of six men for shooting at another 'sotto La Pace'.[946] Khumera's evaluation of peace-making in late medieval Italy suggests that offenders 'had everything to gain by peace-making'.[947] Those wronged by an offender may feel the opposite, and in any case the incentives offered by the peace-making process may not have been as attractive as often assumed - considerations of practicality, willingness on the part of both parties, calculations of an agreement's impact on one's honour projection and, on one's coin purse, all influenced decisions on whether or not to commit to an agreement, regardless of the authority's wishes.[948] Above all, 'honour demanded that an offence be avenged', and whether or not this compulsion was overridden by the competing moral force of Christianity and its emphasis on forgiveness depended on the individuals and circumstances involved.[949]

Conclusions to the Case:

The firearm was a fitting statement piece for this finale. Aware of the public interest in the story between rivals, the busy paved streets and piazzas of Bologna offered potential for its protagonists to demonstrate their honour with a bang, while simultaneously ducking the shame of cowardice by allowed an insult to slide. Significantly, this was a demonstration that all understood, given that the necessity to resolve enmity was a compulsion felt widely by early modern people across the spectrum. The destitute, youthful figures often found in criminal records from the period, here represented by Giuseppe, were expendable and could be dropped with little contrition. Francesco Pasqualini denied the existence of Giuseppe in his interview – 'I have never known or spoke to Giuseppe', he claims to have been named 'badly and falsely'. 'Signore', he continued, 'I am a good

[945] Machiavelli, *Libri dei giustiziati*, 14th January 1576, vol.4832.
[946] *Ibid*, 18th May 1591, vol.4832.
[947] G. Khumera, *The Benefits of Peace: Private Peacemaking in Late Medieval Italy* (Leiden, 2017), p.235.
[948] *Ibid*, pp.235-247.
[949] *Ibid*, p.244.

man' and I 'attend to my own matters'.[950] It appears Francesco was also able to rely upon a greater circle of associates who vouched for his name in court. Several individuals affirmed his 'good condition', his 'good reputation', his 'laudable' way of living – in no way was it possible, they say, that he would be connected to any injury or murder.[951] Much like Blaise d'Monluc could write of throwing men into the path of gunfire without shame, individuals such as Francesco seemingly could throw lowly figures like Giuseppe to the hangman with little recourse to dictates of honour. The character assassination is added by several interviewees who speak the opposite of Giuseppe, perhaps with good reason, since according to at least one Giuseppe was a known thief and murdered for money.[952] Any chance for Giuseppe to save his integrity is buried within the same statement from the above-mentioned Guido. In a surprise turn of events, Guido tells the court that there was no enmity between the Pasqualini and Alberto, in fact, quite the contrary, since in May of the same year he personally had seen Francesco and Alberto greet one another; 'Benvenuto, Messer Alberto', Francesco is quoted as replying to Alberto's 'salvii'. On many other occasions the two were also supposed to have greeted one another with friendliness.[953] Someone like Giuseppe did not have a network strong enough to compete, and he had chosen much of his poorly, if a choice in associates was ever a privilege of his. Nevertheless, Giuseppe was ultimately the one seen holding the smoking gun, despite his claim that the other Vincenzo had taken the shot. The fate of both Pasqualini is vague but it appears that the court was unable to rely on enough witnesses to place both at the heart of the crime. The subsequent attempt by the court to prosecute the Pasqualini for contumacy

[950] 'Sig.r no' cognobbi mai detto Joseph.ne mai parlai et [che] m'ha nominato in cosa alcu.a m'ha no.iato tristame.te et falsame.te, et mai hebbi raggionam.te co' Julio di tal' cuosa, et io son homo da bene sig.r che attendo ai casi mei.', ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 3 (1549), f.71v.
[951] These character statements fit a formula and use very similar statements in support of Francesco. An example being from [Guidi de Torsonibus] who says he was a '…homo di bona vita conditione opinione et fama homo pacific quieto…viver' bene et laudabilmente [abstinersi dai vitii] et delitti max.e di cometter' ne mandar' che sia offeso ne [amazzaro] alcu.o co' archibusi ne co' altr' sorte d'arme...', *Ibid*, ff.77r-77v.
[952] *Ibid*, ff.79r-80v; f.85r; f.81v.
[953] '...e questo piu et piu volte gl'ho visto salutarsi l'un laltro', *Ibid*, ff.78r-78v.

when the crime was first reported fell apart when they were unable to prove whether they had left the city. Once again, connections and influence proved effective.

Unfortunately, no other discussion on the use of the firearm itself is presented in the remaining interviews within the case, though it evidently played a central role in the investigation given the repeat questions about its existence from the court. It is suggested that a firearm was specifically chosen and given to Giuseppe, and that this decision fell within a general pre-planned strategy to kill Alberto. Why the firearm was used over quieter or even more potentially deadly alternatives is never confirmed and remains open to interpretation. Certainly, Giuseppe's weak social and economic standing, his bad reputation, and his willingness to kill for money made him an expendable component of the plan. This negated concerns of being discovered if the Pasqualini could rely on their good name around Cento and Bologna. Despite the dishonour associated with paying for assassinations, the Pasqualini were arguably aware of the degree of separation this provided. By not being present at the scene their connection to the attempt was harder to prove. This is particularly pertinent since witnesses were the most important means of evidence for medieval and early modern judges - a judge also needed at least two eyewitnesses to agree on circumstances to obtain full proof, and this was rarely straightforward.[954] Given the difficulty of guaranteeing consistent witness testimonies and the degree of separation achieved by using a hired killer, it could be suggested that it did not matter that Giuseppe was seen with the gun. This, combined with Giuseppe's bad name, was not enough to place guilt firmly at the Palantieri door, even if unofficially the city knew the story of this enmity. Secondly, it could also be suggested that it did not matter if the attempt failed. This must have been a consideration in the planning of the assassination given the potential issues of reliability of sixteenth-century firearms.

What did matter was that the attempt was seen. Rather than using a more discreet weapon and a quieter location, the Pasqualini chose the gun and a focal point of the city. 'Space and place'

[954] Vitiello, *Public Justice and Criminal Trial*, pp.123-124.

mattered to people who committed, suffered, witnessed and described violence, and highly visible public spaces were very often utilised as hosts for 'significant' violence.[955] The blast of the firearm in the centre of Bologna, both within a marketplace and piazza which were already 'spaces of display and exchange', underlined the intent of the Pasqualini.[956] The backdrop of the city's iconic *Due Torri* speaks to Rose's assertion that early modern behaviour 'was always related to landmarks', too.[957] Nevertheless, it signalled to the rest of the city that the strike against the Palantieri's honour in the murder of their relative two years ago had not been forgotten. It also signalled a disdain for the justice system of papal authority and confirmed the role still to be played by private justice. By choosing this location the Pasqualini were referring to vendetta practices that sought to 'publicise grievances' but also exercise the 'notion of glory based on the self, which fed the culture of vendetta'.[958] Much like Giuseppe's crime, his death sentence was also carried out in the public arena. Giuseppe da Cremona was hanged at the Rhingiera of the Palazzo in August 1549.[959]

[955] C. Rose, 'Homicide in Early Modern Bologna: A Prepositional Cartography', *Urban History*, 50:2, (May 2023) p.2; p.10.
[956] *Ibid*, p.9.
[957] *Ibid*, p.20.
[958] Carroll, *Enmity and Violence*, p.105; p.125.
[959] See figure 4:4.

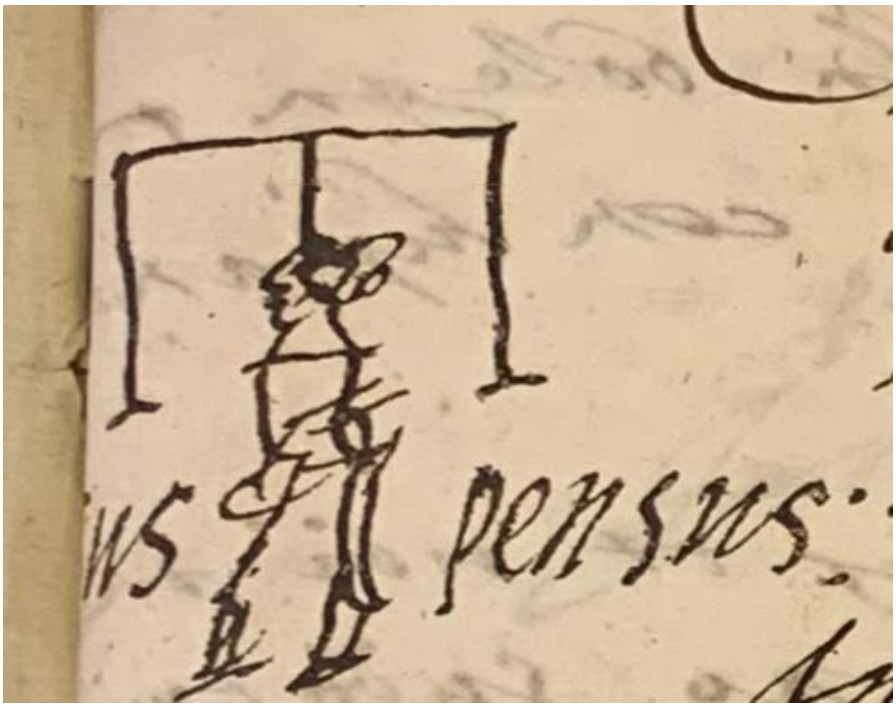

Figure 4:4 ASBo, Registri, 3 (1534), f.6.r. Giuseppe's fate is signalled early in the pages of his interviews by the court notary. Giuseppe da Cremona was hanged at the Ringhiera of the Palazzo in August 1549.

The demonstrative intentions of firearm use in the sixteenth century might be challenged by some, though the number of available studies that offer evidence not only of popular firearm use but also conclusive evidence of the practicality and accuracy of early modern guns is limited. In 1998 researchers tested 14 firearms from the early modern period, which at the time offered the 'best information ever assembled on the performance of early small arms'.[960] However, only four of these guns were dated to the sixteenth century.[961] The studies found that the sixteenth and seventeenth-century small arm was capable of significant damage with spherical bullets that could leave 'large-volume wound cavities'.[962] The issue of metal left in wounds following a gunshot injury and the shattering power of spherical bullets on bone, tissue and cloth fragments that posed infection risks to a victim meant that the lethality of guns should not be underestimated. It should also be considered that leaning into languages of threat rather than firing a gun was chosen because

[960] P. Krenn, P. Kalaus, B. Hall, 'Material Culture and Military History: Test-Firing Early Modern Small Arms', *Material History Review*, 42 (1995), p.102.
[961] *Ibid*.
[962] *Ibid*, p.103.

contemporaries were aware of the killing power of their weapons, and therefore chose to avoid a homicide charge.

Nevertheless, the growth of firearm homicide over the following century might contest that thought process. The *Libri dei giustiziati* reviewed in this research also highlight how capital punishment was not enough to dissuade violent crime and demonstrative homicide. The regular sight of armour even on the city streets of early modern Bologna might be another reason for a hesitation in firing. According to the same study in 1998 contemporary armour was remarkably effective at stopping bullets and offered 'significant protection', given the drawbacks of early modern bullets.[963] The range of these weapons was found to be 'highly inaccurate' and 'subject to very high drag on the bullets.'[964] In a test at 100 metres, six out of ten long-barrelled guns 'scattered their bullets so badly that they effectively hit the intended target solely by random variation'. Similarly, the size of the wound decreased significantly as range increased.[965] At 30 metres the seventeenth-century pistols faired significantly better in terms of accuracy, but these were later models than those often-likely improvised small firearms found in the *Torrone* records. They also delivered 'sub-lethal' shots in the study.[966] Despite the potential lethality of these weapons at very close range the study also could not emulate real-use situations. By using 'standardised modern gunpowder' the study is unable to account for the variation in gunpowder measure used in a period before standardisation. The study's use of a remote mount from which the guns were fired electronically also does not account for the human element in gun use, not to mention the potential differences in aiming practice in the early modern period.[967] The specific conditions required for an accurate single shot and the at times unpredictable travel of the bullet was no doubt known to contemporaries, who often leaned into the gun's symbolic and noisy effect to emphasise demonstrative practice. According to the examples

[963] *Ibid*, p.107.
[964] *Ibid*, p.102.
[965] *Ibid*, p.103.
[966] *Ibid*, p.108.
[967] *Ibid*, p.102.

found during this research, cases where individuals are killed outright with firearms appear less common. In an example where the intention to kill with the gun is clear, protagonists used several firearms at once to ensure success. This case from 1568 and in Bazano, a comune local to Bologna, details how four men all armed with arquebuses fired at a man called Lorenzo. It seems that to ensure Lorenzo was dead they completed the job with knives after hitting him with their shots.[968] The inaccuracy of firearms might also be seen in a case from the same year, when the court heard a report about a seemingly close physical encounter between two enemies wherein a gun was fired but missed. One of the witnesses thanked God that he had not been hit but a knife fight ensued nonetheless.[969]

While the gun may have proven its lethality in numbers, and perhaps at close range (well under 100 meters) in other examples, the sixteenth-century cases reviewed during this research suggest that users, in many situations, leveraged the reputation and effect of the firearm to threaten their opponents, bolster their own image and dissolve a confrontation. This is understandable on practical terms, given that mechanisms could fail, and shots were likely to miss or even hit the wrong target. I argue that the sound of the firearm along with all its connotations outlined in previous chapters added to participation in the languages of enmity and honour, and the contemporary interpretations of place, space, visibility, and selfhood. The following cases will support this.

Other Notable Cases:

The previous case of Giuseppe da Cremona and Alberto da Cento is remarkable in some respects, and that is likely reflected in the deep interest that the Bolognese authorities appear to have taken in the investigation. Obviously, an act of such brazen and demonstrative violence in an iconic area of the city was by itself enough to loudly threaten and undermine any semblance of government control. The role of firearms within the popular politics of vendetta and enmity was highlighted by

[968] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 520 (1568), ff.56v-58r.
[969] '…come piacque à Dio che non mi colse', *Ibid*, f.101r.

an anonymous writer from Perugia in the 1580s, who wrote that 'at present no one undertakes *vendette* or attempts to unburden himself of even the lightest offense with any other weapon than this…'.[970] The arenas for vendetta did change though, and the case between the Palantieri and the Commuli families in the Comune of Castel Bolognese (c. 45 kilometres south-east of Bologna) shows that smaller rural neighbourhoods were still deemed appropriate stages to communicate enmity. In this case the confrontation started at the time of Mass, when the highest number of witnesses could likely be guaranteed, outside the comune's main church, between the Commuli brothers and at least one member of the Palantieri family, Sanctes. The drama began when one man was stabbed in the head before the group appear to have broken off in different directions with the aim of chasing down other members of the competing families.[971] Evidently, the plan was to enact public retribution. Sanctes made his way to the marketplace, another focal point of the community, now armed with a wheellock arquebus. In other places at least two other wheellock firearms were reported by witnesses to the court.[972] Shortly afterwards, another Palantieri, described as a 'knight' (*cavaliero*) rushed to join the fight with another man, both also armed with wheellocks.[973] No killing blow appears to have been dealt in the entire confrontation, though blood was very publicly drawn. Nevertheless, the use of church, market, and streets before the final confrontation with the comune's guards at the gates of the town (outlined in the opening of this chapter) were undoubtedly intentional. The episode finished with Sanctes firing his gun into the air, rallying his allies, and moving into the countryside.[974] That a peace was under negotiation at the time of the attack signalled to its participants that enmity remained and that elements of the peace process, or the peace itself, remained unsatisfactory according to its subjects.[975] Finally, the choice of location speaks to Rose's interpretation of contemporary use of buildings – the church, the walls of the

[970] Davis, 'The Renaissance Goes Up in Smoke', pp.403-404.
[971] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 45 (1561), ff.240r-241v.
[972] *Ibid*, ff.240r-242r.
[973] *Ibid*, ff.240r-242r.
[974] *Ibid*, ff.243r-345r.
[975] *Ibid*, ff.263v-264v; Julius Cesar' explains his role as middleman between the two parties in ongoing attempts to negotiate and confirm a peace when this attack broke out.

comune, and the guards employed by the state are the manifestations and symbols of that governance, in this example the Palantieri used these buildings to reject a peace, and instead demonstrate and communicate their own 'claim to justice'.[976] The barrel of Sanctes' gun directed at a guard employed by the Papal States as he demanded passage through the usually strictly controlled walls of the papal comune was a blatant challenge to authority, using the loudest portable weapons technology available.

Similar scenes played out in an example reported to the *Torrone* in November 1563, when several witnesses reported the attack on Mengho de Gottis during the Carnival festivities which likely took place in the Comune di Calderara di Reno, some 10 kilometres north-west of Bologna. A sense of historical enmity is suggested by Mengho's account of the initial confrontation with Virgilio Poeta; 'What are you doing here?' was Virgilio's challenge to Mengho on seeing him stop to watch the festival dances. Mengho claims to have replied explaining just that – he was here to watch the dancing, but he was quickly struck with a half-pike and sent backwards into a ditch by Virgilio.[977] The drama unfolded before its onlookers as Mengho jumped to his feet, shouting 'Villain! Traitor!' and sought a swift escape through the surrounding fields. He claimed that seven or eight others emerged from the crowd with weapons and gave chase.[978] Among those running after Mengho was another youth, known as 'Barberino', who held a wheellock arquebus. He was young, and without a beard.[979] Gunshots were reported by witnesses, but the interviewees brought to the court differ in their accounts of how many and from what direction these shots were taken. This demonstrates how, despite the emphatic effect of an arquebus shot, the source of the explosion could be difficult to pin down as it echoed and bounced through piazzas, streets, fields, churches, and crowds. This might have been another consideration given to the use of the gun, which could display intent to a

[976] Rose, 'A Prepositional Cartography', p.19.
[977] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 186 (July-September 1563), f.202v.
[978] *Ibid*.
[979] 'Lui era accompagnato da sette o, otto, che non gli conoosco ecetto uno che gli dicono il Barberino...giovene senza barba...', *Ibid*, f.221r.

watching crowd but cause enough chaos as to confuse the witness statements inevitably brought to court. The *Torrone* also heard from Jacomo, whose statement was taken as he lay in bed bedridden by a gunshot wound to his leg. Apparently hit in the crossfire, the shot had maimed him badly - according to the surgeon's report it had broken both 'flesh and bone'.[980] A second man, not given a name but known as a baker from Bologna, was also reported to have been shot in the leg.[981] Another witness spoke of the crowd of people there and affirmed that a significant number ran after Mengho and described hearing a second shot, 'towards the church', but admitted they did not know who had pulled the trigger.[982] Nevertheless, Barberino, soon to be identified as Hercole from Bologna was placed by other witnesses of having taken at least one of the shots.

Two months after the event in question, Hercole finally appears before the court. He was described as being of medium stature, and if the initial description of his youthful countenance is to be accepted, he appears to have grown a 'long black beard' in the intervening months. He affirmed his name as being Hercule di Bartolomeo Pighino, often called 'Barberino' because he was from Bologna. Like many of the youths caught in the *Torrone* documents, he is also described as wearing black clothes. [983] He appears to be an apprentice to a lawyer in Bologna and had a relatively small family.[984] He admits to being the individual described in the summons, to being in the same comune on the same day during the religious festival, and to owning a firearm. His gun appears to have been a relatively small wheellock, perhaps weighing less than 1 kilogram, but he claimed never to have shot at anybody.[985] In fact, Hercole told the court that he was sat on the ground somewhere amongst the festival when he heard a commotion ('*rumore*') nearby and watched others run towards its source – he describes 'a world of people' in attendance.[986] As he jumped up to follow the

[980] '…tronfisione carnis et ossis ali quali fractura cui delato corporali…', *Ibid*, f.222v.
[981] *Ibid*, ff.226r-226v
[982] '...sentei ancora scaricare un'altro verso la chiesa ma no' so da chi.', *Ibid*, f.226r.
[983] *Ibid*, f.248r.
[984] *Ibid*, f.248r.
[985] 'Io son' Hercule detto barboncino et [penso] di esser q.llo che e no'ata in q.lla sentenza ma caio no' sparai altrame'te q.lla archibusata come con' in q.lla sentenza...', *Ibid*, f.249r.
[986] *Ibid*, f.253r.

gun he had tucked into his belt went off of its own accord. He was pulled up to his feet by others and not entirely cognisant of what had happened he was told by onlookers that his gun had fired and that he should leave quickly. His questionable story continues – he had heard that somebody had been hit by the shot but decided to lay low in Modena. He had no knowledge of the man or any enmity with him, though his networks are illuminated by further questioning.[987] His dining with a certain Messer Talentore and other 'strangers' before the events after travelling from Bologna raises the suspicions of the *Torrone* officials and suggest a similar relationship between gunman and paymaster that was apparent in the case between Giuseppe da Cremona and Alberto da Cento.[988] Similarly, a suggestion by one witness that a publicly known peace was in place between two parties involved invokes similarities again.[989] Unfortunately, the case ends here and Hercole appears to have been released on bail. Nevertheless, the surviving information speaks to the demonstrative aspect of vendetta violence in this period and the additional element that the firearm provided in this regard. It also shows the difference in control between urban and rural areas since the court in this case appears to have been fairly accepting of firearm ownership in the *contado* and of Hercole's admission that he casually kept it wound and charged 'as usual'. [990] Nevertheless, popular events in the countryside similarly provided a tantalising opportunity to air grievances and enmities.

Much like confrontations already discussed, firearms were also found in locations that formed part of the daily experience of contemporaries. Mills have already appeared as points of contest, perhaps owing both to the practicality of finding a target likely to be visiting the mill, or because of their visibility in the community. But areas such as mills presented an opportunity to maximise disruption in a locality and speaks to the sense of claiming public buildings and thoroughfares already

[987] 'Io no' havuto mai ne odio ne inimicizia ne [ch*e*] fare con nessuno delli passarini.', *Ibid*, f.252r.
[988] *Ibid*, ff.250r-250v, '...era un archibuso di rota di 15 [oncie], cioe di q.lli [di misura] che si portano alla cintura.', *Ibid*, f.250v.
[989] *Ibid*, f.221v; f.226v.
[990] '...era ben cariga la rota ma no' era giu il cane et la tenvo cariga per usan'za.'; *Ibid*, f.251r.

outlined.[991] The firearm again offered an opportunity to underscore the event and, in this case, provided the range to do it at. The *Torrone* heard, for example, the complaint of Stefano in March 1560, likely in the comune of Casio, 60 kilometres south-west of Bologna. Stefano was shot at the 'molinella' by a certain Anniballe, who appears to have been heading a group of four others. Stefano claimed to have recognised Anniballe, likely as one of the local malefactors, and told his companion to not stop as they passed by the mill; evidently, Stefano had encroached on Anniballe's claim to the area.[992] Stefano also showed the court four of the injuries he had sustained in the confrontation, all four he claims were produced by one shot of the arquebus – a reminder of the destructive potential of even an early modern firearm. The bullet appears to have passed through Stefano's shoulder and arm, likely blasting fragments of bone through flesh as it did so, causing several injuries.[993] Despite the slew of regulations attempting to control their use, guns were fired across the century.

The apparent youth of those involved in the cases reviewed is a common theme of firearm crime across the Bolognese sixteenth century, as was their association with groups of other similarly aged men and even family members. In contrast to the circumstances of the case between Giuseppe da Cremona and Alberto da Cento, where the urban stage was chosen as the backdrop to another episode in that history of enmity, in most cases armed youths are reported in the comunes that dotted the rural landscape of Bologna's *contado*. This is perhaps unsurprising, given the greater control over the passage of persons and weapons into the city. In the multitude of relatively small communities dotted across a varied landscape, some remotely nestled in the mountainous areas west of Bologna and others spread over the expanse of land surrounding the city, firearms were more likely to be openly and casually carried. Similar scenes to that reported to the *Torrone* in early

[991] An example that does not involve firearms is provided in a report from March 1560 when a group of three men, including two brothers, started fighting at a mill, perhaps this time in Bologna itself. Though this encounter only involved blades it demonstrates the aim contemporaries might have taken to scar the faces of their adversaries, leaving a permanent mark on their visages likely intended to serve as a continual reminder of shame dealt by the hand of another man. The fact that contemporaries aimed for hats and heads has already been suggested by J. Ruff in *Violence in Early Modern Europe*, p.123.
[992] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 44 (February – May 1561), ff.122r-123v.
[993] '…e questo quattro ferite du datto un colpo con la palla del arcobuso', *Ibid*, ff.122r-122v.

1561 from the comune of Barbarolo (a small village nestled in the mountainous area around 30 kilometres south of Bologna) are found throughout the records of the sixteenth century. In this example, a large group of young men, some of whom are suggested as being brothers, were reported on the evening of Carnival carrying a range of both long and short wheellock firearms. They were evidently very visible in the community and chose a busy event to parade their weapons.[994] A denunciation in the same month from the Comune di Pizano (around 25 kilometres south of Bologna) presents a remarkably similar scene, once again at Carnival and with at least one wheellock firearm on display. In this case, one of the men was singled out as having regularly committed various 'malefici' and for having a publicly known bad reputation.[995] In what appears to have been a total subversion of the law and of gendered norms, several men were reported in March 1571 for being masked, with at least one dressed in women's clothes and carrying wheellock firearms on their belt.[996] This sense of inversion is to be expected at Carnival times, however the firearm at the hip perhaps sought to playfully subvert the cultural and gendered gap that restricted women's access to guns. Once again, this was a case of display that projected the presence of the firearm and its owner onto their public audience.

Reports of armed groups of men, brandishing several wheellocks, like those reported in another case at Loiano and again in Barbarolo in February 1561 are common images presented by the *Torrone* notaries. This group was also apparently tied to individuals in the locality, having been seen dining at the house of a certain Tonelle de Christofalo 'dalla guardia'. This connection with the town guard is again reflective of the strength of local connections versus that of the state, when, much like the Palantieri case, the gate guard were as much beholden to the men in their localities as they might have been to their official duties.[997] That they were reported in both Barbarolo and Loiano, nearly 7

[994] *Ibid*, ff.90r-93v; ff.289r-291r.
[995] *Ibid*, ff.94r-97v; '…é solito di cometter' et far' simili malefici come e' pub.ca voce et fame nel detto co'e…', *Ibid*, f.94v.
[996] '…quello che era vestito da donna haveva un archibugio da rota alla centura per quanto dicevano li tutti quelli che erano su la festa', ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 679 (1571), f.42v.
[997] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 44 (February – May 1561), ff.29r-31r.

kilometres apart, also highlights the degree of mobility of these male, roaming groups.[998] In the arsenal of weapons presented by a group in another comune within Bologna's territory firearms are not specifically mentioned, but their weapons are similarly carried on display through the marketplace and under the loggia on several days, before they moved on. Among this group were a father and his two sons, labelled as 'banditi' by the court, highlighting the familial connections that these groups were often, at least partially, comprised of.[999] In February 1566, armed men carrying at least four firearms were reported at Mass in the comune of Bisano, around 35 kilometres south of Bologna.[1000] Reports were still filtering into the *Torrone* in late 1582, when the Massaro of the comune of San Agostino detailed 12 men on horseback with wheellock arquebuses 'of many types' and knives.[1001] These cases similarly speak to the contest of public space and the challenge thrown down by local groups of men and youths to claim that space. This is more pertinent given the documented struggles of the Papal States to impose control in the disparate settlements of Bologna's wider *contado*. The silhouette of the firearm hanging at their belts, slung over their shoulders, and paraded through the busier sections of local society sought to underline the demonstration of these groups, no doubt aware of the firearm's shock factor.

The rich records of the condemned from this period suggest that the threat of capital punishment was not enough for people to abstain from serious crime. However, contemporaries do express a sense of an awareness of limits, especially when it came to firearms. Again, the legal literacy of contemporaries should be highlighted. Since authorities appeared intent on cracking down on firearm crime, perhaps with more vigour than most other crimes, and repeatedly passed laws that heightened the stakes of guilty conduct with guns, it seems that contemporaries increasingly leant into the demonstrative aspects of gun use. This also contributes an explanation to their relatively

[998] *Ibid*, ff.29r-31r.
[999] '… tutti armati sono stati del mese di Marzo et d'Aprile pr.ss. passati piu volte nel detto co'e sul mercato di giorno del sabato et in altri giorni sotto la loggia del dett. co'e dove [proprio si fa] il mercato poi si sono partiti et andati tutti insieme verso pancaldolo.' *Ibid*, No pagination (May 1561).
[1000] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 328 (January-March 1556), ff.143r-135r.
[1001] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 1550 (1582), ff.91r-94r.

low appearance rate in capital punishment cases and suggests why cases such as Giuseppe da Cremona's and Mengho de Ghottis's are less common. That firearms primarily became items of expression is underlined by the propensity for gun wielders to not actually discharge their firearm. Firearms can be seen to be incorporated into posturing, threats, and brought with them a whole new means of intimidation. Body language changed as men 'lowered' their gun barrels or cocked the 'dog' of their guns to communicate threat or suggest their potential. In a case from Crevalcore in June 1556, for example, a group of men set about another man – a wheellock is involved in the scene but is not used.[1002] In July 1556 Michele Guerra reported another man to the *Torrone* because he had threatened to shoot him, but evidently never did.[1003] In July 1571, Francesco di Bartolomeo Danolo was made to pay a security after having been found with a gun 'lowered' against his own relative in Bologna.[1004] In October of the same year, a certain Alessandro, who appears to have been a soldier, was found in Bologna with a 'schioppo da fuoco' lowered against another called Borgilio.[1005] In August 1576 another man was made to pay a security of 200 *scudi* for 'having wanted to shoot an arquebus' amongst a group.[1006] The posturing might extend to warning shots as well, which might be inferred by the sentence against a man in March 1586 who had shot a gun 'without offense'.[1007] The men reported fighting one another with swords in March 1560 'on account of an arquebus' may have clashed following a threat with a firearm.[1008]

In March 1561, a private complaint was brought to the *Torrone* from Johannes Mananius in a nearby comune. In it he reported his neighbour for threatening his apprentice with a firearm after a

[1002] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 1 (1556-1558), f.229r.
[1003] ASBo, Legato, Expeditiones, busta 57 (1556), f.58v.
[1004] '…che habbia abbassato un'arcobuggio da [frigho] cotra [Guiem Cotto]...', ASBo, Legato, Expeditiones, busta 66 (1571), f.60v.
[1005] *Ibid*, f.77r.
[1006] '...d.o Ant.o gli habbia voluto tirare un'archibusata tragli...', ASBo, Legato, Expeditiones, busta 72 (1576), f.119r.
[1007]'…per imputazione di haver' sperato uin'arcobugiato [senza offese]', ASBo, Legato, Expeditiones, busta 97 (1586), f.217r.
[1008] '…per conto di uno arcobuso quale li admandava Hier.o...', ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 18 (1559-1560), f.113r.

disagreement over a tampered waterway between their two houses. This was enough for the apprentice to leave, 'immediately.'[1009] Firearms were used in posturing over communal spaces in other examples as well, once again inferring the propensity for early modern masculine energies to lay challenge to contested spaces. In March 1566, for example, the *Torrone* heard of the confrontation between two men over street access outside their homes in the comune of San Martino in Argine, around 30 kilometres east of Bologna. Both were evidently already armed before their confrontation, since both were able to quickly ready firearms once challenged. One of the men, Marcantonio, digging a ditch near to the street, might have expected a challenger given that he was described as having the gun with him as he worked. Suddenly Bartholomeo Bonfiolo appeared some distance from his work, and quickly and visibly cocked his weapon. Marcantonio fired the first challenge according to witnesses – 'What do you want to do?' - Bartolomeo replied that he wanted to pass freely and a brief standoff ensued before Bartolomeo moved on. When questioned by the court, Marcantonio admits to carrying a polearm and a wheellock gun, 'weapons which are usually on person.'[1010] The case appears to end without conclusion, perhaps because judges were content that no long-running enmity could be established and evidently because no shot was fired. Nevertheless, tensions in public places could escalate very quickly.

Streets and doorways were also spots of confrontation with firearms – contemporaries are not often found taking advantage of the potential range a firearm afforded. We have already encountered the case brought by Hyeronimus living in the comune of Barbarolo who claims he opened his door at night to find two men with their 'barrels lowered' and aimed at him. He was being threatened over accusations that his son was having an affair with one of their wives.[1011] This is also another example of firearms being incorporated into established practices of demonstration, since, as noted in cases

[1009] '…il che sentito da lui se ne parti sub.o...', ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 44 (1561), ff.111r-111v.
[1010] ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 328, f.255r.
[1011] '...archibusi a rota con li canni bassi p. ammazzarmi...', ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 1550, ff.82r-82v.

of women's threats against others, the method of intimidating a rival by challenging them on their doorstep has already been identified by historians as a particularly insulting challenge to the integrity of another's household.[1012] These were significant acts for contemporaries who saw great import in the circumstances of place and space. A similar act of brazen insult with firearms was reported to the *Torrone* in July 1582, from the comune of Scascoli (around 30 kilometres south of Bologna), when men appeared at the house of one man as he was sat with his son and a relative. He opened his door to find them brandishing guns as they began making threats about a previous loan of wheat.[1013] The casual carry of firearms is also referenced again in a case from April 1561 when several men were split up from fighting outside a church in Monte Ferdente (c.40 kilometres south of Bologna). While a pike was thrust by one man toward another, damaging only clothes and a wounding a finger according to one witness, the 'schioppo da rota longho' at hand by one of the attendees was never fired. In fact, one witness qualifies that it was never even lowered, and 'nothing was done' with it.[1014] In the same month, in an unidentified comune outside of Bologna two men were split up after falling into a fight while on the way to Mass. Giorgino Baruffo is quoted as having said to Sanctino Baretto, 'I'd like to have a word', to which Sanctino is said to have responded, 'If you want to talk to me, stand back and talk, because I don't want you near me'. This evidently afforded Sanctino the space and time to ready his firearm - he is described as lighting or otherwise preparing his 'archibugio da fuoco' by putting 'il fo suso l'archibugio'.[1015] The threat was enough to slow the confrontation down before the two men were split up by another, apparently emboldened enough to deny the men their show in front of a community moving to hear Mass.

[1012] Muurling and Pluskota, 'Street Crimes', p.196.

[1013] ASBo, Tribunali del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 1550, ff.138r-138v.

[1014] '…no' a veddi abbassar' ne far' cosa nes'una', ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 45, ff.148v-149v; ff.178v-179v.

[1015] 'Sanctino d. bap'ta baratto d.l c'oe d. [Sabine] armarto d. Un'archibugio da foco et d.co giorgino disse a' Sanctino io ti vorrei dir' una parola quale gli respose se me voli parlar' sta indietro et parla che io no' voglio che ti mi accosti et misse il fo suso l'archibugio et no' sequito altro male p.che forno spartiti da bap.ta...', ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 44, f.166r.

The use of a firearm as an extension of individual expression was enough to intimidate even officials of the state. In April 1561, Francesco Casalechius was turned away from a house by a group of men with guns in the comune of Via di Agola, likely the small village of Viadagola, some 10 kilometres north-east of Bologna's centre. Francesco describes how he had been sent to the village on the orders of Alfonso Bennino and the judge of the *Rota* courts in Bologna to reinstate a family into a house they had been forced from, likely by the same group of armed men Francesco encountered. When he showed this group the official letter they snatched it away, declared it had no bearing and turned everyone away, 'violently', Francesco added. Wheellocks were among the most notable weapons they were brandishing, according to Francesco.[1016] The court also heard of the event outside the church in the village of Campeggio, in the comune of Monghidoro (around 40 kilometres south of Bologna), when a knight and his men appear to have been sent to arrest a wanted man called Carlino. The man was found outside the church with several companions, some of whom were his immediate family members and serving soldiers. As the group approached Carlino, his companions challenged the knight and his men. At least two firearms were visibly cocked, one being a 'schioppo da rota' and another 'archibuso da rota'.One of the men threatened to kill everyone at the church, including the priest, if they did not back down in their arrest. They evidently did, since Carlino is quoted as saying to the officials, 'It is good you closed this path, because it wouldn't have been good for you'.[1017] A later interviewee present on the scene complained to the court not only of the threats they received but also of the 'insult' done to them and referring specifically to those who had 'lowered the dog' against them.[1018] It was also noted that all men claimed to be soldiers and therefore allowed to carry arms, once again highlighting the military connection of firearms in

[1016] ' arrivorno tre a cavallo quali io no' cognosco et havevano uno a piedi quale havea un'arme d'hasta et quelli da cavallo haveano gli archbuigii...', ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, busta 45, ff.168r-170r, '…un d. loro il quale la lesse et doppo che hebbe letta mi dissero tutti che io me andasse co' dio dicendo via fora ancor' ti et mi spinsero fora violenteme.t ', *Ibid*, ff.168r-169r.

[1017] ' Carlin' po che [sono] pariti dei dalla gliesa disse al cava.e voi haveti fatto bene a [serise] questa strada perche vi [havaiano] fatto dispiaccare et no' sarai passata troppo bon' p. voi.', ASBo, Tribunale del Torrone, Registri di atti processuali, busta 328, f.241v; f.354r.

[1018] '...tutto questo che ha desposto il cav.re e' la verita quanto a' l'insulto che ci fu fatto li alla chiesia…quali [ci] fecero quello insulto co' li archibusi da ruota et callorno giu li cani…', *Ibid*, f.354r.

civilian spaces.[1019] However, not only was this event an opportunity to deploy firearms and signal intentions, it was also an event that evidently took the crowd into account. The representatives of the state were cowed by the murderous threat held against the 'many people' there (it is in fact suggested that the entire comune was present as they filtered into the church to hear Mass), but for the gang of wanted men and their leader it was an opportunity to once again exercise their claim on this public space and its key buildings.[1020]

The crowd and its ability to swiftly circulate news within a community was a tool used by these groups to underline their projection - one interviewee notes that it was 'publicly known' that the *sbirri* had wanted to arrest these men.[1021] At the same time, cases such as this are once again an insight into the challenges faced by the Papal States to establish influence in the rural peripheries. It seems that one of the men's statements to the court that the word of a *sbirro* could not be trusted was taken to be true even by the officials employing this rudimentary police force - all men involved were absolved.[1022] The importance of visibility and demonstration also meant that these flashpoints between competing influences could quickly descend into violence, which, in this case, the officials representing the state were prepared to avoid. Violent tensions overwhelmed even the state apparatus designed to invite cooperation between civilians and the authorities. A report from March 1566, in the comune of Savigni, describes a heated disagreement between members of the local community during the election of a *Massaro* to represent the locality. In front of a significant crowd the 'dog' of a wheellock was cocked by Rainaldo Mongiorgio after one individual was deemed unworthy of serving as a *Massaro* and another refused to renounce the office as previously agreed. No shot was fired, though it evidently caused a public commotion. In this example, Rainaldo also did not need to lower the gun itself or take aim – according to witnesses the cocking of 'il cane' was

[1019] *Ibid*, ff.361r-363r.
[1020] '...et vu corsero delle genti assai chi vi ando tutti il c'oe…', *Ibid*, f.364r.
[1021] '...io intesi dir' li pub.te h. detti sbirri havevano voluto pigliar' angiolino sudetto et Ant.o…';*Ibid*, f.369v.
[1022] In an interview to the court, one of the men at the centre of this investigation said, 'Io penso che uno quando glie sbirro no' possi dire la verita i' contro nissuno.', *Ibid*, f.376r.

enough to signal his intention to a number of those around him, and it was enough to justify a report to the central court in Bologna.[1023]

The gun became a tool that both integrated into established practice of demonstrative violence that had for decades used public buildings and thoroughfares to make statement attacks, but the firearm also added a new element. It was louder, larger and had already by the mid-sixteenth century become an iconic weapon. Contemporaries, apparently regardless of levels of personal experience with a firearm, were alert to their presence, evident in the numerous witness statements brought to the *Torrone* court and the swift confrontation of users by the court's *sbirri*. Their range was an element of their usefulness, and their potential 'utter destructiveness' should not be discounted. However, a sure shot and high-quality components were often necessary to even come close to effective use. Instead, in the early days of gun use, contemporaries used firearms because of their potential to make a statement, not necessarily because they were the most efficient means of dispatching a foe.

Chapter Conclusion:

In conclusion, this chapter has interrogated the contexts of firearm use in the Bolognese sixteenth century. The proliferation of firearms was evidently a significant concern for contemporary authorities shown in the regular issuing of laws against their use highlighted in the beginning of the chapter. However, the licensing system was an imperfect means of doing so and failed to stem the tide of popular ownership, especially in the countryside. Despite this apparent proliferation, the *libri dei giustiziati* show that gun crime was not a significant representative of capital punishment in the Bolognese sixteenth century. Similarly, the detailed cases provided by the *Tribunale del Torrone* suggest that in many cases guns were not fired, but instead used to threaten, intimidate, and perform. In violent vendetta cases they appear to have been selected for similar reasons and form

[1023] *Ibid*, ff.205r-209v; ff.296r-303v; f.346r; f.353r; '…dicono de sic he Rinaldo havea callato il cane su la ruota del archibuso…'., *Ibid*, f.347v.

part of the story of individual and group protest against the encroachment of the Papal State over private forms of justice. It should not be forgotten that guns could still inflict mortal wounds, and offered a degree of range that might be useful for a killer. However, in many cases understandings of their potential to misfire and their questionable range capability meant that most likely saw a blade as the most efficient ways of killing an enemy if that was the priority. Monluc's statement that swords, pikes, or polearms were necessary for one to 'rid of any work' ring true in this sense.[1024] Instead, firearms were used because their effect – they loudly signalled the agency of the user or group associated with the event. In this way, the firearm retained its image as a subversive weapon intended to undermine the official legal oversight of the Bolognese state and question the legitimacy of the papal government. In Bologna's rural areas, the display of firearms was more common and related to the difficulties the Papal State found in controlling a vast and unruly terrain. In the same ways as urban firearm crime, however, the *contadini* used public spaces to demonstrate their local authority and lay claim to open spaces. The fact that many of these users were war veterans continues to prove the military thread and the significance of the Italian Wars to the spread of guns, but the second fact that these users were often youths speaks to both the maleness of gun ownership, the agency that young men found in using these weapons, and the continued significance of youths' compulsion to present themselves within the contested spaces of the public realm. In this case they were using a weapon that in the eyes of contemporaries was 'loaded' with significance, but in practical terms was louder and more demonstrative than alternatives.

[1024] Montluc, *Commentaries*, p.142.

Thesis Conclusion:

The figure of Giuseppe da Cremona met in the previous chapter brings together the key themes of this thesis. With a background in soldiering, individuals such as Giuseppe's experience of early modern warfare was explored in Chapter 1, where the violence of gunpowder battlefields in the Italian Wars was underlined, as was the role given to firearms in battle tactics. The growth of infantry numbers within larger armies gave young men like Giuseppe the opportunity to use and own a gun. Chapter 2 established the growth of popular gun cultures and the general popularity of firearms. By clashing with established traditions, guns were already alluring disruptors, but they were also loud and attractive pieces of cutting-edge technology. Chapter 2 also noted the physical movement of guns from their service in the Italian Wars into villages, towns, and cities as armies disbanded, and battlefields were picked over for weapons. We will never know if Giuseppe was telling the truth when he denied owning a firearm, but his primary role in the assassination attempt at the centre of Bologna suggests his employers recognised his experience with a gun.

Chapter 3 pulled the focus toward Bologna where a rich record of chronicles, diaries and historical crime documents provided an insight into the day-to-day violence of sixteenth-century Bolognese life. Giuseppe's violent tendencies were formed in this world of destitution, economic and political instability, and the celebration of violent practices. This was a 'society in which violence was easy, and almost an acceptable method of solving problems.'[1025] Indeed, it was Giuseppe's willingness to kill that found him a means of income as he moved from the countryside into the city in search of work. Additionally, Chapter 3 considered the geographical variation in violent crime cases. Most crimes took place outside of city walls and away from the closer observation of urban authorities. However, in both urban and rural context protagonists chose public buildings and spaces to accentuate their presence. Honour was also a major catalyst for violence and provided the strongest

[1025] N. S. Davidson, 'An Armed Band and the Local Community on the Venetian Terraferma in the Sixteenth Century', in Ortalli, *Bande Armate*, p.411.

justification to attack another or defend oneself physically. Chapter 3 showed that this was another experience of daily life that was shared by both men and women, but it also highlighted the differences in acts of violence between genders. While all contemporaries felt compelled to demonstrate public aggression with honour in mind, the use of military-grade weaponry was largely confined to men. The firearm was evidently adopted as a male weapon early on in its history. Established practices of seeking an audience, often in and near churches, piazzas and within the city's contested thoroughfares also sought the gun for its potential to amplify the publicity of an act. Finally, Chapter 4 saw Giuseppe pulled in front of a central authority struggling to establish control over a vast dominion, where power was regularly contested on various scales throughout the city and in settlements across Bologna's rural holdings. Giuseppe's very public use of the firearm was an intentional and considered choice, at least on the part of his employers who sought to openly exhibit their grievances, exact their own methods of justice, and demonstrate their ability to resolve enmity in front of a judging public. This case highlighted the incorporation of the firearm into vendetta practice and underlined the nature of crimes early modern government saw as being most threatening to its authority. This chapter also showed why the gun was so readily taken up in civilian contexts. Not only did it find an enthusiastic reception during the 'first modern civil war' in the Italian Wars, but the gun also held empowering potential for the lower classes of early modern Europe. These people found the firearm easy to use and an effective tool within the negotiation of power, honour, and violence in sixteenth-century Italy.[1026]

On a closer level this thesis has sought to build a sympathetic insight into the experience of life in Bologna during the 1500s. It has shown how the Italian Wars themselves wrought suffering and destruction and this research has underlined the violent impact of the Wars on the average contemporary. At the same time this conflict provided new opportunities, no more so than with the proliferation of the firearm. Early modern men found enjoyment in the gun. It offered a new outlet

[1026] Carroll, *Enmity and Violence*, p.79.

of recreational activities, developed around its popularity, and new gun cultures to engage with. On a practical level, the fear it instilled in contemporaries made it an effective means of defence, and in some cases the firearm's range capabilities took away the visceral act of stabbing and slicing with blades. At the same time, the gun was a means of demonstrating agency and a useful tool to navigate the instability of the period. It was also a weapon of empowerment and subversion, soon associated with the simple foot soldier, the rebellious bandit, the peasant in the field standing his ground against a challenger, and with groups executing their own private justice system. In many ways the firearm was a weapon made for and by the Renaissance era. It represented the duality of a period known for its remarkable creativity and artistic expression, but also its violence and depravity. Cellini, similarly representative of both sides of this Renaissance character, summed this up in descriptions of his gun-toting escapades. He could write of the 'greatly better health' he found in shooting practice with friends and, at the same time, of the effectiveness of the gun's threat of violence – '…come as many thieves as like, and I'll blow their brains out with my gun'.[1027]

In a broader sense, this thesis has presented the social and cultural history of the firearm. It has shown how the firearm's accessibility meant it offered a louder, more impressive means of partaking in the period's cultures of violence, demonstrative behaviours, and notions of honour. It has also shown how what might appear as mindless violence to the modern reader was part of a considered act, which intended to take aim at the justice network that contemporaries perhaps saw as being most important – the public judiciary. In this way, violence was deeply ingrained in the socio-political fabric of early modern life, as was projection. This research has also highlighted the gun's ready acceptance into concepts of masculinity, and in fact offered a new means of expressing it to a wider public. Much like the introduction of the carriage in seventeenth-century Rome, where a new piece of technology both 'exacerbated tensions' but also provided 'new opportunities' to present 'status 'and 'masculine notions of honour', the firearm similarly brought a new means to challenge,

[1027] Cellini, *Autobiography*, p.36; p.90.

showboat, and lean into the 'theatrical society' of early modern Italy. By 'lowering the dog', pointing the barrel, or more overtly firing the explosive shot, the early modern man signalled his sense of independence to wider society.[1028] Its role in group violence also signalled the independence of families and factions from the control of the unsteady Papal State. Nevola's argument that the 'heightened visibility afforded to particular buildings' during the sixteenth century urban renewals that had sought to impose a sense of control over the street also underlines how public buildings became another emblematic point of contention between communal agencies and the will of the state.[1029] By combining the theatre of popular, private justice with public buildings and places of exchange, the firearm was also a means of firing shots at the pretensions of early modern central government. As mentioned, however, this empowerment was limited. Firearms appear to have immediately been understood as a masculine pursuit, and beyond the novelty of ladies shooting tournaments in examples across Europe, they appear largely beyond the reach of women. Similarly, the impetus it provided to action within cultures and practices of violence sustained the pressures felt by early modern people to partake in demonstrative violence. In some ways, then, it contributed to practices that constrained the individual to maintain cycles of brutality.

The interaction of the gun and papal authorities has added to the history of violence, state development, and the history of technology. In both, it has highlighted the potential for early modern people to find agency and space to exploit in a fractured socio-political fabric. It has also highlighted technology's potential to shape identities, behaviours and democratise aspects of life. In this way, the gun has shown how early modern society was more fluid and contested than is often assumed. In other ways it has added to the much-understudied development of gun cultures that remain pertinent to the modern day. In some ways firearm use has stayed the same – most gun owners in the world today are still male, for example, and the sense of demonstration and

[1028] J. M. Hunt, 'Carriages, Violence and Masculinity in Early Modern Rome', *I Tatti Studies*, 17:1 (2014), p.196; Rose, *A Renaissance of Violence*, p.27.
[1029] Nevola, *Street Life in Renaissance Italy*, p.113.

showmanship important to firearm owners is evident in modern industries built around gun sports and customisation.[1030] It is also within the same period where Dean and Lowe see that Italian Renaissance murder 'can be seen to foreshadow twenty-first century murder'. In fact, they argue how remarkably closely 'aspects of murder in Renaissance Italy and twenty-first century Europe and America are aligned'.[1031] Similar concerns about the right to bear arms are familiar today, particularly in the US, as they were in sixteenth-century Italy. In both cases they are associated with a sense of identity and independence.[1032] However, in the history of violence this thesis has highlighted differences in practice between early modern people and today. The socio-political and cultural aspects of the Bolognese sixteenth century outlined above have shown why contemporaries sought to use guns in ways that are perhaps unexpected. Contemporaries were likely aware of the limitations of sixteenth-century design, but they also demonstrated a knowledge of legal limits. Rather than face the challenges of judicial charges the *Bolognesi* leaned into the demonstrative aspect of the gun over its killing potential.[1033]. The urge to demonstrate was key to a bravado integral to the projection of honour. Instead of a revolution, this is an example of technological incorporation as the gun was adapted into established practice. Unfortunately, on an almost weekly basis we are reminded of how firearm ownership and gun violence has also changed. Not only has firearm technology become more deadly over four centuries of technological advancements, but the propensity for them to be used in mindless acts of violence against unrelated targets seems more common. Now the aftermath of these events reaches a global audience rather than being directed to an immediate and specific audience of the early modern Italian community.

[1030] C. W. Mullins, S. Lee, ' "Like Make Up on a Man": The Gendered Nature of Gun Norms', *Deviant Behaviour*, 41:3 (2020), pp.294-295.
[1031] Dean and Lowe, 'Introducing Renaissance Killers', p.5.
[1032] B. Kalesan, M. D. Villarreal, K. M. Keyes, S. Galea, 'Gun Ownership and Gun Culture', *Injury Prevention*, 22:3 (2016), p.218.
[1033] C. Rose, '"To be remedied of any vendetta": Petitions and the Avoidance of Violence in Early Modern Parma', *Crime, History and Societies*, 16:2 (2012), p.18.

This thesis stands among very few to have considered the experience of owning and using guns in the sixteenth century. This line of enquiry has a great deal more potential to offer to historical studies concerned with plotting the development of gun cultures, the lived experience of early modern people, their relationship with technology, and the process of state development. Future work could also consider the changing relationship of people with guns and the wider implications of those changes. There remains a vast amount of untapped data available in the archives of the *Torrone,* and a quantitative analysis of sixteenth-century documents that was beyond the scope of this research project might reveal new trends in criminality and gun crime. With the development of the firearm's role in homicide in the seventeenth century, it might be suggested that better quality firearms and components made the gun a more effective means of killing, as did the contemporary's growing expertise with the firearm.[1034] It may also suggest a wider popularity as more guns were manufactured and dispersed across the peninsula, or that the relationship with and practices built around firearms changed from the early picture of gun ownership seen here. Perhaps it is also indicative of the greater challenges faced by the state in the seventeenth century, bringing about increased violence and more regular referral to private justice. Finally, further research into this area could place popular technology at the heart of the history of criminality and violence. In this research, however, the firearm has been shown to be a tool for early modern people to negotiate the challenges of the Italian 1500s and highlight contemporary popular cultures. In this century, the 'rascal with his firestick' made his impact on the history of the Renaissance.

[1034] For example, though a date for the introduction of rifled barrels remains vague their existence is evident early on in the firearm's development. A German wheellock with a rifled barrel has been dated to 1542, held in the Tojhusmuseet, Copenhagen, G. Foard, A. Curry, *Bosworth 1485: A Battlefield Rediscovered* (Oxford, 2013), p.176.

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