

OUTSIDE THE WALLS:
CIVIC BELONGING AND CONTAGIOUS DISEASE IN SIXTEENTH-CENTURY
NUREMBERG

by

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---------|---|
| StAN | Staatsarchiv Nürnberg |
| StadtAN | Stadtarchiv Nürnberg |
| StB N | Stadtbibliothek Nürnberg |
| HK | Heilig Kreuz Archiv - Hallerischen Grossgrundlach |
| AOGA | <i>Andreas Osiander Gesamtausgabe</i> |
| MVGN | <i>Mitteilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg</i> |
| G | Gulden |
| N pound | Nuremberg pound |

ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the relationship between the imperial city of Nuremberg and its extramural, contagious disease hospitals (i.e. for leprosy, plague and syphilis) between 1490 and 1585. It analyzes to what extent the patients in these outlying institutions belonged to the city or were ostracized from it. The diseases presented in three drastically different ways, providing a comparative framework to analyze early modern concepts of vulnerability to disease and levels of accepted responsibility for its citizens, inhabitants, and foreigners. My project takes Nuremberg as a conceptual unit and analytically slices it multiple ways in order to explore whether the outlying patients were inside or outside of the boundaries of the city. I begin by focusing on the hospitals' fundamental "separated status" as geographically outside the boundary of the city walls. I then complicate this simple definition by exploring the geographic and physical movements of the contagious disease workers as they were the corporal instruments of disease care; the expenditure of the city's resources in the supply of nutrition to the patients; and the provision of patients' spiritual services as their symbolic participation in Nuremberg's Body of Christ. I argue that the inhabitants of Nuremberg's contagious disease hospitals were separated outside the walls in order to limit the city's vulnerability to their contaminating physical condition, but they still belonged under the city's administration, provision, and protection, and, therefore, within the boundary of civic responsibility. In the movement of bodies, all of these seemingly competing boundaries were observed simultaneous, creating the paradoxical position of the extramural patients and continuously redefining Nuremberg as a civic unit.

Introduction

In his poem “The Living under the Dead,” Otto Barthel recounted the legend of a jolly medieval *Dudelsackpfeiffer*, or bagpipe piper, in the city of Nuremberg. He loved two things best in the world: singing and playing his pipes. Rumor of a plague ravishing his city did little to keep the piper from the objects of his affection. One night, after a particularly exhausting evening of playing and drinking, he passed out on the street. The body carriers happened upon him during their evening search and took him for dead. His seemingly lifeless body was placed on a wagon to be brought to the cemetery. During the journey the wagon hit a bump, and the piper awoke with a start. To his utter terror, he found himself buried deep under a pile of plague-ridden corpses. He could not move a muscle for the weight of the bodies. He tried to cry out, but his voice was muffled by the mound of corpses. Finally, out of sheer desperation, he closed his lips around the mouthpiece of his beloved bagpipe and just managed to sound a tone. The gravediggers cried out in fear, exclaiming, “corpses can’t play bagpipes!” The most courageous carrier among them braved the strange noise in the dark night and revealed the poor bagpipe piper, crying and laughing with tears. Quietly the piper trotted home; miraculously, he did not fall sick after having touched so many plague-ridden corpses. But his hour of fear made him resolve to leave his mischief behind forever.¹ The piper’s image stands to this day atop fountains across Nuremberg as a cautionary tale attesting to the potential danger of mischief (image: *Dudelsackpfeiffer*).

This delightful anecdote reveals layers of cultural meaning which will be analyzed

¹ “Dudelsackpfeifferbrunnen,” Nuernberginfos.de: Geschichte, Geschichten und Gesichter einer Stadt, accessed March 26, 2015, <http://www.nuernberginfos.de/brunnen-nuernberg/dudelsackpfeiferbrunnen.html>.

throughout this work. It reveals the pollution associated with dead bodies. The piper's horror was not simply the touching of the dead, but that touching the dead would most assuredly cause him to fall ill. It reveals the spatial orchestration of Nuremberg's contagious disease workers, and the movement of contaminated materials, such as the dead, from the city center. The story also shows the important place of food and drink in city life, and the lengths that some inhabitants would go to enjoy them. The tavern should have been closed because such gatherings were



dangerous during outbreak. Finally, the story displays the endless choices that individuals could make within a given structure. No matter how much the council dictates and popular wisdom forbade the visiting of taverns and inordinate drinking during plague, the bagpipe piper piped on. It was only on his literal and metaphorical journey to the cemetery, that the piper learned his lesson.

The scourge of disease posed an essential threat to early modern cities. City leaders orchestrated objects and bodies in ways designed to limit these diseases contaminating powers. Nuremberg was one of the only German cities to build hospitals for patients with all three major contagious diseases of the period outside of its city walls (i.e., for leprosy, plague and syphilis). My project explores the establishment and function of these hospitals in the period between 1490 and 1585 and what the *extramural* status of patients in these hospitals meant with regards to their belonging to the city as a communal unit. Throughout the middle ages, Nuremberg established four external leprosaria: St. Johannis, St. Jobst, St. Leonard,

and St. Peter and Paul. Starting in the 1490s, city leaders also established the extramural lazaret complex, composed of St. Sebastian's hospital for plague and the French House for syphilis. In like manner to the Dudelsackpfeiffer above, the patients in these hospitals experienced layers of cultural meaning that challenge the perception that their relationship to the city could be defined as simply *outside* the walls.

Nuremberg

By the 1490s, the imperial city of Nuremberg was well into its golden age. It was one of most prestigious and illustrious cities in the Holy Roman Empire. It housed approximately 40,000 inhabitants making it the empire's fourth largest city.² Nuremberg had earned its status



as an imperial city in 1219, meaning that it was directly accountable to the emperor with no other overlord. This special position made the city fiercely loyal to the emperor.

Nuremberg's artisan metal work, printing, and other manufactured goods were celebrated throughout Europe. Its merchants developed extensive trade networks and enjoyed rich ties to

² Joel F. Harrington, *The Unwanted Child: The Fate of Foundlings, Orphans, and Juvenile Criminals in Early Modern Germany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 17.

Florence, Venice, Antwerp, and Lyons.³ This lucrative trade was complemented with flourishing art. Nuremberg prided itself on the internationally celebrated, home-grown painter, Albrecht Dürer. Nuremberg was also the home of humanist Willibald Pirckheimer and the famous lawyer, Christoph Scheuerl; humanist, physician, and scientist Hartmann Schedel; poet and playwright Hans Sachs; a new humanist grammar school headed by Johannes Cochlaeus; and sculptor Adam Kraft. Nuremberg was the subject of *Stadtlob* by Conrad Celtis, Hans Rosenblut and Hans Sachs. People visited from all over Europe to catch a glimpse of the towering walls and to get advice from its leading intellectuals. The city earned the praise of poet Conrad Celtis and author Jean Bodin as “the greatest, most famous and best ordered of all imperial cities.”⁴

Throughout the middle ages the city practiced policies of relentless self-protection and self-sufficiency. The city’s status with the emperor provided it special rights in trade and production resulting in a rich and powerful political unit.⁵ One of the elements that gave Nuremberg its distinctive culture was the unmitigated power of the mercantile, patrician class in the city council. In the mid-fourteenth-century the battle for power between the artisan and merchant guilds erupted into a revolt across many southern German towns. Nuremberg’s artisan guilds successfully overthrew the upper-class. The early triumph of the lower-guilds, however, brought down the wrath of the emperor. He reestablished the merchant guilds in power and rewrote the city’s constitution, disenfranchising the lower-guilds from any effective control in the council.⁶ This elite council worked throughout the late middle ages to ensure that there was

³ Harrington, *The Unwanted Child*, 17.

⁴ Arthur Groos, “The City as Community and Space: Nuremberg *Stadtlob*, 1447-1530,” in *Spatial Practices: Medieval / Modern*, ed. Markus Stock and Nicola Vöhringer (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2014), 188.

⁵ Gerald Strauss, *Nuremberg in the Sixteenth-century: City Politics and Life between Middle Ages and Modern Times* (New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1976), 4.

⁶ Gerhard Pfeiffer, *Nürnberg, Geschichte einer europäischen Stadt* (Munich: Beck, 1971), 73-5.

no external power competing within the city. It wielded unprecedented control over its church parishes and religious orders.⁷ Nuremberg's dominion and influence stretched far beyond its city walls. It held rights over the imperial forest and exercised strong influence over most of the towns and villages of Franconia.⁸ This autonomy and control of its hinterlands is how Nuremberg was able to build such large structures for patients outside of its walls.

Nuremberg was also famous for its piety. In 1525, the city converted to Reformation theology. The new theology received support from multiple levels in the city. A group of Humanists were early translators and reproducers of Martin Luther's works. The ideas were overtly propagated by city clerk Lazarus Spengler and popular preacher Andreas Osiander, fomenting wide support among the middle and lower classes.⁹ Despite individual dissenters, the staunchly conservative council converted to the Reformation because it "...allowed the N[urem]berg Council to achieve full victory over the *Sacerdotium*, something both evangelical and Catholic magistrates could celebrate."¹⁰ In 1533, the city produced church ordinances which

⁷ Strauss, *Nuremberg in the Sixteenth-Century*, 155-157.

⁸ Strauss, *Nuremberg in the Sixteenth-Century*, 1; Walter Bauernfeind, "Alte und Neue Landschaft – Das Territorium der Reichsstadt," in *Der Nürnberg-Atlas Vielfalt und Wandel der Stadt im Kartenbild*, eds. Wolfgang Baumann and Hajo Dietz (Colonge: Emons, 2007), 28-29.

⁹ Strauss, *Nuremberg in the Sixteenth-Century*, 166-174.

¹⁰ Ronald K. Rittgers, *The Reformation of the Keys: Confession, Conscience, and Authority in Sixteenth-Century Germany* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2004), 96. Philip Broadhead argues that Nuremberg gave religious concessions in 1525 due to the fear of the Peasants' Revolt. After 1525 the city realigned its relationship to the hinterlands giving more feudal concessions. Nuremberg acted in self-interest that protected the city's food production. The surrounding villages got security from external threats such as the Margrave who attempted to levy taxes from them, but also from internal instability. Nuremberg's administrative system acted fast to solve local disputes. Local councils, which had been charged to uphold law, liked their special connection with the city and lower players were able to count on a more impartial "constitutional" structure of sorts making the whole system interdependent. Philip Broadhead, "Self-Interest and Security: Relations between Nuremberg and Its Territory in the Early Sixteenth-century," *German History* 11, no. 1 (January 1, 1993): 1-19; Günter Vogler argues that the council gave into the Reformation so they would not have to give more extreme concessions to the people. Günter Vogler, *Nürnberg, 1524/25: Studien zur Geschichte der*

were disseminated and replicated throughout Franconia.¹¹ Like the council, the nature of the Reformation of Nuremberg was highly conservative. It accepted the theological positions of Luther, but it rejected any real social or political change.¹² When Charles V won against the Protestant Schmalkaldic armies in 1548, Nuremberg was the first city to accept the Interim; however, by 1553, Lutheran practices were fully reestablished.

During the chaos of the Schmalkadic wars, Nuremberg was besieged by its neighbor the Margrave of Brandenburg-Ansbach-Kulmbach. The margrave's land was geographically divided by Nuremberg, causing continuous tension between the two powers. The margrave besieged the city on behalf of the Catholic Emperor in 1552; after a long siege, city leaders paid him a ransom to leave. The margrave, having converted to the Reformation himself shortly after, returned to besiege the city again on behalf of the Schmalkaldic League, which Nuremberg had refused to support monetarily. The emperor interceded on behalf of the city, but the damage caused by the margrave was already done.¹³ Nuremberg rebuilt its walls and fortifications even higher, but walls could not stop the troubles of the second half of the sixteenth-century.

The war with the margrave coincided with progressive, wide-spread inflation, economic shifts, and a growing displaced poor population. As we will see throughout this study, Nuremberg was excessively self-protective as it imposed fatherly discipline onto Nuremberg's trade and production sectors. The council put rigorous controls on any citizen's ability to store or to sell goods in a way that was detrimental to another citizen. It saw attempts to circumvent its

reformatoren und sozialen Bewegung in der Reichsstadt (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1982)

¹¹ Scott Dixon, *The Reformation and Rural Society: The Parishes of Brandenburg-Ansbach-Kulmbach, 1528-1603* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 4-5.

¹² Bridget Heal, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Early Modern Germany: Protestant and Catholic Piety, 1500-1648* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 14; Rittgers, *The Reformation of the Keys*, 96.

¹³ Strauss, *Nuremberg in the Sixteenth-Century*, 184-186.

controls, such as by buying products outside of the city, as morally reprehensible. On a macro-level, these policies could not adjust to the increasing use of bulk trade. Nuremberg merchants suffered with other German traders, whose access to the Netherlands was cut off by the Spanish war. In addition, their access to France was impeded by political battlements, and German markets were also increasingly usurped by Italian vendors.¹⁴ Due to the city's growing debts, it steadily increased sales taxes, tolls, and duties to generate revenue. In 1566, Endres Imhoff recommended compulsory public loans to the council, but the plan was denied. The city's patricians donated 110,000 *Gulden* to the city with the expectation of 12% return.

According to Gerald Strauss, Nuremberg still remained a prosperous and prestigious city, but "its self-contained system of political and social values and its parochial orientation inward upon itself were soon to make it a museum piece."¹⁵ As political and economic circumstances of the time changed, Nuremberg became more entrenched. The story of Nuremberg's response to contagious disease will be weaved through this time-line from Nuremberg's golden era of expansion of the 1490s, to the 1570s and 80s when the city's policies become increasingly restrictive and inward-looking. The period of the city's history enables an observation of how its diseased patients were treated in times of plenty and in times of want. It is easy to be gracious when one's cup overflows, but it was when Nuremberg's cups, coffers, and grain stores were nearly empty, that the city's provision took on its most poignant meaning.

The Diseases

My project looks at the three major contagious diseases of early modern Nuremberg:

¹⁴ Strauss, *Nuremberg in the Sixteenth-Century*, 145-150; Michael Hughes, *Early Modern Germany, 1477-1806* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), 75.

¹⁵ Strauss, *Nuremberg in the Sixteenth-Century*, 151.

leprosy, plague, and syphilis. When working in this context, one must strike a balance between modern scientists' understanding of diseases and how they were understood within their historical contexts. Modern germ theory can help historians to follow the vectors of disease and notice its societal impact in ways unapparent to the people at the time.

Leprosy broke out across Europe during the eleventh-century and began to slowly recede by the thirteenth.¹⁶ Leprosy, or Hansen's disease, is a bacterial infection that destroys the peripheral nerves. It attacks mucus membranes, where internal organs meet the surface of the body. The bacteria *Mycobacterium Leprae* is not highly virulent; it takes long-term exposure to become infected. Leprosy is not painful because it destroys the nerves; however, the disease causes massive disfigurement of the face and limbs. Skin lesions are common where nerves cannot sense pain. As a result, victims do not feel small abrasions that then become large erosions that eventually destroy facial features and limbs. The medieval medical community divided leprosy into four categories: the *fox* was the least severe form of leprosy that caused hair loss in patches; the *snake* caused white scaliness, whitish face and urine, the *lion* produced a loss of eyebrows, protuberant forehead, hoarse voice, yellow skin and urine; and the *elephant*, the most virulent and stereotypical form of leprosy, caused nodes and tuberosities with thick, crackling, and blackish color skin.¹⁷ While medieval and early modern diagnoses were suspect, paleopathologists have excavated leper cemeteries and proved that medieval lepers did indeed have modern Hansen's disease.¹⁸ The most recent scientific theory for the waning of leprosy in Europe was that it was displaced by pulmonary tuberculosis (TB or consumption) which

¹⁶ R. I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe, 950-1250* (Oxford, UK: B. Blackwell, 1987), 46-47.

¹⁷ Luke Demaitre, *Leprosy in Premodern Medicine: A Malady of the Whole Body* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 178.

¹⁸ R. I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society*, 47.

resurged in Europe in the seventeenth-century. Leprosy and tuberculosis are both caused by a similar mycobacterium, but the latter is far more infectious.¹⁹

Bubonic plague was caused by the bacteria *Yersinia pestis*, which germinated in rodent populations. Traditionally, the black rat was believed to be its most effective carrier; however, scientists have recently found evidence that gerbils and prairie dogs are possibly better hosts for the bacteria.²⁰ In 1348, boats and wagons of goods were brought from the Europasian Steppe carrying the rodents. As the disease-bearing rodents traveled, fleas carried the disease to human bodies. A flea bite would result in a lymphatic form of plague. Lymph nodes attempted to sequester and purge the bacteria forming large swollen, black buboes in the armpits, neck, or growing. The individual usually died within a few days. The second form of infection occurred when someone's infected cough or sneeze was inhaled into a new host's lungs. This pneumatic or pulmonary form presented like bronchitis or pneumonia. The third form was septicemic infection which occurred when the bacteria reaches the bloodstream. The infected person would die within twenty-hours.²¹ For any epidemic, the more quickly it kills its hosts, the shorter the duration that the epidemic can survive; the bubonic plague usually lasted about one year to a year-and-a-half. After the infected rodent and human populations died, the plague would recede for approximately ten to twelve years. When the rodent population carrying the bacteria repopulated in Euroasia, the process was repeated.

Scientists have debated the effect of quarantine on controlling the plague in early modern Europe. The generally accepted explanation of flea bites transferring the infection from the rat to

¹⁹ Peter Richards, *The Medieval Leper and his Northern Heirs* (Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2000), xv.

²⁰ Jack F. Cully et al., "Disease Limits Populations: Plague and Black-Tailed Prairie Dogs," *Vector Borne Zoonotic Dis.* 10, no. 1 (Feb. 2010): 7-15.

²¹ Joseph Patrick Byrne, *Encyclopedia of the Black Death* 1st. Ed. Sv. "Septicemic plague," "Pneumonic," and "Bubonic Plague."

human population would deny quarantine any protective power. Historian Ann Carmichael has argued that quarantine in Florence was effective because it was social control. As the un-healthy poor were held in the plague hospital, a whole host of other diseases were stopped from spreading.²² However, recent excavations of plague burial grounds and DNA testing shows that people who died during plague outbreak actually did die of plague and not associated diseases or violence. In fact, the confirmation of the extremely high number of people dying of plague in such a short period has led paleopathologists to conclude that human to human contraction in the pulmonary form of plague must have been a bigger factor than has been previously accepted.²³

Diagnosis was even more unclear for syphilis, a disease known even today as the “great imitator.” Syphilis is an infection caused by the bacteria *Treponema pallidum*. Its appearance in Europe coincided with the discovery of the New World in the 1490s. Historians still debate whether it came from the New World or mutated from similar diseases in the Old World.²⁴ When syphilis first arrived in Europe it attacked the body swiftly and virulently; by the 1570s, its rate of infection and ferocity slowed down. The sexual transmission of syphilis was not readily apparent to early medical authorities because men, women, and children suffered from the non-sexual signs and symptoms of the disease, such as cankers, rashes, swollen lymph nodes, lesions

²² Ann G. Carmichael, *Plague and the Poor in Renaissance Florence* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1986), 27-58

²³ Crossrail Project, “Crossrail Archaeology: 14th-century burial ground discovered in central London.” YouTube. (accessed March 23, 2015).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3IZBJfjV20o>

²⁴ Many different theories exist on the origins of syphilis by both early modern and current scholars. Some scholars maintain that it came from contact with the New World. Others suggest that it mutated from another bacterial infection that had been present for centuries in Europe; they argue that the infection merely took a virulent form at the end of the fifteenth-century. See Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*, 30th anniversary ed. (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2003), 122-164.

on mucus membranes, tumors, and in the later stages, breakdown of the nervous system.²⁵ After the acute stage of outbreak, syphilis may enter an incubation or latent stage that can last for years, and then reemerge. Because of this phenomenon early modern authorities were convinced their treatments were largely successful.²⁶ Unlike leprosy and plague, there are no clearly defined grave sites where scientists can conduct DNA or osteology examinations to confirm early modern records.

Other bacterial and viral infections appeared in this period. The English sweating sickness threatened Nuremberg in 1528. Other endemic diseases such as dysentery, small pox, gonorrhea, measles, typhoid and influenzas also occurred occasionally. I have chosen to limit my study to leprosy, plague, and syphilis because these were the three diseases for which the council constructed extramural hospitals. When other diseases threatened, the council did one of two things: it either simply ignored them as bouts of routine sickness, or it used one of the three main diseases as a model for determining the appropriate response. For example, the council used the same procedure for dysentery in the 1570s as it did for plague in 1562.

Historiography

My project builds on three major lines of historiographic enquiry including the history of medicine, early modern urban communities, and marginalization studies.

²⁵ Claude Quétel, *History of Syphilis* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 27.; Jon Arrizabalaga and John Henderson eds., *The Great Pox: The French Disease in Renaissance Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 1; Kevin Patrick Siena, *Sins of the Flesh: Responding to Sexual Disease in Early Modern Europe* (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2005), 12.

²⁶ Kevin Siena, *Venereal Disease, Hospitals, and the Urban Poor: London's Foul Wards* (Rochester, NY: Univ. of Rochester Press, 2004), 81.

Historiography of Medicine

For over a century, historians of medicine were primarily concerned with exploring how modern or how effective medicine in the early modern period was. Historians such as Karl Sudhoff collected documents reconstructing the strict scientific theory and treatments of disease. In the 1980s, Robert Jütte was a leader in starting the field of the social history of medicine. These historians explored the everyday medical experiences of the masses, placing emphasis on barber surgeons, midwives, and folk healers.²⁷ Other studies explored the ramifications of disease in society. These studies drew inspiration from the social stigma and discrimination around AIDS. Kevin Siena, for example, explicated the relationship between moral reform of venereal disease patients and public health in early modern England.²⁸ Paul Slack, like Amy Carmichael mentioned above, explored the broader societal impact of plague.²⁹ Ulrich Knefelkamp and Carolin Porzelt have explored medicine as an instrument of civic authorities' power.³⁰ Hanna Murphy's recent dissertation on Nuremberg's medical marketplace looks at the network of physicians as they vied for authoritative roles in Nuremberg's civic life.³¹

²⁷ Robert Jütte, *Ärzte, Heiler und Patienten: Medizinischer Alltag in der frühen Neuzeit* (Munich: Artemis & Winkler, 1991); *Daily Life in Late Medieval and Early Modern Germany: A New Social and Economic History, 1450-1630* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996).

²⁸ Kevin Siena, *Venereal Disease*, 181.

²⁹ Paul Slack, "Responses to Plague in Early Modern Europe: The Implications of Public Health." *Social Research* 55 (1988): 433-453.

³⁰ Ulrich Knefelkamp, "Stadt und Spital im späteren Mittelalter: Ein struktureller Überblick zu Bürgerspitälern süddeutscher Städte." In *Städtliches Gesundheits- und Fürsorgewesen vor 1800*, ed. Peter Johanek, 19-41 (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2000), 38-40; Carolin Porzelt, *Die Pest in Nürnberg: Leben und Herrschen in Pestzeiten in der Reichsstadt Nürnberg, 1562-1713*. St. Ottilien: EOS, 2000). Mitchell Lewis Hammond, "Leprosy and the Defect of Diagnosis in Sixteenth-Century Germany," in *Ideas and Cultural Margins in Early Modern Germany: Essays in Honor of H.C. Erik Midelfort*, eds. Marjorie Elizabeth Plummer and Robin Barnes (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2009), 271-288; Fritz Dross, "Seuchenpolizei und ärztliche Expertise: Das Nürnberger ‚Sondersiechenalmosen‘ als Beispiel heilkundlichen Gutachtens," in *Seuche und Mensch*, ed. Carl Wahrmann, (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2012), 283-286.

³¹ Hannah Saunders Murphy, "Reforming Medicine in Sixteenth-Century Nuremberg." (PhD

The most robust historiography of medicine of recent years has found inspiration in Michel Foucault's *Birth of the Clinic*. According to Foucault, there was an epistemic rupture in the late nineteenth-century with "the rediscovery of the absolute values of the visible."³² Modern medicine began to relegate disease to bacterium visible underneath a microscope; it fundamentally altered what disease was. Barbara Duden took this epistemic discussion into other fields of gender and the body, arguing the pre-modern female perception of her body (or unborn child) could not be reduced to the "medical gaze."³³ This turn in medical history is connected to the new understanding of the body. The historian Roy Porter was the primary initiator of this movement. He argued that the historical body has to be explored at multiple levels of phenomenological meaning.³⁴ Claudia Stein argues in her study on early modern Augsburg that the modern "syphilis" and early modern "French pox" are completely separate diseases. For Stein, the construction of French pox must reach beyond socio-cultural construction to an understanding of the construction of the physical itself in a particular place and time. She "...sought to represent the sixteenth-century pox as both 'real' and 'constructed' on the grounds that 'reality' itself is an ongoing negotiation. This understanding follows those who argue that reality refers not to a single overarching thing existing independent from human society, but rather something endlessly re-processed along with language and life itself."³⁵

diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2012), 10.

³² Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1973), 183.

³³ Barbara Duden, *The Woman Beneath the Skin: A Doctor's Patients in Eighteenth-Century Germany* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1991), 4-6; *Disembodying Women: Perspectives on Pregnancy and the Unborn* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1993), 52.

³⁴ Roy Porter, "History of the Body," in *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, 2nd ed., ed. Peter Burke (Univ. Park: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1991), 206-232

³⁵ Claudia Stein, *Negotiating the French Pox*, 176. While not denying the laudable pursuit in stripping early modern concepts from post-petri dish lingo, such as the term syphilis, it runs the

Despite early modern circumspect diagnosis and Stein's compelling view of "pox concept in praxis," the signifier of these three main diseases (*Sondersiechen*, *Krankheit der frantzson*, and *Pest*) represented a functional meaning. Mitchell Lewis Hammond argues that the impetus to diagnose did not come from the doctors who understood diseases as mutating and unstable, but at a civic functional level. Their primary objective was not to define the disease, but to differentiate between diseases, i.e. determine in which institution the patient should be treated.³⁶ When an individual was diagnosed with one of these labels, city leaders could know how to manage the physical corruption of the disease, where to house the contaminated patients, and what course of treatment should be conducted. In contrast to the physicians who wandered the mire of early modern perceptions of the body, the city council simply desired to locate the sick in a place that benefited both the patient and city. The physicality of disease was not phenomenologically experienced by the individual alone, but within the community as well.

Marginalization

risk of believing that using the literal translations such as French pox actually gets to the thing-in-itself. I argue that even in the period the experiences of each of these diseases is as complex, as Stein's tireless work reconstructs, but even within the culture the thing that was "leprosy," "syphilis," and "plague" became codified place-holders in the need to communicate and create modes of prevention, care, and treatment. My use of the out-of-vogue terms of such as leper and syphilis are mere acceptance of endlessly infinite and complex processes being squeezed into finite terms both in their culture and their translation into our own. Ute Lotz-Heumann made similar concessions in naming early modern confessions. In the end, no label for a phenomenon is perfect; it can only be useful in meaningful discussion. Ute Lotz-Heumann, "Comment: Renaming Reformation Movements Panel," (paper presented at the 7th Frühe Neuzeit Interdisziplinär Conference, Nashville, Tennessee, March 5-7, 2015).

³⁶ Mitchell Lewis Hammond, "Naming, Describing and Treating Maladies in Sixteenth-Century Germany," (paper presented at the 7th Frühe Neuzeit Interdisziplinär Conference, Nashville, Tennessee, March 5-7, 2015); Claudia Stein, *Negotiating the French Pox in Early Modern Germany* (Farnham, England: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2009), 176; Fritz Dross, "Seuchenpolizei und ärztliche Expertise: Das Nürnberger ‚Sondersiechenalmsen‘ als Beispiel heilkundlich Gutachtens," in *Seuche und Mensch*, ed. Carl Wahrmann (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot 2012), 283-301.

In 1987, R. I. Moore published a foundational work *The Formation of a Persecuting Society*. Drawing from social theorists Mary Douglas, Michel Foucault, and Emil Durkheim, he explained the development of the systematic persecution of heretics, lepers, and Jews in medieval Europe.³⁷ Studies on discrimination of minority cultures explore social outcasts, religious dissenters, or the sexually unorthodox etc. in “underdog histories” of all kinds.³⁸ For example, Kathy Stuart explores how cultural prejudice toward dishonorable trades in early modern Germany created robust subcultures that functioned on the edge of society.³⁹ These works look for boundary markers of social exclusion. The most famous articulation of social exclusion came from Michel Foucault’s “the Great Confinement;” he argues that institutions such as hospitals and prisons were erected as dumping grounds for all unwanted and chaotic elements in society.⁴⁰ The problem with this way of thinking is that it minimizes marginalized groups to only their differences. This approach does not differentiate between the functions of these institutions, it fails to put the foundations of these structures in their altruistic contexts, and it presumes a *telos* of the nineteenth-century workhouse.⁴¹

The work on religious minorities and tolerance are helpful in qualifying these forms of reductionism. Keith Luria points out in his work on confessional conflict and coexistence in early modern France that the things that united the two confessional groups often outweighed

³⁷ R. I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society*, 1-6.

³⁸ A few examples are: R. I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society*; John Boswell, *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth-century*. 1980; Sherry M. Velasco, *Male Delivery: Reproduction, Effeminacy, and Pregnant Men in Early Modern Spain*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2006.

³⁹ Kathy Stuart, *Defiled Trades and Social Outcasts: Honor and Ritual Pollution in Early Modern Germany* (Oxford, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), ix.

⁴⁰ Michel Foucault, “The Great Confinement,” in *The Foucault Reader*, trans. and ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 124-140.

⁴¹ Joel Harrington, “Escape from the Great Confinement: The Genealogy of a German Workhouse,” *The Journal of Modern History* 71, no. 2 (1999): 308-345.

their differences in the mundane world; "...it remained possible that shared religious values created social bonds across the confessional divide."⁴² It is like Americans, who sling mud across the proverbial political aisle, but still broadly maintain a common culture. Elements of daily life bond people together, such as where we get our haircut, which baseball teams we support, or when to renew our car insurance. Ultimately, the mundane tasks serve to create more similarities in life than rhetoric would suggest. I do not want to deny the potential power that us-vs.-them dichotomies can have, but I question the reduction of these individuals totality to that of their marginalized status. My study takes the infectious sick as a stereotypically marginal people and places them within their broader communal experience.

The Urban Commune

In 1962, Bernd Moeller argued in his seminal article, *Reichsstadt und Reformation* that the German city of the Late Middle Ages saw itself as a "*Corpus Christianum* in miniature."⁴³ His primary purpose was to explore why the early Reformation occurred as an "urban event."⁴⁴ The field embraced his work in two different ways. It sparked the use of the city as a microcosm through which to view a range of social phenomena, and it embraced the concept of spiritual

⁴² Keith P. Luria, *Sacred Boundaries: Religious Coexistence and Conflict in Early-Modern France* (Washington, DC: CUA Press, 2005), 7; Sean F. Dunwoody, "Civic Peace as a Spatial Practice: Calming Confessional Tensions in Augsburg, 1547-1600," in *Spatial Practices: Medieval / Modern*, ed. Markus Stock and Nicola Vöhringer (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2014), 207-240.

⁴³ Bernd Moeller, *Imperial Cities and the Reformation: Three Essays*, ed. and trans. Erik C. Midelfort and Mark U. Edwards (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), 49.

⁴⁴ Barbara B. Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross: Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth-Century Paris* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 29-38; Robert Scribner, "Civic Unity and the Reformation in Erfurt" *Past and Present* 66 (1975): 60; Natalie Davis, "Strikes and Salvation at Lyons," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 56 (1965): 48-64; Thomas A. Brady, *Turning Swiss: Cities and Empire, 1450-1550* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 170-184; and R. Po-chia Hsia, *Society and Religion in Münster, 1535-1618* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), 205.

community as a vital analytical category in the early modern world.⁴⁵ Much more than simply being a facet of early modern life, religion composed the fabric of social interaction and communal cohesion. Historians, such as Edward Muir and Barbara Diefendorf, have showed that civic communities were maintained through religious ritual and occasional conflict which continually defined who was in and out.⁴⁶ These studies illustrated how the survival of the individual was based on the health of the communal whole, emphasizing the perceived need of confessional and moral purity to avoid damnation. Thus, the Corpus Christianum was a community of interlocking vulnerabilities and responsibilities of both the city leaders and the

⁴⁵ For literacy: Miriam Usher Chrisman, *Lay Culture, Learned Culture: Books and Social Change in Strasbourg, 1480-1599* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982); For gender: see Lyndal Roper, *The Holy Household: Women and Morals in Reformation Augsburg* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989). Merry E. Wiesner, "Beyond Women and the Family: Towards a Gender Analysis of the Reformation," *Sixteenth-Century Journal* 18, no 13: 311-21; on banishment: Jason Philip Coy, *Strangers and Misfits: Banishment, Social Control, and Authority in Early Modern Germany* (Leiden: Brill, 2008).

⁴⁶ Defining community by oath, taxes, and spirituality: Moeller, *Imperial Cities and the Reformation*, 42-48, 92-93; Natalie Zemon Davis, "The Sacred and the Body Social in Sixteenth-Century Lyon." *Past & Present* 90 (1981): 40-70. By ritual, Corpus Christi procession and Communion: John Bossy, *Christianity in the West, 1400-1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 58; Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991), 243-270; Steve Hindle, "Beating the Bounds of the Parish: Order, Memory, and Identity in the English Local Community, c. 1500-1700," in *Defining Community in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Michael Halvorson and Karen Spierling (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2008), 225-227; Philip M. Soergel, *Wondrous in His Saints Counter-Reformation Propaganda in Bavaria* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 83-89. Barbara B. Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross: Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth-Century Paris* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 29-38; David Warren Sabean, *Power in the Blood: Popular Culture and Village Discourse in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1987), 24-27; David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (Princeton University Press, 2014), 13; Barbara Diefendorf, "The Rites of Repair: Restoring Community in French Religious Wars," *Past and Present* 214, no. 7 (2012), 30-31; Keith P. Luria, *Sacred Boundaries: Religious Coexistence and Conflict in Early-Modern France* (Washington, DC: CUA Press, 2005), 7; Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Divided by Faith Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe*. (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap, 2007), 60-64.

populace.⁴⁷ If the community opened its vulnerability to an individual allowing him to live within its boundaries, that individual was responsible to play his part and not falsify, steal, or do anything immoral that would lower the quality of goods, take a necessity from one's neighbor, or bring down the wrath of God. Any grave disobedience that threatened the lives of neighbors would result in extreme punishment or banishment.

By comparing the threat of physical disease outbreak with the threat of social pollution, spiritual corrosion, and other forms of "purity violations," my project highlights how early modern communities saw their very hope for survival as dependent on the control and expurgation of elements that were deemed corrosive. In that effort, the community continually defined limits within which they were pure and intact. In order to determine what composed Nuremberg as a conceptual community, my approach is to reconstruct the variety of boundaries that defined the city in geography, physical movement, allocation of tangible objects and as a religious unit.

Boundaries: In Theory

A boundary is any limit of an entity. Boundaries provide the finitude that allows language, communication, or communal living to function. They define what an entity is by delineating what it is not. Unfortunately, boundaries are generally only analytically invoked when historians illuminate exclusionary practices. The term has come to be synonymous with what R. I. Moore refers to as, "...processes associated with persecution including especially

⁴⁷ Studies exploring religious changes have shown that decision making in the civic community did not come from the authorities alone but was negotiated between different social groups. Thomas A. Brady, *The Politics of the Reformation in Germany: Jacob Sturm (1489-1553) of Strasbourg* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1997), 3; and David Warren Sabean, *Power in the Blood: Popular Culture and Village Discourse in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 26.

stereotyping and the construction of rationales for suppression or oppression.”⁴⁸ However, this form of thinking ignores the primary and necessary function of boundaries - they define what is on the inside.

Boundaries of Self-definition

One of the fields in which the concept of boundaries has been applied is in practical psychology. It is used as a therapeutic strategy to treat enabling/addiction and codependency disorders. Recognizing one’s boundaries is the practice of identifying one’s self from that of other people. Proponents of this approach advocate that the pathway to healthy relationships is made through understanding the needs, wants, and responsibilities of the self and the differentiation of those needs from the demands of others. The old adage, “Good fences make good neighbors,” reflects this view. A classic example is the parents who have a thirty-year-old offspring still living in their home. The parents subsidize the adult-child’s lifestyle, thus enabling the adult-child to remain in the situation. The parents are then overburdened carrying the needs, wants and responsibilities that the adult-child has not learned to manage for himself.⁴⁹ This is also true in abusive relationships. As the abuser strikes out at the abused, whether verbally, physically, or sexually, he crosses the boundary of the abused within which the abused has the right to be whole, intact, and unblemished. In therapy, victims of boundary transgression (parent or abuse victim) learn to say “No” as a tool to define the self and raise self-esteem.

This philosophy also teaches that healthy boundaries should be permeable, and they need to be turned into walls when there is a threat. Psychologists teach patients to defend themselves

⁴⁸ R. I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe, 950-1250*, 2nd. ed. (Oxford, UK: B. Blackwell, 1987), 185.

⁴⁹ Henry Cloud and John Townsend, *Boundaries: When To Say Yes, How to Say No* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008), 27-29.

from toxic influences (i.e. guilt of an adult-child or the abuse of a partner); however if the defensive walls are up all of the time, the individual will live a guarded and lonely life. In order to live in healthy relationships, the individual must know when to be vulnerable to allow love and intimacy in and when to put up defensive walls to keep abuse out.⁵⁰ At the macro-community level, acknowledgment of boundaries maintains peace between two entities, whether between two political powers or confessional cohorts, as is seen in Luria's concept of maintained boundaries.⁵¹

The bifurcating fault-lines we associate with discrimination are based on boundaries. When these flash issues arise, groups initiate boundary-work to define who "us" as opposed to "them." Distinctions, which were previously permeable or not even noticed, become defensive walls. According to Luria, in early modern France these distinctions seemed to be "the irreducible core of their selfhood. To question such distinctions puts their identities and sense of self at risk."⁵² The clearer the boundaries between these two groups are, the more the possibility of coexistence.⁵³ It is often the inclination of historians to delineate the justifiable threats to their community (i.e., famine, war, or plague) and what they merely *perceived* to be threats (i.e., heretics, witches, or sexual deviants), but it is important to remember that all of these threats were on a continuum of *their* perceived threats. These cities feared famine, war, spies, falsified

⁵⁰ Pia Mellody, *Facing Codependence: What It Is, Where It Comes from, How It Sabotages Our Lives* (New York: Harper Collins, 2003), 11-22. See also Pia Mellody, Andrea Wells Miller, and Keith Miller. *Facing Love Addiction: Giving Yourself the Power to Change the Way You Love: the Love Connection to Codependence* (New York, NY: HarperSan Francisco, 1992); Pia Mellody, and Lawrence S. Freundlich. *The Intimacy Factor: The Ground Rules for Overcoming the Obstacles to Truth, Respect, and Lasting Love* (San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 2003).

⁵¹ Luria, *Sacred Boundaries*, 306.

⁵² Luria, *Sacred Boundaries*, xxiv. Michele Lamont and Virag Molnar, "The Study of Boundaries in the Social Sciences," *Annu. Rev. Sociol.* 28 (2002): 168.

⁵³ Luria, *Sacred Boundaries*, XXIX, 37; Sean F. Dunwoody, "Civic Peace as a Spatial Practice," 238-239.

products, plague, floods, and God's wrath. Throughout these chapters, Nuremberg will use the same purging processes for smelly pigs, falsified food items, beggars, poisonous clothing, corrupt vendors, quack physicians, etc. Unhealthy purging practices occur not because boundaries exist, but because the unit is not able healthily to gage threats. As seen in the psychological discussion above, it is our "No" that defines us, but that limitation is not the end goal. The end goal is the definition of self-hood and intactness which is vital for existence, function, and intimacy.

Boundaries in Human Action

In a community, boundaries serve not only to define the communal unit in its entirety. The majority of boundaries that compose our world are below the level of perception. In crowds, people tend to replicate the driving boundary by walking on the right-hand side. People understand that it is socially acceptable to show up thirty-minutes late to a party, but not to a meeting. Most of the time these unwritten rules, which sociologist Susan Leigh Star calls "boundary objects," are traded unknowingly, yet they also provide structures that define *places* within which certain behaviors are appropriate.⁵⁴

Geographer Tim Cresswell has spearheaded a movement that analyzes geographic space as places of human interaction. As individual bodies weave through and within a variety of cultural boundaries, they both produce and reproduce a place's meaning. Boundaries are built on the two basic building blocks of cognition and physical reality - *space and time*.⁵⁵ This

⁵⁴ Tim Cresswell, *Place* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2004), 7.

⁵⁵ The power of space has been seen in early modern religious history. Andrew Spicer, Sarah Hamilton, and Will Coster explore the concept of sacred space in sacred art, monasteries' burial grounds, churches, nature, and holy wells. Alexandra Walsham sees sacred sites as agents of change during the Reformation in Britain. Her work explores how the rewriting of legends and

movement through space and time brings the connotation of dance. Allen Pred has used the term “body-ballet” to describe how most movements in life are unconsciously performed in our physical bodies. Bodies move through pathways created by accepted cultural bounds, individually reproducing power dynamics and ideologies.⁵⁶ These approaches analyze the structures through which people moved without necessarily ascribing individual motivation to the individuals. This theory resonates with Michel de Certeau’s *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Certeau argues that authorities (i.e., religious, political, scientific etc.) erect structures, signs, and symbols communicating strategies that their inhabitants should use to get through life.

legitimacy surrounding religious sites became a “mirror and motor of religious change.” Others have written how physical arrangements during secular and religious rituals inscribed social ranks. Gerd Schwerhoff and Susana Rau have explored urban landscape and architecture as a source of political power play in early state building. Historians exploring confessional conflict and coexistence in the early modern period have seen the dividing of space and time. Alexandra Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity, and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 14. See also Will Coster and Andrew Spicer, *Sacred Space in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Sarah Hamilton and Andrew Spicer, *Defining the Holy: Sacred Space in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate Pub, 2005); Gerd Schwerhoff and Susanne Rau, eds. *Topographien des Sakralen: Religion und Raumordnung in der Vormoderne* (Munich: Dölling und Galitz, 2008). Time has been discussed to a lesser degree. Time boundaries provide life-structure as the individual is defined in relation to community. Early modern historians and anthropologists have emphasized how *rites of passage* “marked and assisted biological and social transition.” Members of the community acquire self-definition marked out by time intervals. The individuals then reproduce the communal structure through the ritual calendar marked out in a “predictable and structured way.” Time cannot be undervalued because without predictable intervals of time, spaces are stagnant. The philosophical underpinning of the studies on time and space is the importance of human action. The proscribed events in space and time are not merely the recipients of communal meaning, but actively create it. Thus, the human action are “practiced ideologies.” Robert W. Scribner, *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany* (London: Hambledon Press, 1987), 1. David Cressy also brings the English liturgical calendar to the level of national identity. David Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells: National Memory and the Protestant Calendar in Elizabethan and Stuart England* (London : Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989), 23-24.

⁵⁶ Allen Pred, “Place as Historically Contingent Process: Structuration and the Time-Geography of Becoming Places,” *Annals of Association of American Geographers* 74, no. 2 (1984): 279-297; Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1977), 118.

Individuals use tactics as they navigate their lives picking and choosing which strategies help them at any given time.⁵⁷

For geographer, David Seamon the performance of many body-ballets together in an unchoreographed yet prescribed manner create the meaning of a place. “The place ballet is a fusion of many time-space routines and body-ballets ...it generates a strong sense of place because of its continual and regular human activity.”⁵⁸ These theories emphasize two important points for my work. One, it is the action of bodies that create social relations that define conceptual units.⁵⁹ These humanistic geographers focus on the practically lived community instead of the more ephemeral ideology (i.e. divisions based on politics, religion, etc.). Elements that “seem [to be] the irreducible core of self-hood” on the level of cognition, may play out differently on the level of functional reality.

Two, this focus on human movement places the extramural patients into a context of the deeper structures, which provided for the practical needs of their bodies. From the city center, city employees danced body-ballets providing supplies, care, and spiritual service to the patients. This emphasis on physicality also implies the importance of tangible resources and the bounds

⁵⁷ Joel Harrington rebuilds the culture milieu around these individuals providing the “range of experiences and choices available.” Joel F. Harrington, *The Unwanted Child*, 10.

⁵⁸ David Seamon, “Body-subject, Time-Space Routines, and Place-ballets.” In *The Human Experience of Space and Place*, ed. Anne Buttimer and David Seamon (London: St. Martin’s Press, 1980), 159.

⁵⁹ Barbara Stollberg-Rillinger in her powerful work *Des Kaisers alte Kleider*, points out the importance of space in power relations. She argues that traditional power equilibriums which were continually re-produced in the court of the Holy Roman Emperor changed with the advent of sketches of the court. The power of the codification of the image disrupted the traditional physical signs of power vis-a-via arrangement of the room and clothing. The image was then reproduced in practice until all of the original modes of communication had no adjudicating power and the Emperor was left metaphorically naked. Rillinger focuses on the visible what she calls the “social magic” holding power in a community, but there is also the importance of the physical in her study: the movement of bodies, the ritualized gestures, and the tangible clothes. Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger, *Des Kaisers alte Kleider: Verfassungsgeschichte und Symbolsprache des Alten Reiches* (Munich: C.H Beck, 2008).

within which they were supplied. The action of provision and consumption creates the place of the civic hospital as a site of communal care. According to Tim Cresswell, in order to understand *place* “as a phenomenological-experiential entity,” it must be explored at the levels of nature, social relations, and symbolic meaning.⁶⁰

The psychological and geographical ideas of boundaries show that the unit of the community can be defined through multiple lenses, sustaining seemingly paradoxical ideas of the community at one time. I argue that physical actions provide the more important boundaries of community because they display deep communal responsibility for the physical sustenance of the external, vulnerable patients.

My Project: Sources and Methodology

The baseline sources for my study are hospital ordinances. These ordinances provide prescriptive directions and expectations for how patients were to be managed in the city and hospitals. Ordinances were often outlined in donation books, account books, or council mandates. I also use *Ratschläge*, expert reports, which provided advice to the council on topics such as medicine or practical issues in the hospitals such as book keeping. Medical tracts and handbooks also informed the council and the public how to best handle contagious disease. As one of my goals is to explore how these hospitals were connected to the functioning of the city, I also look for parallel ordinances pertaining to the city proper. For this, I use a number of mandates and decrees from the city council; I am also indebted to Joseph Baader’s printed collection of *Nürnberger Polizeiordnungen*.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Tim Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 156-158.

⁶¹ Joseph Baader, ed. *Nürnberger Polizeiordnungen aus dem XIII bis XV Jahrhundert*.

These sources are obviously prescriptive, designating the desires of the city council; however, I also use an array of sermons, letters, and financial court records, to place these dictates into Nuremberg's cultural values. These values were not created by the council *ex nihilo* but were continually negotiated throughout the community. Within these documents, I analyze particular prescriptions of time and space. These temporal and spatial limits thus defined the placement and rhythm of human movements which defined the *place* of the hospital.

These prescriptive sources both reflect and set standards for behavior in a given place; however, individuals chose whether to act within the given structures. Through inculcation in the ordinances, it is possible to see where the repetitive cases of noncompliance occurred. The council's decrees, *Ratsverlasse*, and Act books also provide individual examples of disobedience, displaying ways in which the boundaries were transgressed. These sources provide the most descriptive information since the council dealt with the day-to-day problems of the city. In the end, we cannot know for sure the rationale for the choices individuals made, but we can rebuild the structures that they faced. They either renegotiated the accepted boundaries through transgressions of space or time, or made their transgressions as invisible as possible, thus, not challenging the reigning boundaries.⁶²

Ordinances, act books, and accounts meticulously detailed guidelines for resource expenditures. Food, firewood and clothing were most likely to be surreptitiously consumed or sold to third parties. City ordinances may have produced prescriptions for how much of these items were to be provided to the patients and workers, but the additional account documentation and policing shows the value of these products and the efforts of the council to ensure their proper dispersal.

Bibliothek des Literarischen Vereins Stuttgart 63 (1861).

⁶² Tim Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place*, 29-31.

It is important to note that my primary sources grow in length and intensity throughout the period. By the 1570s and 1580s, the city council sought systems of authority to more adequately manage their responsibilities. Often all we can do is use later sources to surmise what occurred in the earlier period that was devoid of meticulous record keeping. However, it is also important to keep in mind that this record keeping changed the very nature of the phenomena: both in the sense of their increasing bureaucratization of authority structures and how we understand their experience as mediated through this bureaucratization. These sources should always be taken with a healthy dose of suspicion when applied retrospectively on the late fifteenth and early sixteenth-centuries. This transition is why I have chosen to end my study in the 1580s. As the changing socio-economic climate prompted the council to contract its resources and augment its use of authority structures, the city's institutions entered a new phase.

Finally, I utilize chronicles, particularly Johannes Müllner's seventeenth-century chronicle, to recount the major events as they transpired in Nuremberg. Chronicles are often colorful and embellished but they provide the general context through which I weave my story.

Outline of Chapters

My project takes Nuremberg as a conceptual unit and analytically slices it multiple ways to see whether patients of contagious disease were defined within or outside the city as a community. I look at four major sets of boundaries: the geography in relation to the city walls, the bodies of the contagious disease workers, the supply of nutrition to the patients, and patients' participation in religious service.

Section One covers the establishment of the respective hospitals outside the city walls. *Chapter 1* looks at the medieval establishment of Nuremberg's four leper houses. I argue that

Nuremberg founded these extramural houses because of an ethic of maintaining purity within the city walls. The city sought to achieve this goal by keeping contaminating-forces outside. This ethic was consistent with the city's broader practice of banishing those with unorthodox religious views, chaotic criminal components, and contaminating materials such as spoiled food, human waste, and corpses. *Chapter 2* explores how the city reproduced this purity boundary in their dealings with plague and syphilis. In these chapters, Nuremberg's walls were believed to have had an almost magical power to protect against war, intruders and disease, that is, power to protect purity within the walls, a vital component of the city's sense of intactness. Paradoxically, though outside the walls, the hospitals were actually Nuremberg by proxy. The very separation of the hospitals prompted their need for supplies, protection, and religious provision, which are discussed in later chapters.

Section Two follows the work of contagious disease employees as they provided the vital functions that kept the separated hospitals places of actual care. *Chapter 3* explores the working bodies of the employees within the hospital. It looks at the spatial orchestration of the institutions' duties as the protocols directed to instruct workers on how to care for the patients. *Chapter 4* looks at workers that primarily worked in the city. Body carriers, errand boys, washerwomen, guards and gravediggers maneuvered supplies and sick bodies to the hospitals and the dead to cemeteries. It was not enough to simply separate contaminating elements, as seen in Chapters 1 and 2; they needed human bodies to physically transfer the materials, crossing the simple boundary of dirty and clean. In these two chapters, I rely on the concept of body-ballets to describe how the workers moved in an un-choreographed spatial logic. These movements reveal how the intended shape of contagious disease care was actually formed by the bodies of often disobedient contagious disease employees. If hospital workers stole a patient's food or dropped

him in a ditch, the patient would find himself outside the boundary of the city's contagious disease care through no fault of his own; therefore, the real boundary of care in Nuremberg was ever-shifting, dependent on the minds and bodies of these workers.

Section Three explores tangible objects as they were maneuvered to and from the separated hospitals. *Chapter 5* covers the city council's provision of food through its extensive quality, price, and administrative controls. These controls intensified in the latter portion of my study. During the famine years of the 1570s, droves of displaced poor begged at Nuremberg's gates; the council, who at that time imported grain by incurring civic debt, tightened its control on who could receive the city's resources. It provided intermittent aid to the surrounding poor, but it never accepted the full responsibility for their sustenance as it did for its own patients in the outlying hospitals. This provision is the most dramatic reversal of the patients' simple definition of "outside" because their bodies were completely sustained "inside" the city's managed resources.

Section Four looks at the religious boundary of Nuremberg as a *Corpus Christianum*. *Chapter 6* shows how the patients in these institutions were integrated into the religious rituals of the city. Although most of my chapters are organized by space and the maneuvering of people and objects in and out of the city, this chapter is organized by time. The church calendar and dietary customs provided the rhythm and cosmology that held the layers of boundaries together. Late medieval ideals of the interlocking relationship between the salvation of souls within a city created a synergy of religious devotion between the healthy and sick. Donations and hospital chapels provided spatial connection points between the patients in the hospitals and the rest of Nuremberg's populace; Nuremberg's sick prayed for the souls of their benefactors. As the souls of the patients were closer to death than the rest of the city, care of their souls became a priority.

The intensity of this priority grew until the place of the deathbed. In both Catholic and Lutheran articulations of the faith, the devout sick were to take the Holy Sacrament of Communion in the last moments and thereafter, were believed to be reconciled to Christ in the afterlife. As each of the lepers received their portion of the *Osterbrot* (Easter bread) during the city's Easter celebration, so did each of their souls occupy a portion of the body of Christ.

Thesis

If one analyzes Nuremberg's extramural hospitals beyond their static space of separation, their existence is predominantly one of inclusion and belonging. Using Tim Cresswell's analysis of the phenomenology of a *place*, I analyze the hospitals through three different levels: the natural, social, and symbolic. On a *natural* level, the physical corruption of the disease necessitated physical separation. Throughout this study, we will see this in the erection of separated buildings, protective clothing, cleansing measures against foul smells, and strategic placement of corrupted materials at the out-flow of the river. Even in moments of proximity when a priest gave the sacrament to the dying, there were still layers of separation. On the *social* level, the picture gets more complex. The rich were not generally housed in the hospitals. They found their own means of separation; however, the middle and poorer levels of the city were all allowed admittance. Power dynamics, such as the role of the Church and council, were replicated in the hospitals; likewise gender was reconstructed to mirror the home. Allocated resources, such as food, workers, money, religious personnel, and administration recreated Nuremberg as a social unit within the separated hospitals. Finally on the level of the *symbolic*, the houses were built by the city's patricians and from small donations to community chests. The houses were filled with religious imagery of healing and redemption in the saints and Christ. Patients partook

in the sacraments as members in the body of Christ. The provision of material and spiritual resources at the expense of the city displayed the ultimate symbol of belonging. I argue that belonging is defined by who takes care of the person who has nothing to give in return, when he is a burden, and when he costs. It is when his vulnerability is not only his responsibility alone but that of the community as a whole.

Throughout the sixteenth-century, the bureaucracy of the city council swelled. As the price of food soared, the anonymous poor in and around the city grappled for the city's shrinking resources. The city retrenched, holding to the protection of their mythical walls, as they desperately sought to redefine those for whom they were responsible. In this period of retrenchment, the relationship between the outlying hospitals and city center intensified: individual alms giving was replaced by common donation in parish churches; previously entrusted authorities in hospital management were then monitored more closely by council watchdogs; foodstuff was meticulously inventoried; and the obedience of both workers and patients was set to a new premium. The council wanted to ensure that the proper food, medicine, religious services, and charity went to the right people in the right manner and at the right time.

When looking at Nuremberg's contagious disease hospitals through the lens of multiple boundaries the patients occupied a seemingly paradoxical position of separation and belonging. The patients were separated outside the walls in order to limit the city's vulnerability to their contaminating physical condition, but they still belonged under the city's administration, provision, and protection, and, therefore, within the boundary of civic responsibility.

Chapter 1:

Outside the Walls: The Foundation of Nuremberg's Leprosy Hospitals



“Concerning the walls so glorious” humanist Johannes Cochlaeus described Nuremberg in 1512, “Yes, concerning the fortifications and building...no other city stands next to them.”⁶³

Cochlaeus goes on to describe the walls. The inner walls were composed of large square stones on which two hundred defensive towers stood.⁶⁴ The outer walls were built to launch offensive weapons. They were located about twenty feet outside the inner walls; between the two walls

⁶³ Johannes Cochlaeus, *Kurze Beschreibung Germaniens = Brevis Germanie Descriptio (1512)*, trans. Karl Langosch (Darmstadt: WBG, 2010), 49-50.

⁶⁴ Probably an estimation or exaggeration. There were actually around 150.

was an immense sixty foot drop. “Through the secured gates” were “six large and two small gates; each one guarded by high towers, complete with parapets. If the outer gates were breached, the city could still be defended from the inner walls and towers with stones and shot.” In front of each gate, hung sharp portcullises, ready to fall against the invaders.⁶⁵ It is no wonder that although the city was besieged a number of times in its medieval and early modern history, the walls of Nuremberg were never breached through straight out warfare.⁶⁶ Nuremberg’s lingering connection to its majestic walls was evidenced by their continued use until 1868, long after other major cities recognized that city walls were made obsolete by heavy artillery and swollen populations.⁶⁷ The enduring medieval character of the city, complete with its original walls, was allegedly why Hitler used Nuremberg to link himself with Germany’s strong medieval past.⁶⁸

In Michel Wolgemut’s 1493 image of the city, published in Hartmann Schedel’s *Nuremberg World Chronicle*, the walls cut a sharp protrusion above the surrounding landscape (See Image: Nuremberg’s walls).⁶⁹ It was in this decade that Nuremberg reached its golden age; it was one of most prestigious and illustrious cities in the Holy Roman Empire. As an imperial free city, Nuremberg was directly accountable to the Emperor, but no other overlord. Throughout

⁶⁵ Johannes Cochlaeus, *Kurze Beschreibung*, 49-50.

⁶⁶ During the Thirty Years War, Gustavus Adolphus took refuge in these walls which held out until both sides were exhausted out of hunger, poor sanitation and disease, but they were still not taken.

⁶⁷ Max Bach, “Die Mauern Nürnbergs: Geschichte der Befestigung der Reichstadt, ” *Mitteilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg MVGN*, 5 (1884), 47-48.

⁶⁸ This relationship is what prompted Stephen Brockman to explore the myth of “Nuremberg” in *Nuremberg: The Imaginary Capital*. (Rochester, NY : Camden House, 2006).

⁶⁹ In this image, one can see the two layers of walls and the moat/ditch in between. At the Frauentor gate, where the imperial coat of arms hangs above, one can see a toll house before the bridge. The wood bridge spanning the enormous sixty foot drop could be burned at sight of enemies. One can also see the in-flow of the river at *Wöhrde Wiese* with a lowered portcullis to keep invaders from swimming into the city.

the middle ages, the city practiced policies of vigilant self-protection and self-sufficiency.⁷⁰ It enjoyed special rights from the Emperor in trade and production, resulting in a rich and powerful political unit.⁷¹ The city council worked throughout the late middle ages to assure that there was no external power competing within the city. It wielded unprecedented control over its church parishes and religious orders.⁷²

When discussing the history of Nuremberg, I noticed that I unconsciously formed the oblong shape of the city walls with my hands. Subconsciously, this crooked rectangle had become the city to me; but, did those walls define the true boundaries of the city? In many ways, the walls are too simple to be called Nuremberg's boundary. By 1505, the dominion of the city covered more land than any other city in the Empire. One could walk for a day and a half through Nuremberg's surrounding forests before even reaching the towering walls.⁷³ In recent studies on nationalism and trans-nationalism, scholars have described borders of nations as constructions. These constructions are often blamed for obstructing scholars who confine the scope of historical projects to these arbitrary borders.⁷⁴ However, regardless of how constructed the boundaries may be, individuals and communities compulsively draw them to facilitate their political, economic, religious, social, and emotional world. While the dominion of the city may

⁷⁰ Gerald Strauss, *Nuremberg in the Sixteenth-Century: City Politics and Life between Middle Ages and Modern Times* (New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1976), 4.

⁷¹ Strauss, *Nuremberg in the Sixteenth-Century*, 4.

⁷² Strauss, *Nuremberg in the Sixteenth-Century*, 155-157.

⁷³ Michael Diefenbacher, "Nürnberg, Reichsstadt: Territorium," in *Historisches Lexikon Bayerns*, last modified September 2012, accessed March 6, 2014. http://www.historisches-lexikon-bayerns.de/artikel/artikel_45857. The works of Tom Scott and Peter Blickle also emphasize the relationship between cities and countryside in community building and the use of raw materials and economic processes. Peter Blickle, *Obedient Germans?: A Rebuttal : A New View of German History* (Charlottesville, VT: University of Virginia Press, 1997); Tom Scott, *Town, Country, and Regions in Reformation Germany* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), and *The City-State in Europe, 1000-1600: Hinterland, Territory, Region* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

⁷⁴ William I. Robinson, "Beyond Nation-State Paradigms: Globalization, Sociology, and the Challenge of Transnational Studies," in *Sociological Forum* 13, no. 4 (1998): 561-594.

have stretched for miles outside of the walls, there was something powerful in the definition of the walls.

The city walls defined Nuremberg on two levels: physical and mental. As seen above, they were used effectively for military defense; they defined tax and property values, and they provided limited points of access through which everything that entered the city could be monitored. However, beyond practicality, the walls gave a sense of intactness and integrity. Keith Luria explores this concept of intactness in his work on confessional coexistence. Luria contends that the sacred boundary “is a mental construct; it exists in the minds of those who live along it, who participate actively in its creation, and who share the meanings attributed to it. Ultimately, if a secure boundary is established, people hold fast to the distinctions it creates because they are thereby provided with a social identity that appears as the irreducible core of their selfhood.”⁷⁵ For Luria, the boundaries gave the confessional group a sense of selfhood, intactness, wholeness and ultimately security. Practically, the inhabitants transgressed these confessional lines; however, the transgressions could happen more peacefully when constituents of both communal units felt security within the physical, ritual, and social limits. In the same way, citizens and inhabitants of Nuremberg could look to the walls for their physical limits and security.

Nuremberg protected itself from invaders and continually purged itself of internal threats. The walls functioned as a filtering membrane, permitting entry to the good and resisting the bad. The complete filtering criteria are beyond the scope of this project. For example, a foreigner could not bake bread in an innovative way without being seen as highly threatening; innovation, could mean destitution for Nuremberg’s bakers. Therefore, baking bread, like all other guild

⁷⁵ Keith P. Luria, *Sacred Boundaries: Religious Coexistence and Conflict in Early-Modern France* (Washington DC: CUA Press, 2005), 25.

production, was closely monitored. This chapter evaluates only a handful of these perceived threats as they relate to contagious diseases.

Disease was a highly invasive menace that penetrated the city's walls. It was a far more formidable enemy than humans who could be held at bay. Nuremberg's Council attempted to purge itself of polluting things and people, based on the advice of the religious and medical cosmologies of the day. Paradoxically, the very citizens and inhabitants, whom they were sworn to protect and *for whom the walls were built*, festered with pollutants in their very bodies. Therefore, Nuremberg established hospitals in separate spaces outside the city walls. This chapter tells the stories of the establishment of the first of these hospitals and the city's quest for intact purity inside the walls.

Chapter Structure

The *first* section explores leprosy's definition of "unclean" and its general identification with pollution and the reasoning that led to the removal of anything or anyone deemed unclean to separate places outside the city walls. A number of breaches of this separation were allowed, but they were always controlled and designed to limit the city's exposure to the uncleanness. At the same time, residency in the leprosaria showed marked similarities to normal religious houses of their day, as well as an intense use of the city's internal management and resources. This section shows how leprosy set a precedent in that the city practiced proxy custodianship of its citizens and inhabitants in the separated space.

The *second* section looks at Nuremberg's Lepraschau. During the Lepraschau, the city allowed foreign lepers inside the walls for medical examination, religious service and charity. In many ways this event was a complete reversal of the separation strategy the city invoked for its

own lepers in the leprosaria; it was internal and foreign. From another perspective, the event was orchestrated in a way that geographically and financially limited the city's exposure to the lepers.

The *third* section looks at the progressive restrictions on the begging by Nuremberg's own lepers and by those who attended the Lepraschau. In addition to the difficulties of dealing with leprosy, the Council's increasing inability to deal with poverty, crime, and chaos prompted Nuremberg's leaders to reduce the permeability of walls. From times of abundant wealth to times of suffocating siege, the orchestration of leprosy care reflects the efforts of the city to balance the competing issues surrounding security, vulnerability, and mercy. The actions both formed and reflected the boundaries of Nuremberg--inside and outside the walls.

I. Leprosy

Nuremberg's Leprosaria

The precedent for the contagious disease hospitals outside the walls of Nuremberg came from the original four leprosaria. Leprosy had many different names in German and Latin: the *Sondersiechen*, the especially sick; *Aussätz*, the set apart; or the *separabitur*, the one who is separated.⁷⁶ Leprosy broke out in force across Europe in the eleventh through thirteenth-centuries. Beginning in the fourteenth, it slowly began to die out.⁷⁷ Medieval authorities took the protocol for dealing with leprosy from the Old Testament.⁷⁸ According to the book of Leviticus,

⁷⁶ Luke Demaitre, *Leprosy in Premodern Medicine: A Malady of the Whole Body* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 80.

⁷⁷ Paleopathologists have confirmed that the leprosy of the middle ages was not the leprosy of the Bible. Even at its height, there were never many lepers in Europe. Leprosy, today called Hansen's disease, is not highly contagious; it takes prolonged exposure to become infected.

⁷⁸ Fritz Dross and Marion Maria Ruisinger, "Krisenzeiten: Pest, Lepra und ihre Patronen," in *Heilige und Heilkunst 10. Deutsches Medizinhistorisches Museum Ingolstadt* (2009): 29-30; GreshamColledge, "*Leprosia: The Lost Leprosy Hospitals of London - Professor Carole*

priests evaluated the skin disease and declared the leprous person “unclean,” then sent him or her to live *extra castra*, outside the camp.⁷⁹ This concept of uncleanness carried through the New Testament; when a leper asked Jesus to heal him, Jesus responded “‘I am willing,’ he said ‘Be clean!’”⁸⁰ It was reported in the *Donation of Constantine* that Emperor Constantine was also believed to have been healed of leprosy by Pope Sylvester. Such a healing would lend credibility to the story of Constantine’s conversion and the subsequent primacy of the Roman Church.⁸¹ In medieval European culture, *extra castra* translated into specialized religious houses called leper houses or leprosaria. The Third Lateran Council of 1179 commanded that every bishopric provide lepers with their own religious houses, complete with a church, cemetery and priest.⁸²

Official leprosaria often formed around unofficial leprous communities living outside urban centers.⁸³ Wealthy aristocrats then endowed the communities as houses of charity. The oldest leper house in Nuremberg, St Johannes, was mentioned in a letter from Pope Gregory IX in 1234. Emperor Heinrich VII endowed the house along with the mills located next to it. In this early phase, it was overseen by the Teutonic Knights, a religious order that founded hospitals during the crusades. In 1307, Queen Elizabeth of Tyrol, wife of Albert I of the Holy Roman Empire, endowed the leprosarium as a convent under Augustinian rule. She describes it as “a

Rawcliffe.” YouTube (accessed April 5, 2015). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B_M-EHmtF-Q.

⁷⁹ Lev. 13: 14 NIV.

⁸⁰ Mark 1: 40-42 NIV.

⁸¹ Patrick Baker and Christopher S. Celenza, *Christianity, Latinity, and Culture: Two Studies on Lorenzo Valla* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 99.

⁸² Elma Brenner, “Recent Perspectives on Leprosy in Medieval Western Europe,” *History Compass* 8, no. 5 (2010), 397.

⁸³ Elma Brenner, “Recent Perspectives,” 397.

group of lepers...for the Lord at St. Johannis outside the walls of the city.”⁸⁴ In 1365, the city council took over its full administrative oversight.⁸⁵

The house ordinances of St. Johannis in 1422 show the expected physical separation for its inhabitants: “They are not to work alongside a healthy person. They are not to bathe with a healthy person,” but in special water. If they wished to bathe by themselves (outside of prescribed house bathing times), they were “not to let a healthy person wash them.” They were ordered not to go into a church if a healthy person was inside the church.⁸⁶ If the women wished to sell products, they were to sell then through a healthy middle man, not even being allowed to touch/taint objects that would be passed on to a healthy community.⁸⁷ They were also not to sit or stand for a long time in conversation with the servants. While St. Johannis remained the oldest and most prestigious leper house in this early phase, eventually three other leper houses were founded: St. Leonard’s, St. Peter and Paul’s, and St. Jobst.⁸⁸ (See Image: Leper Houses)

Nuremberg generally referred to these houses as *Siechköbeln*. *Siech* means literally sick, and *Kobel* is a very old word that was used to describe a little bird’s nest.

⁸⁴ Christine Seidel, “Die Siechköbel vor den Mauern Nürnbergs” (Master’s Thesis, University of Erlangen-Nürnberg, 1984), 13. *Collegium Dominarum Leprosarum ad St. Johannem extra muros Nurembergeses*.

⁸⁵ Michael Diefenbacher, “St. Johannis,” in *Stadtlexicon Nürnberg (on-line)*, edited by Michael Diefenbacher und Rudolf Endres (Nuremberg: W. Tümmels Verlag), accessed March 4, 2014. http://online-service2.nuernberg.de/stadtarchiv/dok_start.fau?prj=biblio&dm=Stadtlexikon; Ingrid Busse, *Der Siechkobel St. Johannis vor Nürnberg (1234 bis 1807)* (Nuremberg: Stadtarchiv, 1974), 35.

⁸⁶ “Ordnung der Sondersiechen Frauen von St. Johannis 1422: StadtA, J VII 2, 28ff,” reproduced in Ingrid Busse, *Der Siechkobel St. Johannis vor Nürnberg (1234 bis 1807)* (Nuremberg: Nürnberg Stadtarchiv, 1974), 175. *Item es sol auch kein siech gemeinlich arbeiten mit einer gesuntten. item es sol auch ir keine baden mit den gesunden. Dar zu sullen sie auch ir besunder wasser haben. Und welche auch ir selbs gewaschen mag, die sol ir kein gesunde lassen waschen. item es sol auch ir keine in ein kirchen gen, wenn volk darinne ist.*

⁸⁷ “Ordnung der Sondersiechen Frauen von St. Johannis 1422,” 176; Martin Uhrmacher, *Leprosorien im Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit* (Cologne: Rheinland-Verlag, 2000), 70.

⁸⁸ I use apostrophes (’s) to denote customary pronunciation. The houses ending in an “s” sound will not have apostrophe when standing alone.

St. Leonard's was established as a female leper house to the southwest of the walls "to serve the Lord, all the better with more diligence."⁸⁹ It was directly under the influence of St. Lorenz parish church and the oversight of Nuremberg patrician Hermann Schürstab. The earliest remaining record of it is an ordinance from 1317 which stated that the house required a civic overseer, "with his true oath to the city."⁹⁰ This obligation to the city was essential because the house soon became an emblem of competition between the city and the bishop of Bamberg. In 1362, the bishop secured finances for the services of a priest for the St. Leonard's chapel, intending that he serve the growing nearby villages of Schweinau and Gostenhof by establishing a new parish church. The Council opposed a new parish, seeing it as a locus of oppositional power since it was close to the city. The women within St. Leonard's also opposed the action, fearing that the establishment of an official parish would force them, as lepers, to move outside the parish boundary.⁹¹ Although St. Leonard's was in the middle of this important conflict, it was the poorest and most neglected of the city's four leper houses by the sixteenth-century.

As the city grew in wealth and prestige in the first half of the fourteenth-century, Nuremberg's wealthy families participated more intensely in the charitable work within the city. During this period, financial support for the leper houses increasingly shifted from surrounding aristocracy to prominent Nuremberg families.⁹² St. Peter and Paul's began as a loose settlement of lepers camping outside the southeast city walls. It is most often also referred to as St.

⁸⁹ StadtAN A 21-2 Nr. 150. *die Frauen unserm herrn dienen, destomehr und desto fleissiger* Christine Seidel, "Die Siechköbel," 24.

⁹⁰ StadtAN A21-2 Nr. 150.

⁹¹ Christine Seidel, "Die Siechköbel," 25.

⁹² Two kinds of endowments emerged in Nuremberg during this period; both were based on inheritance. One type was a simple inheritance in which the oldest son inherited property from which donations for hospitals could be derived. The other type was a family endowment. The family endowment could only be executed in ways that were consistent with the will of the dead patron. The funds were then inherited with only executive control. In this system even heads of

Peter's, but is sometimes also called the *Siechgraben* or the sick ditch. The Haller and Tetzl families endowed the group into a leprosarium. St. Peter's was established "that the sick help one another in truth, bodily and spiritually, as much as possible."⁹³ And finally, St. Jobst was founded possibly as early as 1308 directly by the "will of the council." It was established under the direction of St. Sebald's priest, Hermann von Stein.⁹⁴ When the walls of the city were expanded in 1356, St. Jobst was moved further out past the northeastern corner of the city.⁹⁵ The movement of St. Jobst was in contrast to St. Jacob's chapel, a pilgrim chapel originally located outside the city walls. When the walls were expanded, St. Jacob's was absorbed into the city while St. Jobst, as a leper house, was moved and rebuilt.⁹⁶ By the mid-fourteenth-century, Nuremberg's four leprosaria stood at the four major trade routes into Nuremberg, like spokes of a wheel.

household could not use the money for personal debt. The Haller family for example endowed the Pilgrim Hospital, later the Holy Cross Hospital, with various members of the household being the financial caretakers of the institution; but those caretakers could not take the funds for themselves. Family endowments allowed more security and stability for the institutions. When the family line could no longer care for the institutions, the responsibility defaulted to a member of the Council. After the Reformation, religious and societal changes made it difficult to determine what was in keeping with the wishes of the initial endowers. Michael Diefenbacher, "Die Nürnberger Stiftungswesen," *MVG N* 91 (2004): 1-34.

⁹³ StadtAN D 07 Nr. A1a 8r. It was placed under the administration of the St. Martha's Pilgrim House.

⁹⁴ Michael Diefenbacher, "St. Jobst," in *Stadtlexicon Nürnberg (on-line)*.

There is some disagreement between scholars about the 1308 date because of an unclear Roman numeral.

⁹⁵ Walter Steinmaier, *St. Jobst: Das Aussätzigenhospital am Empfangsweg des Kaisers: Herrscherkult und Siechenhaus: Ein Beitrag zum Stadtausbau unter Karl IV. und zum Spitalwesen der freien Reichsstadt Nürnberg* (Nuremberg: Mabase, 2006), 71.

⁹⁶ Walter Steinmaier, *St. Jobst*, 59.

Why the Separation?

The problem with understanding the meaning and experience of Nuremberg's four leper houses is that the institutional evidence presents the lives of lepers quite differently than art or literature of the time. R.I. Moore in his *The Formation of a Persecuting Society* relies largely on myth, symbols, and the few ordinances that differentiated leper houses from other religious

houses. He uses the example of lepers attending their own funeral to signify they were "dead to society but alive to God," a ritual for which we have no real evidence.⁹⁷ Saul

Brody uses literary sources to argue that the lepers' physical manifestation of the disease was a sign of unmitigated "moral corruption."⁹⁸ Christine Boeckl, in

her recent work, *Images of Leprosy*, analyzes the image of lepers in

medieval high art. In this art, she argues that the leper was a two-dimensional character which



⁹⁷ R. I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe, 950-1250* (Oxford, UK: B. Blackwell, 1987), 54-55. In his "Bibliographical Excurses" in the second edition he admitted that the "leper mass" occurred rarely, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe, 950-1250*, 2nd. ed. (Oxford, UK: B. Blackwell, 2007), 181; Caroline Rawcliffe, review of *Images of Leprosy: Disease, Religion and Politics in European Art*, *Church History* 82, no. 1 (March 2013), 183.

⁹⁸ Saul Nathaniel Brody, *The Disease of the Soul: Leprosy in Medieval Literature* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press, 1974), 51, 59, and 147.

was never the subject of art but always used to the greater ends of religious and political authority. In the same manner, Michel Foucault classically calls the leper, “that fearful figure.”⁹⁹ Such scholarship depicts the leper as simply a recipient of social prejudice, separated and marginalized. This perspective portrays the boundary of the wall as impermeable and the sole definition of the leper as an outsider.

Recently, scholarship on leprosy has attempted to qualify this stereotype. It sees the blunt figure of the leper as falling into nineteenth-century understanding of leprosy which is a misunderstanding of what actually occurred in the Middle Ages.¹⁰⁰ In contrast, this research focuses on the leper as the redemptive character who was chosen to be purified in this life through bodily suffering in the image of Christ. For example, medieval French theologian Jacques de Vitry categorized lepers within the most spiritual group of the laity along with the other sick, poor, and pilgrims. Images from the endowment book for Nuremberg’s leper houses show the leper as a redemptive character. (Image: Jesus and the leper). In this image, Christ is pointing to the tools of flagellation, relating his suffering to the suffering of the lepers. Like the Apostle Paul’s “thorn in the flesh,” the image shows a common bond between Christ and the leper. Christ looks on the leper with compassion, and the leper gazes back, focusing on the wounds on Christ.¹⁰¹

In contrast to the prescriptions of separation, which I listed for St. Johannis above, the majority of the institutional ordinances parallel other religious houses at the time. They elected a

⁹⁹ Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (UK: Routledge Classics, 2005), 4; Christine M. Boeckl, *Images of Leprosy: Disease, Religion, and Politics in European Art* (Kirksville, MO: Truman State Univ. Press, 2011). She refers to the "victims" throughout the entire book. "The meek victims of leprosy frequently served as conduits for powerful political rhetoric" 163.

¹⁰⁰ GreshamColledge, “*Leprosia*,” (accessed April 5, 2015).

¹⁰¹ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 32 1.

Sickmaster, such as an abbot or abbess, to oversee the daily functioning of the house.¹⁰² They collected alms, ate a strict diet, maintained a daily schedule of work and prayer, wore special clothing, and practiced extreme isolation. One could argue that lepers did not choose to go into leper houses, but for most people in the period, a Church vocation was also not a personal choice. Families commonly placed second sons and unmarried daughters in monastic houses. They also practiced oblation, which was the act of giving young children to the Church.¹⁰³ Leper houses received all normal religious services including a mass, confession, and extreme unction.¹⁰⁴ They were required to pray a number of *Paster Noster* and *Ave Maria* each day, and also sing and pray masses for the dead from their community.¹⁰⁵ In parallel to other religious houses, St. Johannis was established “to be able to hold the poor women in good peace and to praise and honor the God three-in-one, and in their souls to stand in use and consolation.”¹⁰⁶ Also, like religious houses, admission was not free, but required a donation to the institution. Indeed, one has to meticulously search through daily practical, financial and religious ordinances to find the few exclusionary principles that formed the stereotype of the segregated leper.

¹⁰² In St. Johannis this female Sickmaster was called the Discipline Master or *Zuchtmeisterin*. StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4; StadtAN D 5 Nr. 9.

¹⁰³ Mayke De Jong, *In Samuel's Image: Child Oblation in the Early Medieval West* (Leiden: BRILL, 1996), 1.

¹⁰⁴ Seidel, “Die Siechköbel,” 13.

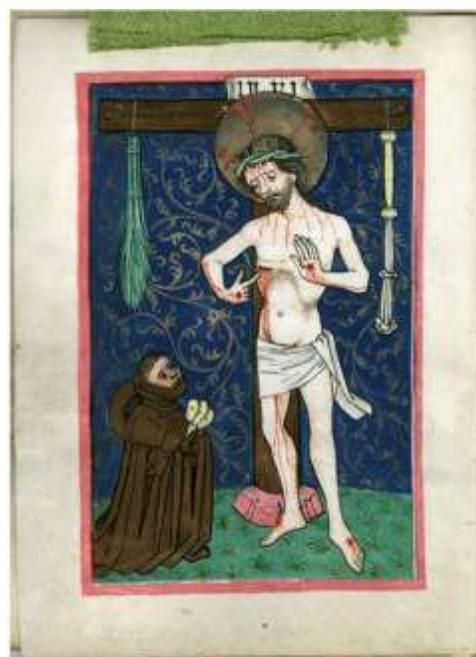
¹⁰⁵ StadtAN D 5 A21-2 Nr. 150 172r; Walter Steinmaier, *St. Jobst*, 167.

¹⁰⁶ “Ordnung der Sondersiechen Frauen von St. Johannis 1422,” 172. *Das die armen frawen in gutem fried und eintrehtikeit got zu lob und zu ere und iren selen zu nutze und zu trost sten und bleiben mugen.*

The redemptive view of the leper is even clearer when one examines other examples of inclusion. In the fourteenth-century, men from St. Jobst were allowed to leave the house for up to fourteen days for pilgrimage, retrieving inheritance, or going to healing baths.¹⁰⁷ While they could not wander into the city without permission, all Nuremberg's lepers were allowed visits into the city on certain holidays to sing and beg. Inhabitants from St. Jobst's, for example, could beg during the evening before Mary's Ascension processions, on the third and fourth day of Pentecost, during the feasts of St. Lucian, on the celebration of St. Jobst, and on Good Friday.¹⁰⁸

Lepers were also allowed to attend the *Kirchweih*, the celebration for the patron saint of the local chapel. (See Chapter 4 and 5)¹⁰⁹

Upon examination of institutions' ordinances, account books and local rituals, it is possible to detect tension between the conventional, the external, and *exceptional inclusionary* aspects of the leper's relationship with urban centers. Lepers were conventional in their participation in a broad late medieval religious culture. They were external in their appointed station outside the city walls, and they were *exceptionally included* in two ways: the custodianship that the city was willing to undertake in the houses and their consistent ritualistic inclusion despite their designation as unclean.



¹⁰⁷ "Alte Gesetze des Siechkobels zu St. Jobst aus dem XIV Jahrhundert," reproduced in Johann Christian Siebenkees and Johann Carl Sigmund Kiefhaber, *Materialien zur Nürnbergischen Geschichte*, vol. 1 (Nuremberg: Schneider, 1792), 414.

¹⁰⁸ Walter Steinmaier, *St. Jobst*, 179-180.

¹⁰⁹ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 86v.

Since we have already seen how the religious function of the lepers was typical of late medieval religious life, why place the lepers outside the walls? The greatest distinction between the leprous and other forms of religious orders in the period came from its distinction as being *unclean*. After a leprosy examination, participants were even given certification that declared them *rein*, pure and clean, or *unsauber or unrein*, unclean.¹¹⁰ In late medieval culture as in biblical times, the designation of, “unclean” resulted in mandatory physical separation.

The social stigma surrounding uncleanliness included a sense of pollution. Pollution was spread through touch. As one rotten apple can spoil the whole barrel, one unclean person could taint and dishonor the city. For example, executioners or skimmers could pass dishonor to a normal citizen if that normal citizen touched him or even touched an object that had been touched by the tainted person.¹¹¹ Folklore anthropologist, Emiko Namihira, argues that the idea of pollution is connected to anything of “danger, adversity, and misfortune.”¹¹² The leper was the physical embodiment of all three elements. His skin was essentially corrupted with bulbous tumors or skin lacerations starting at the mucus membranes: nose, mouth, anus and fingertips. Lepers’ limbs often eroded due to loss of nerve sensation.¹¹³ Further, according to Namihira, pollution was not an abstraction but was always manifested as a tangible reality, whether by a person or an object; it was moments of interaction (in time and space) that defined him as

¹¹⁰ Fritz Dross, “Seuchenpolizei und ärztliche Expertise: Das Nürnberger ‚Sondersiechenalmosen‘ als Beispiel heilkundliches Gutachtens” in *Seuche und Mensch*, edited by Carl Wahrman (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot 2012), 286-287. In Nuremberg, they were often declared *schön*, meaning pretty or fine, or *unsauber* meaning unclean. StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031 8v.

¹¹¹ Kathy Stuart, *Defiled Trades and Social Outcasts: Honor and Ritual Pollution in Early Modern Germany* (Oxford, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 128; Martin Uhrmacher, *Leprosorien*, 70.

¹¹² Emiko Namihira, “Pollution in the Folk Belief System” *Current Anthropology* 28, no. 4 (Aug.-Oct., 1987): 65.

¹¹³ GreshamColledge, “*Leprosia*,” (accessed April 5, 2015).

dishonorable. Namihira's assertion means that if the leper lived alone in his malady, there would be no dishonor associated with his disease.¹¹⁴ Uncleanliness was dangerous because it maliciously contaminated people and objects; it expanded beyond its permissible boundaries in order to pollute or corrupt separate entities. Like contagion, it needed to be secluded; unlike contagion, its meaning for society was less direct.

In personal boundary theory, when someone refuses to stay within his personal space and attempts to impose his or her will on another, the transgressed person will often hide himself behind physical barriers. When an individual's personal boundaries are transgressed, it is as if she is no longer a whole, intact person, but she must then bear the will and desires of another person as a piece of herself; she then believes she must be physically separated in order to be whole.¹¹⁵ In the same way, the idea that the uncleanliness of lepers could not be kept intact and contained within their bodies necessitated the practice of physical separation, thus differentiating the treatment of lepers from the victims of injuries or even other illnesses. The walls provided the physical separation that the city as a community believed it needed to remain intact and to keep rot or corruption on the outside.¹¹⁶ Just as the walls defended them from invaders, they also provided a means to defend their purity and intactness. In Queen Elizabeth's endowment of St. Johannes, she draws a parallel between *extra castra* and Nuremberg's *extra muros*, consigning people to space outside the walls.

François-Oliver Touati argues that during the early era of leper separation in Europe, it was impossible for society to understand infection or contagion. He argues that the Black Death

¹¹⁴ This could also be applied to the lying in period for women after child birth or the executioner's house.

¹¹⁵ Pia Mellody, *Facing Codependence: What It Is, Where It Comes from, How It Sabotages Our Lives* (New York: Harper Collins, 2003), 11-22.

¹¹⁶ R. I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society*, 94-95; Mary Douglas, "Witchcraft and Leprosy: Two Strategies of Exclusion" *Man, New Series* 26 no. 4 (1991): 732.

prompted society to seek more material explanations for all diseases; therefore, physicians began to analyze leprosy in Galenic terms. Physicians contended that leprosy was caused by an excess of black bile in the humors resulting in the ruptures of the skin. The identification of this imbalance of humors moved the responsibility of identification of leprosy from the priest to the physician.¹¹⁷ The diagnosis, treatment and management of leprosy, shifted from the spiritual realm to the physical.

One of the foundational principles of Galenic theory was that foul odors caused an imbalance of the humors. In German, the phrase often used is *vergiftet luft* or poisonous airs.

Physicians advised inhabitants to wash with rose water or carry herbs in their pocket to ward off these foul airs.¹¹⁸ This understanding of poisonous airs resonates with the fact that lepers were not only dangerous through touch, but also smell. They had notoriously bad breath. As their mucus membranes broke down, their noses, mouths and throats corroded, resulting in bad



¹¹⁷ François-Olivier Touati, *Maladie et société au Moyen Âge: La lèpre, les lépreux et les léproseries dans la province ecclésiastique de Sens jusqu'au milieu du XIVe siècle*, vol.11. (Paris: De Boeck Supérieur, 1998); Hannah Saunders Murphy, "Reforming Medicine in Sixteenth-Century Nuremberg" (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2012), 51-54. Murphy uses the Lepraschau to depict doctors as an interest group that buttressed their own authoritative power as a part of the medical reformation that occurred in sixteenth-century Nuremberg.

¹¹⁸ Hans Folz, *Die Reimpaarsprüche*, trans. Hanns Fischer (Munich: C.H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1961), 431.

breath and a husky voice. This attribute was even noted in an age with virtually no dental hygiene, or as Luke Demaitre quips, “in a world that was probably not very sweet scented.”¹¹⁹ In many cases, lepers were required to speak to a healthy person from downwind.¹²⁰ Physicians and priests covered their mouths with cloths to protect themselves from the foul odors. (See Image: Excerpt Lepraschau Confession) In his 1482 plague regiment, poet Hans Folz compared the foul odors of plague to the bad breath of the leprous. He had heard of no one who did not “remove himself from a leper or from one with stinking breath, who soon after was not the man poisoned. I swear, that the one who doesn’t flee on account of breath, immediate he will receive [it] from him.”¹²¹ As we will see throughout Chapters 1 and 2, air, odors and windows are all important parts of the medieval notion of purity.

Throughout the early modern period, authorities continued to regard leprosy as a special uncleanliness not attributed to other diseases. Claudia Stein’s study of syphilis in Augsburg noted the attempts of physicians to differentiate leprosy from syphilis. Some scholars believed syphilis could turn into leprosy or that it was possible to have them both at the same time.¹²² Throughout the sixteenth-century, Nuremberg remained vigilant in its effort to identify lepers by examination at the *Lepraschau*, and by requiring its own inhabitants to be examined. Two cases were brought before the council in September 1562, Anthait Barmunter, the leprous, was accepted into St. Peter’s. A few days later the council entertained a request from a Fritz Pauring

¹¹⁹ Luke Demaitre, *Leprosy in Premodern Medicine: A Malady of the Whole Body*, 99.

¹²⁰ Uhrmacher, *Leprosorien im Mittelalter und früherer Neuzeit*, 70.

¹²¹ Hans Folz, *Die Reimpaarsprüche*, 430. *Sich zu fernen von einem sundersichen oder von einem mit einem stinckenden otem, die dennoch den menschen so pald nit vergiffen. Ich sweig, das der nit zu flyhen sey, des otem, soballd er von einem enpfangen wirt.* “Sondersiech” is Nuremberg’s term for leprosy for which Folz explicitly wrote this tract.

¹²² Claudia Stein, *Negotiating the French Pox in Early Modern Germany* (Farnham, England: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2009), 56, 79-81. See also Ulrich von Hutten, *Of the wood called guiacum, that healeth the Frenche pockes, and also helpeth the goute in the feete, the stone, the palsey, lepre, drosy, failing euyll, and other dyseases* (London Tomas Berthes, 1539), 6.

to accept his sick maid into a leper house. The council ordered her accepted if she was found leprous.¹²³ The same occurred when another “unclean” maid was bought for investigation.¹²⁴ The appearance of syphilis as a separate disease further complicated the already problematic task of diagnosing leprosy, but it also shows the preoccupation with diagnosing leprosy even into the seventeenth-century despite the question of whether or not it was the modern Hansen's disease.

Incrementally, Nuremberg limited its houses to its own citizens and inhabitants. By the late fifteenth-century, the council co-opted the houses' ordinances and funds through centralized administration.¹²⁵ Unlike the registration protocol for other diseases, the names of people entering leprosaria were recorded, as were the names of citizen relatives or citizen employers. For example, Ulrich Fröd was given admittance into a leper house because he was the son of a citizen.¹²⁶ Another example was the entry “Ulrich Schlesner Spengler to be accepted in a leper house.”¹²⁷ Sometimes the council included specific descriptions: “the Schwinkendorfer servant who worked for so long, that he be given citizenship and taken care of in a sick house, as long as he brings his bed linens.”¹²⁸

The increasing reliance on medical diagnosis and material explanations should not be overstated. These explanations did not supplant the commonly held view of lepers' pollution nor their transcendent access to Christ. Although the leper was an important symbol in the medieval period, Nuremberg never housed more than six to ten lepers in each house in their early

¹²³ RV 7 and 9 Sept. 1562 #1213 29v.

¹²⁴ RV 28 Aug. 1562 #1213 13r.

¹²⁵ In 1508, the city called for all four ordinances to be renewed and reordered. Johannes Müllner, *Die Annalen der Reichsstadt Nürnberg von 1623*, edited by Michael Diefenbacher, and Walter Gebhardt (Nuremberg: Im Selbstverlag des Stadtrats, 2003) 3: 410.

¹²⁶ RV 21 Aug. 1562 #1213 4v.

¹²⁷ RV 5. Jan. 1534 #832 7v.

¹²⁸ RV 2 May 1533 #822 15r. *der schwinkendorfferin knecht der in solang gearbeit, das [man ihm] burgerrecht schenk und in a einen kobel lassen kummern, doch das er sein petgewandt mit bringen.*

history.¹²⁹ Leprosy may have been a symbolic pollutant, but it was not regarded as a potent pollutant, which was why the city was so open to its ritual inclusion. Ultimately, Nuremberg chose to take custodianship of these lepers for life; this relationship intensified as the council encroached on the management of the houses.

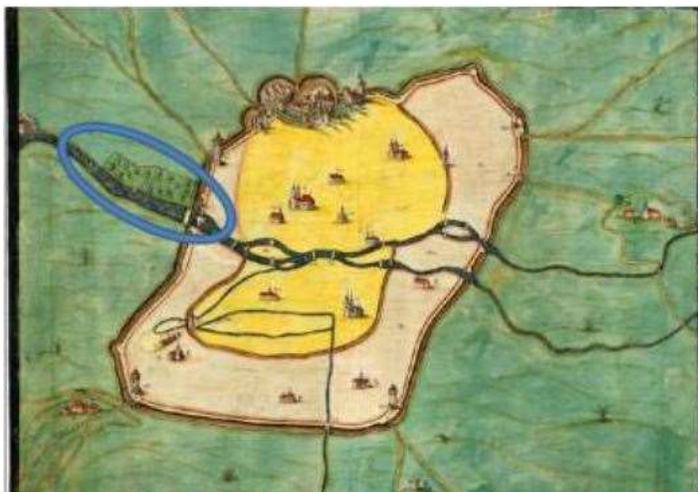
Not all lepers were fortunate enough to gain admittance to a leper house. The lives of those housed in Nuremberg's leprosaria stood in stark contrast to homeless lepers living in the surrounding area. The position of these lepers in relation to the city was expressed in the phrase: "the poor limbs of Christ." The civic community regarded lepers as members of the body of Christ, but because of their uncleanliness and pollution, they had to be separated. Nuremberg's lepers outside the walls were simultaneously defined as both separate and together. Essentially, the leprosaria were viewed as holding places of separation awaiting *holy exceptions* to reintegrate them into the community by ritual or miraculous healing.

II. Lepraschau

If the lepers in the Nuremberg's four leprosaria were the "poor limbs of Christ;" there were even poorer limbs. Many lepers in the middle ages were homeless or *Feldsiechen*, the field-sick.¹³⁰ In 1394, a group of pious women, Anna Grundherrin, Anna Neidungin, Agnes Plinderin and Margeth Schafferin, were led by a woman who is known only as "Mother" Ußlingerin, and Master Nicolas, priest of the Holy Ghost Hospital, to found the

¹²⁹ By one account, it was because of the Reformation that they admitted more lepers into the house. The source states that St. Johannis was overcrowded at 19 residents. StadtAN A 26 Rep 90 Nr. 109.

¹³⁰ Dross calls these lepers doubly foreign. Fritz Dross and Annemarie Kinzelbach "'nit mehr alls sein burger, sonder als ein frembder' Fremdheit und Aussatz in frühneuzeitlichen Reichsstädten," *Medizinhistorisches Journal* 46 (2011): 18-19.



Nuremberg Lepraschau.¹³¹ The Lepraschau was a three-day long charity festival during holy week which was designed to serve lepers in the area who were not given entrance into the city's four leprosy houses. The term Lepraschau refers to its most basic

function, the show or examination of suspected lepers to see if they were infected. Although similar Lepraschau examinations took place in other cities such as Cologne, it was only in Nuremberg that it evolved into a large festival, drawing hundreds from twenty and thirty miles away.¹³² By 1512, Johann Cochlaeus described the event as a feast in which, "700 homeless lepers were fed bodily, as the soul, onetime publicly on the St. Sebald's churchyard, where the patricians and their wives served their table."¹³³

The Mother, who came from the patricians' wives, was the central organizer and sponsor of the event. She was supported by daughters, who were younger, possibly single women. A number of lower male and female servants fulfilled less ceremonial roles.¹³⁴ The feminine

¹³¹ I am struck by the dignifying descriptors used with some names, yet naïve and often patronizing terms are used with others. We see Anna "wife of the Lord of the manner"; but also, Anna "envious"; Agnes "the blind woman" and Margrette "shepherdess". Such descriptions are in sharp contrast with the old patrician family designation of "founder's wife." Fleischman has no record of any of these women in the Nuremberg patriciate. Peter Fleischmann, *Rat und Patriziat in Nürnberg: die Herrschaft der Ratsgeschlechter vom 13. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert*, 2 vols (Nuremberg: Verein für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg, 2008).

¹³² StadtAN A6 Nr. 70.

¹³³ Johannes Cochlaeus, *Kurze Beschreibung*, 56. In 1462 there were around 600. The numbers exploded in the 16th-century with a reported 2540 people. Johannes Müllner, *Die Annalen der Reichsstadt Nürnberg von 1623*, edited by Gerhad Hirschmann and Walter Gebhardt (Nuremberg: Im Selbstverlag des Stadtrats, 1972) 1: 136.

¹³⁴ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031.

quality of the leadership is particularly striking. Charity was the one realm in which women were permitted to take the leadership role.¹³⁵ Like caregiving in the hospital, charity had a maternal, nurturing quality. There was also an inversion quality to this leadership. Lepers traditionally excluded and belonged outside; the Schau performed a complete inversion: it was inside and included.¹³⁶

The first recorded civic ordinance for the event was written in 1462. The ordinance prescribed a timeline in which every inch of fabric, the food, and the table cloths were to be ordered.¹³⁷ By Palm Sunday (the Sunday that begins Holy Week), tables and benches were brought to St. Sebald's churchyard. The homeless lepers then gathered in the St. Johannis city section and Hallerwiese outside the western gates, ready for entry on Tuesday afternoon. (See Image: Nöttlein Hallerwiese.) The Mother led the leper procession into the city. The first event that took place was the medical examination in the "Stromer's house," a house that the patrician Stromer family temporarily donated.¹³⁸ Leper candidates were examined to determine whether they were *unclean* or *schön*, meaning fine or pretty.¹³⁹ Those who were declared clean could still participate in the feast at the end of the week but could not receive the clothes and money

¹³⁵ Jennifer Ward, *Women in Medieval Europe: 1200-1500* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 209.

¹³⁶ Historians have explored inverted society and gender roles as temporary outlets to flush out and relieve tensions. See Natalie Zemon Davis's article, "Women-on-top" in Natalie Zemon Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France: Eight Essays* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1975), 130.

¹³⁷ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031 3v.

¹³⁸ I cannot locate this house, but it is likely that it was either on the path to the *Siechhaus*, where the lepers were lodged, or outside the western gates. This house was also where the Stromer allowed lepers to board their horses.

¹³⁹ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031 8v.

intended for lepers. Those declared unclean received a white cloth certifying their leper status.¹⁴⁰

(Image: Leprous Woman)

Throughout all three days, the priest from St. Sebald's preached to them.¹⁴¹ "Dear brothers, you are guilty. Jesus, out of everyone, was innocent. Still he voluntarily gave himself over to great fear and need. Thank him from every inch of the heart and offer up to him your greatest pains. God [gave] through his great sacrifice and [through this] bread, in order that he would be grace to you all."¹⁴² On Wednesday after a small meal, the leprous would confess their



sins in order to be "worthy to be given the Sacrament of the body of our Lord on the Holy Thursday."¹⁴³

The confession itself was a carefully orchestrated event. The city ordered chairs, cushions and potent herbs for the city leaders so they could comfortably, and safely, watch the leper confession. After confession, the Mother gave the lepers a document or a sign indicating that they had confessed.

¹⁴⁰ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 032 1 25v., 9r, and 16v. If someone was leprous, he should "receive the sign again, they are given the cloth, if he is declared 'fine/clean' from the physicians, one should not give him back his little note or sign not saying he is 'not guilty,' but should receive a note with the official insignia calling him clean. The sign was meant to be taken back to the leper's home, the city's leprosaria." Mitchell Lewis Hammond, "Leprosy and the Defect of Diagnosis in Sixteenth-Century Germany," in *Ideas and Cultural Margins in Early Modern Germany: Essays in Honor of H.C. Erik Midelfort*, ed. Marjorie Elizabeth Plummer and Robin Barnes (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2009), 282.

¹⁴¹ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031 6r.-6v.

¹⁴² Reprinted in Luke Demaitre, *Leprosy in Premodern Medicine: A Malady of the Whole Body* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), 48. The broadsheet was originally published in Casimir Tollet, *les edifices hospitalier depuis leur origine jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris, 1892), 45. National Library of Medicine, Bethesda, Maryland.

¹⁴³ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031 6v.

On Thursday, the lepers proceeded in an orderly manner, with “no forcing each other,” into St. Moritz chapel to take the sacrament.¹⁴⁴ The main event was the great feast on Good Friday in St. Sebald’s churchyard (Image: Excerpt Lepraschau Feast). During the meal, the priest preached about



the suffering of Christ while patricians served the feast. Immediately after eating, the lepers filed out of the city. All of those who had been declared leprous, who had confessed, and had received the Sacrament were given wood, clothes, and a bit of money. As they left, the priest prayed the *Pater Noster*, the *Ave Maria* and reminded them to pray for “the council of the city of Nuremberg throughout the whole year, and for the whole city and for all who have been given the alms and have been given help and support, food, drink, clothing, and to those who have served and given out alms, and for dear souls there from whom so much good has happened.”¹⁴⁵

Pious inhabitants donated “to praise Almighty God, to honor Mary the queen of heaven and all of the heavenly saints, to comfort those before and those who will come, to help and support and the poor leprous.”¹⁴⁶ The Schau was funded by charitable donations, land rents, and

¹⁴⁴ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031 17v.-18r.

¹⁴⁵ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031 8r.-8v.

¹⁴⁶ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031 2v.; StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 032 2 2v.

begging.¹⁴⁷ In the mid-fifteenth-century, the city council began using endowments from the Holy Ghost Hospital and the four leper houses to help finance the event, likely because the city underwrote any funding shortfalls.¹⁴⁸ One of the more curious forms of funding was from eight designated beggars who, on specific days and places, begged on behalf of the Lepraschau. The begging days began on Annunciation (usually 25 March); Palm Sunday (Sunday before Easter celebrating Jesus' arrival into Jerusalem); Holy Thursday (Thursday of Holy Week celebrating the Last Supper) and Good Friday (greatest day of fasting and penance in the liturgical year, remembering Jesus' death and separation from humanity). The beggars set up tables in front of the *Wexel*, a building on the central market. They displayed the papal indulgence and two cloths that signified the city's official endorsement. They begged after mass on the above listed days and throughout Good Friday. In addition, the Mother invited the special beggars for a meal in her home on Annunciation and two meals on Palm Sunday. On Holy Thursday, they shared a meal at the festival.¹⁴⁹ Finally, on Good Friday, the Mother collected the money that they had begged; then the Mother, daughters, and servants honored them with a special feast, complete with roasted almonds, gingerbread and wine to thank them for their diligence.¹⁵⁰

The Geography of the Lepraschau

As the lepers gathered at the city walls on Tuesday, the council specified when, where, and how they were to be led into the city. As the poor entered through the walls, they were

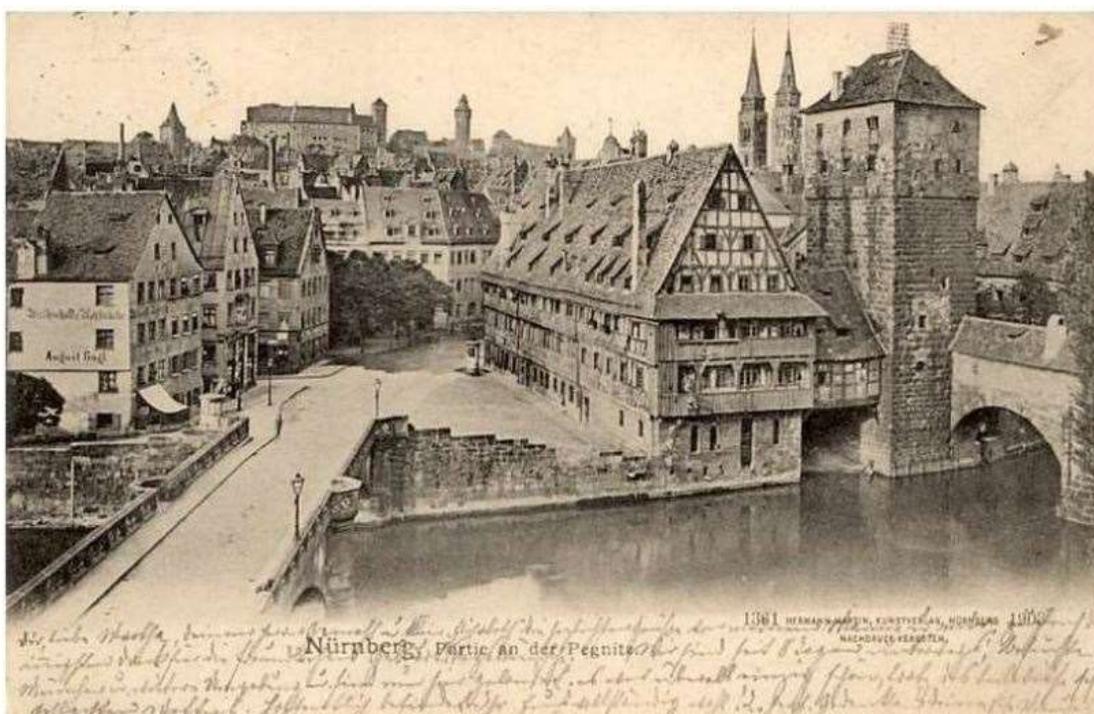
¹⁴⁷ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031 26v.

¹⁴⁸ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031 27r.; This takes on a bigger story line towards the end of the sixteenth-century when an official overseer for the *Schau* was appointed in 1462 and a complete financial accounting was required, 36r.

¹⁴⁹ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031 22r.

¹⁵⁰ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031 22v.

forbidden to “go or ride around in the city.”¹⁵¹ One of the meals during the *Schau* took place on Tuesday evening, immediately after they entered the city. Because the city had secured all necessary food, the lepers had no excuse to beg. The Nützel family, for example, supplied 300 salted fish to St. Sebald’s before the festivities began.¹⁵² If the lepers still wished to beg, they could not come into the city.¹⁵³ At the end of the festival, when the lepers “rode out of the city,” they were not permitted to return for another year.¹⁵⁴



In the 1420s, Mother Küngung Krellin, her daughter, Margetha Krellin and helper maiden, Anna Graserin, together with the city building master Hanns Graser, campaigned for the building of a house in which the lepers could sleep while in the city. The *Weinstadel* or

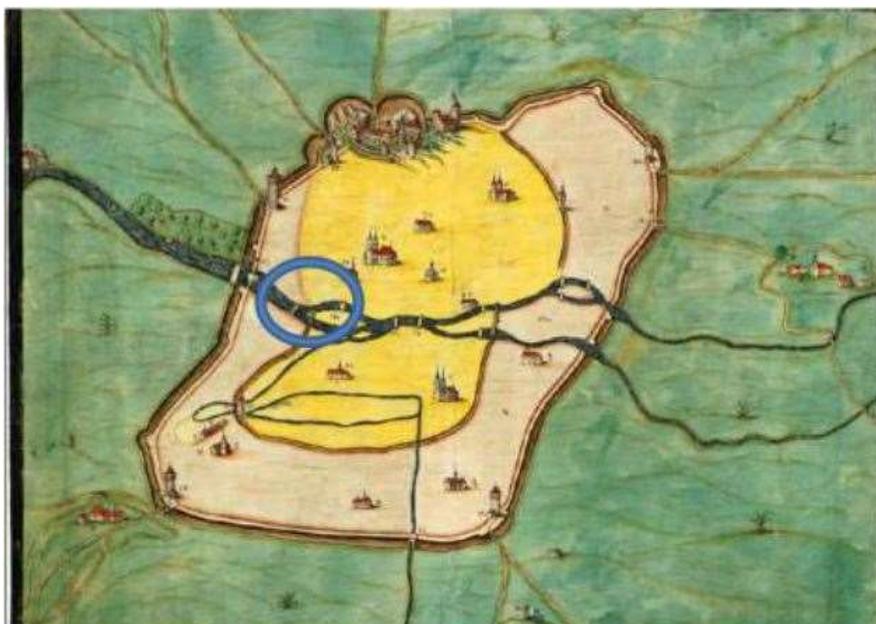
¹⁵¹ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031 15r.

¹⁵² Georg Wolfgang Karl Lochner, “Die Sondersiechen in Nürnberg, ihr Almosen und ihre Schau,” in *Deutsche Zeitschrift für die Staatsarzneikunde* 17 (1861): 207-208.

¹⁵³ Lochner, “Die Sondersiechen in Nürnberg,” 215.

¹⁵⁴ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031 20r.

Siechhaus was completed between 1446 and 1448.¹⁵⁵ (See *Siechhaus*). Between Lepraschau festivals, the building housed the tables, benches, and other items used for the event. Shortly before the festival



began, the house was supplied with fresh straw for beds and wood for heat.¹⁵⁶ Women slept in the two smaller chambers; the men slept in the one large chamber.

The *Siechhaus* was a “large and roomy house, behind the Augustian friary, on the water, close to the Max Bridge and the city meadow.”¹⁵⁷ This early description of the *Siechhaus* included all of its component parts. The friary had a long affiliation with St. Johannis leper house, and was one site at which lepers were historically allowed to beg.¹⁵⁸ The new building was large enough to house the incoming hundreds of lepers, and most importantly the chosen site was the lowest sector of the city, at the outflow of the river. This location is consistent with the notion that foul odors were injurious to health; open sewers flow downhill. The *Neu Bau* (or the Newly Built section of the city) was the area that was integrated into the city when the walls

¹⁵⁵ Michael Diefenbacher, “Weinstadel,” in *Stadtlexicon Nürnberg* (on-line).

¹⁵⁶ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031 4r.

¹⁵⁷ Lochner, “Die Sondersiechen in Nürnberg,” 221. *Ein grosses und geräumiges Haus, hinter dem Augustinerkloster, am Wasser, nahe am Neuenbau und der Stadtwiese.*

¹⁵⁸ StadtAN D15 J VI Nr. 4 67r.

expanded in the mid-fourteenth-century as seen in this map from Georg Nöttelein.¹⁵⁹ (See Map Nöttelein Neu Bau). It was the most polluted area within the walls because it was down river from the majority of the city, even from the *Fleischbrücke*, or Butcher's Bridge. It housed not only the Lepraschau but also the pig market and even the house of the executioner. Later, small huts would be built there to house syphilis patients. Another reason the Siechhaus was built at this location was so it could be next to the city meadow or *Hallerwiese*. It was on this meadow that lepers, or other poor people, would gather as they waited to see if they would be granted entrance into the city.

The housing of foreign lepers inside the city was the antithesis of the "outside of the walls" *modus operandi* for leprosy; therefore, as the homeless lepers came into the city, they were funneled into specific places and forbidden to roam. Even during the night, servants watched over the Siechhaus.¹⁶⁰ Each of the places to which the Mother brought the lepers in the city had special protections, both material and spiritual.¹⁶¹

Each space of the Schau was materially corrupted, but spiritually consecrated. St. Sebald's churchyard was an active cemetery until the beginning of the sixteenth-century; St. Moritz was used as an alternative to St. Sebald's for suspected plague victims; and the Siechhaus

¹⁵⁹ The papal indulgence from 1517, referred to the new city hospitals on both sides of the river for building the shelter of the needy. "With the expanded building on both sides of the same river to comfortable accommodation for the poor and needy persons." Here, the Pope is referring to both the *Siechhaus* and the Holy Ghost Hospital, which the council was using to house a growing poor population. The upper end of the river was also associated with poverty. "The sand" which was an area of land generated by the Sand mills at the upper and eastern edge of the city was a common site for freelance prostitution. StadtAN A6 Nr. 70.

¹⁶⁰ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031 11r.

¹⁶¹ Fritz Dross, "Verortungen-Aussetzen und Einsperren. Zur Integration und Desintegration von Leprosen in Spätmittelalter und Früher Neuzeit." unpublished manuscript (December 2013), 4.

was built to isolate the smell of the lepers in the city.¹⁶² The cemetery and chapel were consecrated, and even the Siechhaus was blessed by the Pope. He offered indulgences during its building for its role in Christian charity.¹⁶³

The festival administration also provided material protection from the polluting odors of the lepers. The Lepraschau ordinance is replete with mentions of fresh herbs to purify the foul or poisonous air brought by the lepers. The tables for the feasts, the area for confession, and even the altar for mass were prepared with strong herbs.¹⁶⁴ Immediately after the lepers' Good Friday feast, servants washed the sheets and tablecloths, and collected and counted the tables and benches to be housed underneath the building.¹⁶⁵ It was after this process of cleaning and purifying that the Mother, daughters, and the eight beggars gathered for a meal in the Siechhaus, "after the house is returned again clean (*schön* the same word they used for declaring someone clean of leprosy) and blessed."

Although the Schau was an incredible occasion of inclusion, great care was taken to protect the city from the lepers' corruption. They were processed on specified pathways, downstream from most of the city. They took communion in the small chapel and not the parish church. City leaders smoked herbs to keeping the lepers' smell from penetrating the rest of the city. The ritual was also one of spiritual cleansing. Nuremberg's inhabitants could watch them confess and take Holy Communion. They were filled physically and spiritually before being led out of the city. Like those in Nuremberg's leprosaria, they were also included and cared for in a special way, albeit, temporarily.

¹⁶² It is important to note that the foreign lepers were brought into the lesser St. Moritz chapel next to St. Sebald's and not into the great St. Sebald's parish church.

¹⁶³ StadtAN A6 Nr. 69; StadtAN A1 10.1.1517.

¹⁶⁴ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031.

¹⁶⁵ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031 20v.-21r.

Lepers from Nuremberg's houses were explicitly forbidden to participate in the Lepraschau. The council ordered three days' worth of extra of bread for the four leper houses because they had to stay home.¹⁶⁶ All begging, however, was about to lose its legal status in Nuremberg.

III. Leprosy and Begging

Leper houses and the Lepraschau evolved within the context of the late medieval social and economic environment. The late fifteenth-century experienced population and economic shifts that resulted both in an influx of beggars from the countryside and an impoverishment of guildsmen from within the city.¹⁶⁷ Urban poverty was one of the most difficult and debated topics of the period. In response to the influx of the poor, the council attempted to differentiate its own legitimate beggars from criminals, vagabonds, prostitutes and exploited children, by mandating that legal beggars be licensed and wear badges. In 1370, Nuremberg passed its first poor and begging ordinances which restricted times and places its lepers were allowed to beg and sing. For example, a women from St. Johannis could beg within the city, but only in front of the Augustinian friary and then only at special times.¹⁶⁸ The council further specified that "after they sing, they go immediately outside the city rather than roaming."¹⁶⁹ In 1478, the council decreed that all lepers, "whether they are from here in the city or foreign, [should] not wander around or

¹⁶⁶ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031 21v.; this was a general prohibition on begging in front of the leprosy houses during the Schau and was probably intended to keep the guests of the Lepraschau from seizing the opportunity.

¹⁶⁷ Robert Jütte, *Poverty and Deviance in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 36-44; Willi Rüger, *Mittelalterliches Almosenwesen* (Nuremberg: Krische, 1932), 37-46; and Joel F. Harrington, "Singing for His Supper?: The Reinvention of Juvenile Streetsinging in Early Modern Nuremberg." *Social History* 22, no.1 (1997): 27-45.

¹⁶⁸ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 67r.

¹⁶⁹ Baader, Joseph ed. *Nürnberg Polzeiordnungen aus dem XIII bis XV Jahrhundert*. Bibliothek des Literarischen Vereins Stuttgart 63 (1861), 316-319.

go begging in the city, except for when they are allowed in the city and sufficiently in their prescribed places, where they are shown.”¹⁷⁰

In time, the ritualistic inclusion of lepers begging at holy times and holy places was phased out due to the pressures of even greater social problems. By 1522, Nuremberg’s lepers were forbidden to enter the city, ostensibly because of the loud noises and clappers used for begging. Even their Glockler or Collector, who came into the city ringing a bell to collect food for the lepers, was forbidden entry. Instead the city installed special charity boxes in parish churches where pious citizens could donate toward this cause. Ultimately, Nuremberg’s lepers were restricted to begging solely in front of their houses, outside the walls.¹⁷¹

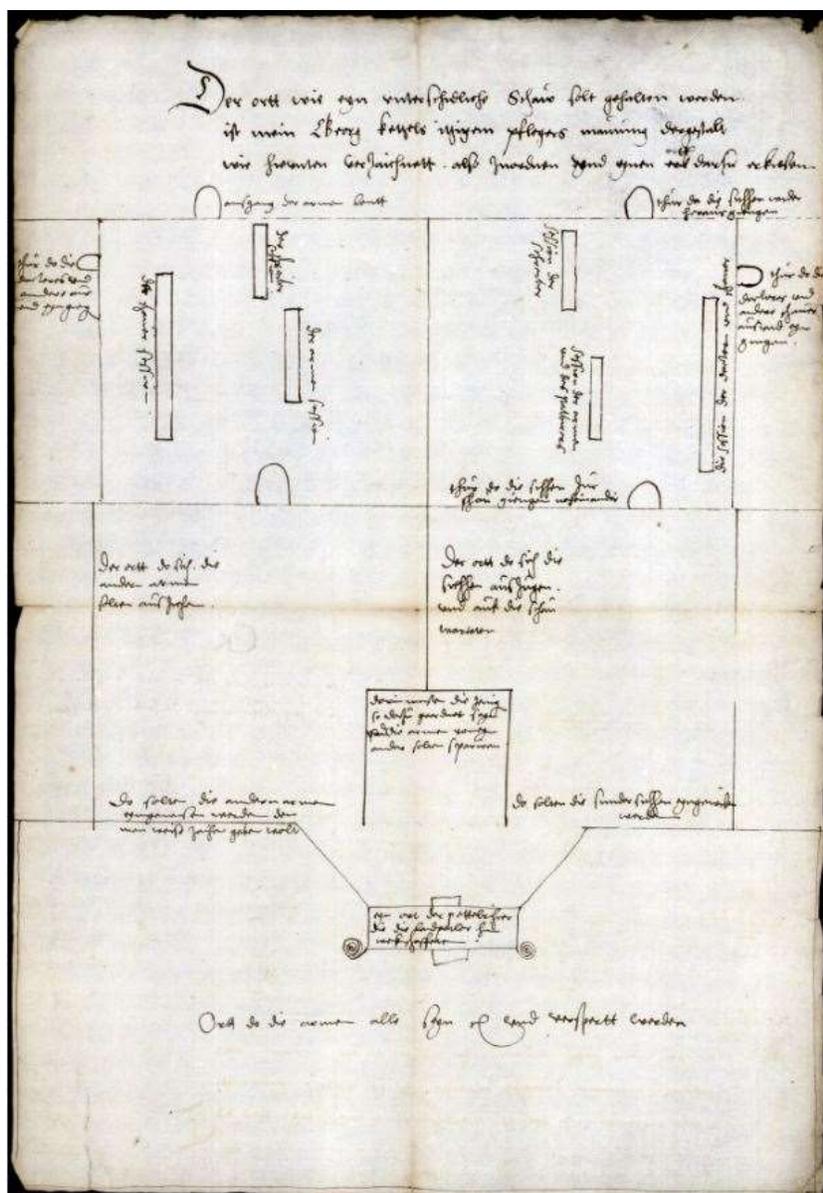
Despite regulations against lepers within the city, the Lepraschau continued, but it also felt the impact of the council’s efforts to curtail the growing poor population. The city issued instructions concerning foreign lepers, “It will be said to them, to conduct themselves in this way: avoid the city all year except for during Holy Week, the usual time that the sick come in and can be held.”¹⁷² Many healthy poor took part in the Schau, either for the immediate charity of the festival, or the hope of being diagnosed with leprosy. A diagnosis of leprosy could gain them admittance into their own city’s leprosaria with its long-term provision of food and shelter. A broadsheet depicting the 1493 Lepraschau shows a physician chiding a leper, “Friend, you are not leprous. You have neglected yourself. You have frozen in the cold winter. Leave from here and let another come in.” City physician, Joachim Camerarius, echoed this accusation in the

¹⁷⁰ Joseph Baader, *Nürnbergger Polizeiordnungen*, 318. *Auch sollen die sundersichen, es seyen die hie vor der stat oder fremde, hie in der stat nich umbreiten oder geen petteln, sunder die hie umb die stat sollen sich benügen lassen irer stet,*

¹⁷¹ “Die Armenordnung der Stadt Nürnberg. 1522,” in *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 10 (1912/1913), 64.

¹⁷² The council warned, “If the leprous come in, not to the specified places, and instead stay here and wander around, it is desired that they be held in the dungeon.” Lochner, “Die Sondersiechen in Nürnberg,” 189-190.

1570s. He contended that the poor would lie in the snow hoping to lose their noses to frost bite in order to receive a leprous diagnosis.¹⁷³



In the 1550/60s the increase in poor, along with the lepers, made it difficult to keep the participants in approved spaces. The participants begged on unapproved streets, abandoned their destitute loved one's behind to be cared for by the city after the approved time and overwhelmed

¹⁷³ StadtBib N Cent V 42. 90r. See also Robert Jütte, "Lepra-Simulanten. 'De lis qui morbum Simulant'" in *Neue Wege in der Seuchengeschichte*, edited by Martin Dinges and Tom Schich. Stuttgart: Steiner, 1995), 25-42.

the populace with their disorder and cries.¹⁷⁴ Through the movement of their bodies, they challenged these approved spaces by acting out what Tim Cresswell calls “heretical geographies.”¹⁷⁵ The transgressive acts, in turn, prompted this renegotiation between the participants of the Schau and the city. Barnubas Bemer and Georg Ketzl drew up a diagram to limit and control the influx of participants at the gates (See Image: Ketzl Diagram). In 1560s and 70s, when almost 3,000 people (many lepers, but mostly hordes of beggars) descended on Nuremberg for the Schau, the event was finally moved out of the city into the St. Johannis city section outside of the walls.¹⁷⁶

As the council increased their protective measures at the city walls, they also increased measures at the leprosaria walls. Without the income of beggars’ alms from inside the city, the custodianship of the leper houses had to be financed systematically from the city center. The city council increased their oversight and secured an influx of private funds to remain solvent. By the turn of the sixteenth-century, the city’s custodianship progressively led to micromanagement of the daily affairs of the houses. In 1484, the council attached a series of “Statutes of the Council” to St. Peter’s ordinances ensuring the solvency of the institution. In 1505, St. Johannis’ ordinances were also revamped and inventories of its possessions made.¹⁷⁷ The city required new leprous inhabitants to bring their own “table, table cloth, towel, mug, two wooden bowls, two wooden plates and whatever else one would need.”¹⁷⁸ The council also legally attached the inheritance of the lepers to help fund their respective institutions. In addition, the hospital

¹⁷⁴ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031.

¹⁷⁵ Tim Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 156-158.

¹⁷⁶ StadtAN A6 Nr. 352. The later history of the *Lepraschau* will be discussed in later chapters.

¹⁷⁷ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4.

¹⁷⁸ StadtAN D 07 Nr. A2a. *dischtucher, hanthzweheln, ein disch, ein seidel kendele zwu zelich [zinene] schusselle und zway [zinene] delerle auch zu seiner nothurft zugebrauchen inn kobell zu bringenn verpflecht.*

overseer was made financially liable for poor stewardship. For example, in 1495 Ulrich Haller, overseer of St. Jobst, and Sigmund Besler, overseer in St. Peter's, sued the previous overseers: Lorenz, Anthony, and Hanns Kress. The Kress family had already lost a suit to Nicolas Gross for money owed to the Holy Ghost Hospital, but the family owed Haller and Besler an additional 20 G to cover deficits in St. Jobst's and St. Peter's accounts.¹⁷⁹ Eventually, the council began to use the leper houses as hospices on a fund basis to try to cover deficits.

All meeting at the Gates

The walls of Nuremberg were permeable. The unclean lepers were let into the city ritualistically in special places and in protected ways. In practice, however, people often found ways to slip inside the walls. Nevertheless, the walls had physical and conceptual power. As lepers were dangerous pollutants, the city attempted to limit its exposure to them. While the city was willing to house, monitor, and assure the function and solvency of the institutions for its own leprous, Nuremberg was vulnerable to being overwhelmed by the polluting persons; therefore, the city limited and controlled the lepers', especially foreign lepers', access through the walls. The general exclusion of leprosy gave a sense of intactness and security from pollution. The city *chose* when it wished to deviate from this principle. When the accepted geographies were challenged, city leaders renegotiated or retrenched.

These deviations were also viewed as gaining important protections from God. In 1405, the city council blocked the Lepraschau from coming inside the city, citing the dangerous plague of *portzel*.¹⁸⁰ On that same Easter week, plague ravaged the city. The people raged against the council for bringing the wrath of God down on them; the council capitulated and reinstated the

¹⁷⁹ StadtAN B14/II: Amtsbuch: H 169r.

¹⁸⁰ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031 2r. I have not been able to discern what disease this was.

Schau.¹⁸¹ Nuremberg did this to prevent *Heimsuchung*. Its literal roots mean *home search*. The word can mean a simple a home visit, such as Mary received from Gabriel; a visit from God's friendly grace; or its most common usage: a visitation of God's punishment or the sacking and ravaging of a city from an invader. The term is most often associated with plague brought down by God as a result of communal sin. This concept related the safety and intactness of the home with that of the city walls. Every year the lepers gathered outside the imposing walls and every year they were ritualistically allowed to break the uncleanness prohibition. This practice was repeated on All Saints' and All Souls' Day, the time of year when all surrounding poor were indiscriminately let into the city to beg.

All of these ideas would impact city practices concerning the walls during the disease outbreaks of 1490s. The Lepraschau was again kept outside the walls. The poor people who gathered at the walls for All Saints' Day were also turned away. As the walls marked the boundary of the new hygiene regiments, city leaders could not permit the potential unclean airs that the lepers and poor would bring into the city. It was in this decade that Sebald Schreyer began his twenty-five year effort to establish the St. Sebastian's plague hospital outside the city walls. In parallel to leprosy, it had become apparent to the city leadership that plague victims themselves fostered the poisonous airs of plague. The council could not cast out their own; yet they had to maintain purity inside their city walls.

Conclusion

Leprosy set forth an important precedent: on the one hand, the keeping of the *unclean* inhabitants outside the city walls, and on the other hand, the ability of the city to practice

¹⁸¹ StadtAN A 21-4° Nr. 031 1v.-2r.

custodianship over the lepers' lives at arm's length. Nuremberg's four leprosy houses proved that that the money, provisions, and oversight of the council could radiate from the city center to the separated houses. The walls physically and metaphorically defined this juxtaposition and the paradox: they were separate yet together.

The Lepraschau shows moments of inclusion of foreign lepers who were not generally worthy of the city's custodianship; however, the city's temporary hosting of the lepers' bodies within the city offered spiritual benefit both to the lepers and the city. The inverted moments of admittance were geographically orchestrated following traditional boundaries of material and spiritual purity. However, when the poor and lepers pushed into "heterodox geographies" and exploited the city's desire for their inclusion, the city had limited ability to constrain them. At that point, the lepers' inclusion jeopardized the integrity of the city to the extent that the festival was transferred outside of the walls.

In my next chapter, the principles laid out for the management of Nuremberg's lepers will be applied to plague and syphilis patients. Leprosy set the precedent for purity maintenance in the face of disease and the housing of contaminating patients outside the city walls; however, the fate of the leprosaria continued to evolve with introduction of other diseases, political events, and socio-economic change.

Chapter 2:

Outside the Walls: The Foundation of the Plague and Syphilis Hospitals

My last chapter explored Nuremberg's four leprosaria that were established to protect the city from the physical corruption of lepers. It also looked at the Lepraschau as the ritualistic inclusion of foreign lepers in certain areas of the city. This chapter looks at the establishment of St. Sebastian lazaret for plague and the French house for syphilis. If leprosy showed the management of purity on a small scale, plague augmented the need for purity across the whole city landscape; the cataclysmic and poisonous impact of miasma called for purity from wall to wall. Corrupted objects, the dead and the sick were purged from the city.

Syphilis presented new challenges as its material corruption was entirely different than that of plague or leprosy. Syphilis was much harder to identify and contain. Instead of tainted objects and airs of plague, the city increased protective measures at the walls and attempted to identify obviously infected people. These two diseases show the city's protection of both the walls and resources extended to the separated hospitals.

Chapter Structure

The *first* section of this chapter explores the experience of plague in Nuremberg. The entire city landscape was enlivened with prescriptions designed to purge the city of "poisonous odors," ultimately resulting in *extramural* burial and St. Sebastian's plague hospital. In the *second* section, I explore the outbreak of syphilis in the last few years of the fifteenth-century. It follows the original custodianship of syphilis patients in the Holy Cross Hospital and, then, the later establishment of the French House as a part of the lazaret complex. My *third* section,

weaves a few themes from these two chapters together. It shows the consistent values held in Nuremberg of purity maintenance; separated and guarded custodianship in their hospitals; and the importance of geography to contagious disease management.

I. Plague

In 1482, Hans Folz described the signs and symptoms of plague: “that person does not eat very much, as he is full with the evil moisture, and soon after eating he wants to sleep, and has complaints of pain in the forehead. He then receives a discernible heat under the appearance of frost, which disturbs the spirit of life.” If the person was strong, the pox or buboes appeared; if weak, the sickness would manifest with a cough or an intense sickness, affirming, that a deep and fast poison had already taken root deep inside with quick resulting death.¹⁸² Folz’s description is consistent with the modern view of the three forms of plague: bubonic (swollen, blue/ black lymph nodes), pneumonic (respiratory), and septicemic (direct to the blood).¹⁸³ Plague did not cause the slow, full-body breakdown of leprosy; it was far more virulent and killed quickly.

An endowment book for the city’s plague hospital explained why plague happened: “God through the work of the influence over the celestial bodies [has let] the poison of air and the reign of pestilence befall these lands. As has happened about once every ten to twelve years in

¹⁸² Hans Folz, *Die Reimpaarsprüche*, 438. In the “strong” case, the infection was on a limb and was fought off by swollen dark colored lymph nodes. The second type was a form of plague that was transferred by breath or saliva that was taken became a respiratory infection, and the third was an infection directly to the blood causing septicemia and death usually within 24 hours.

¹⁸³ Joseph Patrick Byrne, “Septicemic plague,” “Pneumonic,” and “Bubonic Plague,” in *Encyclopedia of the Black Death* (Santa Barbara, Calif: ABC-CLIO, 2012), 322-323, 283-284, 59-60.

this worthy city of Nuremberg.”¹⁸⁴ In parallel to leprosy this sentence shows the causes of plague were both spiritually and materially rooted; in contrast to leprosy, however, it shows the central experience of plague that was different: it was communal, falling on the city of Nuremberg as a whole.

Spiritual Purging

Foremost, plague was caused by God’s judgment and wrath on the city:

According to the Almighty God, through the many sinful transgressions... foremost blasphemy of his holy names, foolishness, fornication, improper obnoxious behaviors against the love of neighbor among other misdeeds practiced in front of God [and] the highest punishable offenses... He has poured out his proper wrath over us... to punish and deeply ravage us (*heimsuchen*).¹⁸⁵

A spiritual purging through communal prayer and repentance was always the answer. In 1488, “dangerous and worrisome airs” prompted weekly processions throughout the city and special masses. Heinrich Steinhöwel, who wrote a plague regiment for the city of Ulm, reprinted in Nuremberg in 1495, recommended “fasting, prayer or alms giving.”¹⁸⁶ In 1492, the city again ordered special processions and also collected special alms to bake bread for the city’s poor.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ StadtAN A 21-2 Nr. 116 5v. *gottes durch die wurkung der einfluß der Cörper des himels sich in disen lannden vergiftung des Luftes und regirung/ der pestilenz begeben/ Alls sich dann gemainlich in zehen order zwelf jaren ungeverlich ein mal ereuget in diser loblichen stat Nuremberg*

¹⁸⁵ StAN Rst. Nbg Rep 53II Verz. III Nr. 62 *Nach dem der Allmechtig Gott/ durch das vilfeltig sündlicch ubertretten/ so nun ein gut zeut here alhie/ in manicherley weyse/ fürnemlich aber mit leßterung seins heyligen Götlichen names/ füllerey/ unzucht/ unbillichen beschwerungen/ Wider die liebe des nechsten/ vnd andern mer/ vor Got hoch strefflichen laßtern geübt/ davon auch noch nit abstanden wirdet/ zum höchsten verursacht/ und bewegt/ seinen billichen zorn/ vber vns außzugießen. und solch sundlich leben/ mit seiner Ruten/ der Pestilenzischen seucht zustraffen vnnnd heym zu suchen*

¹⁸⁶ Heinrich Steinhöwel, *Büchlein der Ordnung der pestilenz mit Widmungsvorrede des Autors an die Bürgerschaft von Ulm* (Ulm, 1473), n.p. *mit vaste()/ beten oder almüsen gebe()*

¹⁸⁷ Johannes Müllner, *Die Annalen der Reichsstadt Nürnberg von 1623*, edited by Michael Diefenbacher, and Walter Gebhardt (Nuremberg: Im Selbstverlag des Stadtrats, 2003) 3: 93, 129.

Other examples of alms throughout the 1490s included donations to a St. Rochus altar. St. Rochus, a plague saint popular in Venice often coupled with St. Sebastian, was brought to Nuremberg through the Imhoff family in the 1480s and 90s. The cult of St. Rochus experienced financial surges during outbreaks.¹⁸⁸ Steinhöwel argued, “All of these prayers [should be] devoutly spoken in the face of the sickness of evil pestilence and in the face of any damage to the body and soul.”¹⁸⁹

The common analogy for plague was arrows.¹⁹⁰ Arrows of God’s wrath hit the young and old, weak and strong, saint and sinner. While one could reason that the relatively small number whom God smote with leprosy may have merited the disease for sinful or moral reasons, plague visited everyone. In 1533 Andreas Osiander argued that both the pious and evil die during plague. For the sinful, it was the wrath of God; for the righteous, it was simply their time. Neither saint nor sinner could flee God’s appointed time. For everyone in the period, however, the solution was repentance and faith.¹⁹¹ Hans Sachs echoed this statement arguing that those

¹⁸⁸ Heinrich Dormeier, “St. Rochus, die Pest und die Imhoffs in Nürnberg vor und während der Reformation,” *Anzeiger des germanischen Nationalmuseums* (1985): 38-53.

¹⁸⁹ Heinrich Steinhöwel, *Büchlein*, 4.

¹⁹⁰ Pamela Berger, “Mice, Arrows, and Tumors: Medieval Plague Iconography North of the Alps,” *Piety and Plague: From Byzantium to the Baroque*, eds. Franco Mormando, and Thomas Worcester (Kirksville, Mo: Truman State University Press, 2007), 45.

¹⁹¹ After the Reformation, Osiander argues that plague falls on both the faithful and sinners no matter how far they flee from the dangerous airs. If God decided to take a faithful person to him, he should not fear; it was God’s timing. The unfaithful had cause to fear because there is nowhere to hide from God’s wrath. For the believer, as David says in Psalm 91, God “will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge.” Faith in God is like the tiniest of fire on rotten wood, no amount of darkness can put it out. Andreas Osiander, “Wie und wohin ein Christ fliehen soll,” in *Andreas Osiander Gesamtausgabe*, eds. Gerhard Müller and Gottfried Seebass (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Mohn, 1975), 391. *das ich yemand in disen erschrockenlicken leufften das fliehen oder ertzney zu geprauchten oder gefahrliche ort und krancke person zu meyden wehren oder widerrathen wölle, soferne der mensch darin nicht wider den glauben, noch Gottis gepot, noch wider sein berüff, noch wider die liebe des nechsten th(u)t.* Ronald Rittgers argues this change in tactics was directly a result of evangelical theology. Ronald Rittgers, “Protestants and Plague: The Case of the 1562/3 Pest in Nürnberg,” in *Piety and*

who daily fear *heimsuchen* take it inside their hearts, thereby, causing longer and deeper torture and fear within themselves.¹⁹²

Colin Jones argues that plague was a carnivalesque time without the party. It disrupted the normative spirituality such as church services and funeral rights, but it was still time for religious moralizing. “Just as the human body after plague refound definition and stability in its contours, so the mystical body had to be redefined and recommitted to a same spiritual regimen after its unholy symptoms, quasi-humoral expulsions, and violent purgations.”¹⁹³ Plague penetrated the walls of Nuremberg and visited all within, *heimsuchen*, to punish sin and ultimately to return the city to him. The purgation of immorality and disbelief from the body and soul reaffirmed the intactness of the communal body. The processions, altars and city-wide almsgiving during outbreaks were symbols of that return to God in civic space and of prayerful hope against future *heimsuchung*.

Material Purging

Like leprosy, educated authorities also sought physical explanations for the plague. Due to its appearance every ten years, plague was linked with the movement of celestial bodies, a notion gaining favor as part of the Renaissance and the reconnection to Platonic astrology.¹⁹⁴

Plague could be anticipated by watching for strange weather patterns such as a cold summer or

Plague: From Byzantium to the Baroque, eds. Franco Mormando and Thomas Worcester (Kirksville, Mo: Truman State University Press, 2007), 139.

¹⁹² Hans Sachs, "Der eingang diß vierdten buchs," reproduced in Carolin Porzelt, *Die Pest in Nürnberg: Leben und Herrschen in Pestzeiten in der Reichsstadt Nürnberg, 1562-1713* (St. Ottilien: EOS, 2000), 191.

¹⁹³ Colin Jones, "Plague and its Metaphors in Early Modern France," in *Representations*, no. 53 (1996): 109.

¹⁹⁴ See William Eamon's discussion of Astrology and plague in William Eamon "Astrology and Society," *A Companion to Astrology in the Renaissance*, edited by Brendan Dooley (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 148-154.

hot winter. The council did indeed watch these elements and canceled a number of events “because of strange airs”; cancellations often occurred when plague did not erupt. Examples of this form of the preemptive move occurred in 1504 and 1505 when the city canceled carnival because of the dangerous airs.¹⁹⁵ On an earthly level, the poisonous airs of miasma caused plague.

Miasma theory was the predominant medical paradigm in the medieval and early modern medical community. When the air or “vapors” were polluted with anything rotten or putrid, it would enter the body causing excess humors to pool in the lymph nodes or putrefy the heart. These foul airs could be caused by the alignment of the stars, vapors from an earthquakes, weather irregularities or human filth.¹⁹⁶ By the 1480s and 90s, city governments were actively promoting plans to limit their vulnerability to these airs and, thereby, the disease.

Nuremberg patrician families paid to make these recommendations available to the city. In 1494, a “little note for pestilence” was printed and circulated.¹⁹⁷ In 1482, Nuremberg patrician, Anthony Haller commissioned Hans Folz to produce a full plague regiment. In these advice books, flight was the highest recommendation. Folz quoted the old Latin adage, “Flee fast, flee far, and return late,” adding the phrase, “these are the three herbs in emergency.”¹⁹⁸ The rich and connected simply fled from infested cities. Many of Nuremberg’s elite fled to estates or

¹⁹⁵ Müllner, *Die annalen Der Reichsstadt Nurnberg von 1623*. 3: 258, 380.

¹⁹⁶ Byrne, “Miasma Theory,” in *Encyclopedia of the Black Death*, 236-237.

¹⁹⁷ Charlotte Bühl, “Die Pestepidemien des ausgehenden Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit in Nürnberg (1483/4 bis 1533/34)” in *Nürnberg und Bern; zwei Reichsstädte und ihre Landgebiete; neun Beiträge*, eds. Urs Martin Zahnd and Rudolf Endres (Erlangen: Universitätsbund Erlangen-Nuremberg, 1990), 134.

¹⁹⁸ Hans Folz, *Die Reimpaarsprüche*, 434. *die forcht einwurcsel, pald fliehen, ferr fliehen, spet widerkumben, das nit die lesten zeit erger werden dan di ersten*. This recommendation drew derision from Osiander and Hans Sachs for not showing sufficient faith in God.

had standing arrangements with other cities such as Nördlingen.¹⁹⁹ In 1494, so many people had fled that it was difficult to find personnel to oversee city events such as the Lepraschau.²⁰⁰ When the Nuremberg city council demanded the presence of Council attorney Christoph Scheuerl, he snapped back that he had no intention of returning when so many people were dying in his own household. With a growing poor population, however, at least two-thirds of the city had no means to flee.²⁰¹

Folz sympathized, that this plague is one “which, of course, no one would like to fight...” in themselves, but on the other hand, “...not everyone would be able to avoid such poisons much less to flee them, their house, their city or their region.”²⁰²

Those who could not flee from the city needed to “manage the evil and poisonous air and to strengthen the heart and other limbs of the body.”²⁰³ The first step was to keep a purity and cleanliness in their own homes. Residents needed to treat “the air of your home in a learned manner, cleansed according to the best [advice].” They cleansed the air using a combination of herbs and dry wood, purging the home of all fog and moisture.²⁰⁴ Other recommendations

¹⁹⁹ Nüzel Friedrich, "Nürnberger Patrizier in Nördlingen im Jahre 1562 (Reichsstadt Nördlingen)," in *Historischer Verein für Nördlingen und Umgebung* (1912): 80-86.

²⁰⁰ Charlotte Bühl, "Die Pestepidemien des ausgehenden Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit in Nürnberg," 132.

²⁰¹ A letter from Martin Behaim said that one-third of the population fled, which means that two-thirds could not. Bühl, "Die Pestepidemien," 127.

²⁰² Folz, *Die Reimpaarsprüche*, 429. ...*das es allweg ein besundre plag were, der niemand widersten möcht, und das auch kein sülcher vergiffter zu scheuhen were noch in zu flyhen, auch das haus, stat oder die jegent*

²⁰³ "Regimen praeseruatium a pestilencia ad petitionem consulatus Nurenberge," Quoted in Sudhoff/Hartmann Schedel "Rat und Ärzte der Stadt Nürnberg und ihr Vorgehen gegen die Syphilis im Jahre 1496. Maßnahmen einiger westdeutschen Städte," in *Studien zur Geschichte der Medizin* (1912): 25. *Diese rechtuertigen den posen vnd vergifften lufft vnd stercken das hertz vnd ander gelyder des menschen.*

²⁰⁴ Heinrich Steinhöwel, *Büchlein*, 11-12. *So werde der lufft dyner wonung gereinigt künstlich nach dem besten.*

included “doors and windows standing open throughout the city.”²⁰⁵ To increase circulation, windows and doors were opened and closed at specified times of day.

Winds needed to be taken before sunrise and after sundown. They were to avoid the most evil air of midday and dusk. The residents themselves were to determine what was useful.²⁰⁶ In other words, they were to use their own discretion to air out their homes when the heat of the day did not waft smells of excrement, animal carcasses, trash, or corpses into their homes. In the evening, they were to burn incense using myrrh, currants, and aloe in a light fire with dry wood.²⁰⁷ Steinhöwel further recommended a mixture of herbs, among them rumex (docks or sorrels), gooseberry, peas, pomegranates, rose water, elderberry or wild leaves to mask the airs.²⁰⁸ This process of smoking or fumigating was increasingly referred to throughout the period, particularly in the city hall, churches, the lazaret itself, and other populated places.

Along with a good, light diet, herbs were also to be ingested to purify the body. These remedies acted both as prophylactics and as purgatives. Once the poisonous airs had entered the body, a medicinal paste was dissolved and ingested; the medicine would cause the patient to sweat and thus sweat out the excess humors.²⁰⁹ City apothecaries produced incense, tablets, powders, and pastes composed of the herbs. Folz warned about all the *Heinz und Kunz*, two German names used as an idiomatic phrase meaning every little person or every Tom, Dick and

²⁰⁵ Hans Folz, *Die Reimpaarsprüche*, 432.

²⁰⁶ Heinrich Steinhöwel, *Büchlein*, 13; Heinrich Dormeier, “St. Rochus,” 33.

²⁰⁷ Hans Folz, *Die Reimpaarsprüche*, 433.

²⁰⁸ Heinrich Steinhöwel, *Büchlein*, 12-13.

²⁰⁹ “Regimen praeseruatium a pestilencia,” 26; StadtBib N 1an Med 86.

Harry, i.e., every charlatan, who wished to produce treatments which might contain harmful materials. Thus, he recommended the remedies sold by the city's approved apothecaries.²¹⁰

When traveling throughout the city, advisers recommended avoiding the stinking things on the streets and the cemeteries including, "graves, feces, [and] standing water."²¹¹ Folz recommended avoiding groups of people in the churches, in crowded markets, in taverns, in common bath houses, and at dances. He quipped, "at times... a poisoner desires very much to poison, still if possible, just one more."²¹² One could carry saffron or other expensive herbs to mask the smells, the German equivalent to "a pocket full of posies."

There were two kinds of plague regimens in the period: recommendations for individuals, as seen above, and city-wide regulations. The council also ordered the regimens printed on long broadsheets and posted in markets, taverns, and on church doors. The regimens included explicit directions to "house fathers" as heads of households to make sure family members and servants were informed "that no one has the excuse of ignorance."²¹³

Purging Waste

Regimens were developed to "protect the common alleys and streets from excrement or any other kind of uncleanness."²¹⁴ They specified that excrement was to go in common designated areas, washed down either the Pegnitz River or the Fischbach stream, or carried to

²¹⁰ Hans Folz, *Die Reimpaarsprüche*, 433. The city council was very invested in keeping out charlatan practitioners particularly during times of plague. These warnings were quite common in regiments produced for the city.

²¹¹ Folz, *Die Reimpaarsprüche*, 433; Heinrich Steinhöwel, *Büchlein*, 13. *zu flyhen sint die schmeck der greber, des mistz, still stender wasser.*

²¹² Folz, *Die Reimpaarsprüche*, 432. *wan als ein vergiffter fil vergifften mag, noch müglicher fil einen.*

²¹³ StAN Rep. 53II Verz. III Nr. 7/1; Stadt A6 Nr. 111 1r.- 1v.

²¹⁴ StAN Rep. 53II Verz. III Nr. 7/1; Stadt A6 Nr. 111 1r. *der Darm oder andere unsauberkeit/ auff die gemainen gassen vnd strassen zuschütten.*

their private homes. It explicitly forbade “young or old from squatting on the street bringing one’s body to completion.”²¹⁵ Animal feces were not to be left on the street longer than three days.²¹⁶ Pigs and other livestock were to be removed from the city as their feces and stink were dangerous to the airs.²¹⁷ The city hired personnel to clean the streets and remove dangerous elements. The *Hundschlager*, the dog slaughterer, killed feral animals that roamed the city and carried any carcasses out through the *Tiergärtnerthor*.²¹⁸ The common latrines were cleaned out nightly.²¹⁹ There were many names for the man responsible for cleaning these facilities: the *Mistmeister* excrement master or *Nachtmeister* Night-master. Although he held a very low status, his work was especially important for purifying the stench by removing feces, soiled straw, and moldy hay from market places and other densely populated areas.²²⁰

Every regimen commanded that the poisoned clothing of sick or dead be carefully conveyed to the outflow of the Pegnitz River, where they could be burned or expertly washed.²²¹ As sick people sweated in and soiled their clothes and bedlinens, toxins from the body caused the material to become exceptionally odoriferous and therefore exceptionally dangerous. By the turn of the seventeenth-century, the city appointed specialized washerwomen and guards to secure the linens after someone died within the city (See Chapter 4).

The city also increasingly shut down bathhouses that had reported plague and informed the public to avoid particular houses that had been infested. The council also limited the

²¹⁵ StAN Rep. 53II Verz. III Nr. 7/1; Stadt A6 Nr. 111 1v. *Auch sol niemand von alten oder jungen auff der gassen niderhauchen Seins leibs gemach zuvolbringen*

²¹⁶ StAN Rep. 53II Verz. III Nr. 7/1; StadtAN A6 Nr. 111 1v.

²¹⁷ StAN Rep. 53II Verz. III Nr. 7/1; StadtAN A6 Nr. 111 2r.

²¹⁸ Ernst Mummenhof, *Die öffentliche Gesundheits- und Krankenpflege im alten Nürnberg* (Neustadt/Aisch: C.Schmitt, 1898), 27.

²¹⁹ Mummenhof, *Die öffentliche Gesundheits- und Krankenpflege*, 3-15.

²²⁰ StadtAN B19/11 Nr. 481 10v.

²²¹ StAN Rep. 53II Verz. III Nr. 7/1; StadtAN A6 Nr. 111 2r.

exposure of surviving household members to other city inhabitants. The first extreme case of this limitation was in the particularly severe outbreak of 1494 when city leaders noticed that the plague ravaged Nuremberg's Jewish population. The Jewish community in Nuremberg had settled between the central market and fruit market in the thirteenth-century. Because of their perceived plague-polluting power, the council forbade the Jewish population from moving among the non-Jewish community, going to the city hall, visiting bath houses or receiving any healing bath services.²²² Their cemetery, against the traditional Jewish custom, was inside the city walls. It was originally established outside the walls but was integrated when the walls were expanded. During the 1474 and 1494 plagues, the council commanded that the dead from the Jewish population be buried outside of the city. Some scholars have speculated that they were buried in the cemetery of St. Jobst leper house and chapel, northeast of the city walls.²²³ Because they believed that foul odors caused plague, decaying corpses presented a central problem during plague.

²²² Müllner, *Die annalen Der Reichsstadt Nurnberg*, 3:138.

²²³ I have no evidence to suggest that the city of Nuremberg expelled its Jewish population in 1498 because of their presumed spread of plague; nor have I found any connection with well-poisoning or explicit blame of plague-spreading because of the Jewish population's disbelief or of a conspiracy; however, there is a correlation between plague in 1494 and syphilis beginning in 1496 and the purgation of the Jewish population in 1498. Jewish communities across Europe experienced many purgations during this period. The most prominent examples were the rescinding of rights in the Holy Roman Empire, their expulsion from or forced conversion in Spain and Portugal in the 1490s, and in the early sixteenth-century with the Reuchlin Affair. The majority of the Jewish population from Nuremberg moved to Prague, but to the annoyance of city leaders, part of the community remained in the Margrave's territory in the city of Fürth. In 1533 when the first major plague since the Reformation hit Nuremberg, there are records of Osiander sending preachers to the Jewish community in Fürth. This preaching may indicate that they believed that the Jewish community's disbelief, usury, or material uncleanness brought God's wrath or, converting the Jewish population was a particularly righteous deed during such scary times. Bühl, "Die Pestepidemien," 153; Emil Reicke, *Geschichte der Reichsstadt Nürnberg: Von dem ersten urkundlichen Nachweis ihres Bestehens bis zu ihrem Uebergang an das Königreich Bayern 1806* (Nuremberg: J. P. Raw, 1896), 479-486; Erika Rummel, *The Case Against Johann Reuchlin: Religious and Social Controversy in Sixteenth-Century Germany* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002).

Guarding the Gates

Nuremberg also sought to keep any signs of sickness from entering through the walls. The city posted guards at the gates to look for signs of incoming sickness. The council commanded the use of physical force if necessary: “to the gate lockers that they again lock the gates at the usual time, and similarly to say to the doorkeepers to use physical blows in the proper manner.”²²⁴ On September 16, 1562, a guard was censured for leaving his post at the *Frauenthor*. He had an emergency with his family and left the gate unguarded. The council ordered that there was no personal emergency so great as to call gate guards away from their posts, and that they could rest in the fact that the council would address any emergency themselves.²²⁵ Citizens and inhabitants were forbidden to bring into the city a sick foreign person, whether family member or friend.²²⁶ The city also opened the gates thirty minutes later and closed thirty minutes earlier; each day the guards were ordered to use more diligence as the gates were opened for a shorter period of time.²²⁷ As seen in the previous chapter, in 1494, when the poor people waited outside the gates in the St. Johannis city section to be let in for All Saints’ Day begging, the council did not let them in. Instead they were allowed only to collect alms in the graveyards outside the walls.²²⁸

²²⁴ RV 8 Jan. 1563 #1218 28v. *den Thorsperrern ansagen Unnd bevelhen lass(), die Thor widerumb zu gewandlicher Zeit auf unnd zu zusperren, dergleich() auch den Thuruern sagen, mit dem schlag() recht umbzugeh()*.

²²⁵ RV 16 Sept. 1562 #1213 41v.

²²⁶ StAN Rep. 53II Verz. III Nr. 7/1; StadtAN A6 Nr. 111 2r.

²²⁷ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 66v.

²²⁸ Müllner, *Die annalen Der Reichsstadt Nurnberg*, 3: 138.

Throughout the sixteenth-century, the regimens grew in specificity as the city expanded its administrative structure to enforce the regimens; however, there was no substantial change in the belief of miasma's cause of plague or how it could be avoided.²²⁹

Purging the Dead

Folz recommended that Nuremberg keep the dead clean or have them quickly removed from the city.²³⁰ Authorities noticed a correlation between bodies being buried in the chapels of monasteries and the annihilation of monks and nuns within; in 1494, fifteen monks died in St. Egidien monastery alone. So many corpses were being buried in the city's churchyards that it was almost impossible to dig new graves without disturbing the fresh, older graves. While rotting flesh was an obvious source of the dangerous miasma, the removal of the dead carried a much heavier social weight than the removal of waste products listed above. In so doing, the council acted against a very real boundary of the *Corpus Christianum*, of both the living and dead, within the city walls.

The council recommended bringing soil from other building sites to cover the fresh corpses. In 1478, the council ruled that any external or foreign dead bodies could not be brought into the city for burial.²³¹ They posted guards at the gates to enforce the policy. Nuremberg used

²²⁹ StAN Rep. 53II Verz. III Nr. 7/1; StadtAN A6 Nr. 111 1r.- 1v.; StadtAN A6 Nr. 114; StAN Rep. 53II Verz. III Nr. 62; StadtAN A6 Nr. 154; StAN Rep. 53II Verz. III Nr. 66; StAN Rep. 63II Verz. III Nr. 133; StAN Rep 63II Verz. III Nr. 137; StadtAN A6 Nr. 246; StadtAN A6 Nr. 247; StAN Rep. 52b Nr. 253.

²³⁰ Hans Folz, *Die Reimpaarsprüche*, 430.

²³¹ Charlotte Bühl, "Die Pestepidemien des ausgehenden Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit in Nürnberg," 152.

the St. Jobst cemetery for its inhabitants or servants who had died outside the city, reducing the number of incoming bodies from surrounding villages and patrician estates.²³²

During the outbreak of 1494, extramural burial was expanded from applying to those who died from the outside of the city, to those who died within the walls as well. On December 21, the stench in Nuremberg was so great that the council called for the last burial in a parish churchyard. The council ordered that the wife of patrician Hans Imhoff be the last person to be buried inside the city for the duration of this “time of death.”²³³ On March 21, 1519, the bishop of Bamberg consecrated the newly expanded St. Johannis cemetery, after it was widened to accommodate the influx of bodies.²³⁴

The council’s position on extramural burial was opposed by patrician families, who fought for their right to be buried in holy and prominent places within the city, and by religious orders, who objected to the absence of the full religious customs. The dead figured prominently in late medieval civic and religious culture. Burial in proximity to the altar indicated to the community the piety and magnanimity of the dead. It also facilitated the dead’s intercession on behalf of the living, and inversely masses given for the soul of the dead in purgatory. In contrast, Martin Luther advocated that the extramural cemeteries provided a nice and calm alternative space compared to the desecrated and well-trodden churchyards within the city; moreover, it was something a responsible Christian should do in light of the poisonous airs.²³⁵ The religious orders

²³² Bühl, “Die Pestepidemien des ausgehenden Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit in Nürnberg,” 152.

²³³ Müllner, *Die annalen Der Reichsstadt Nurnberg von 1623*, 3:138.

²³⁴ Müllner, *Die annalen Der Reichsstadt Nurnberg von 1623*, 3: 440, 459. He also consecrated St. Rochus and St. Peter's leper house's cemetery.

²³⁵ Craig Koslofsky, *The Reformation of the Dead*, 46-50. While not exclusive to Protestant cities, extramural burial was related to Reformation theology, drawing the derision of Catholic theologian George Witzel. He tauntingly asked if cities, such as Nuremberg, that buried outside

argued that only the people who died in the newly built St. Sebastian's plague hospital should be buried in St. Johannis cemetery.²³⁶ Against all opposition, the 1521 plague regimens warned the city that no more bodies could be buried in internal churchyards, whether they died inside or outside the city. The ordinance pointed out, "Rather the honorable council has provided several useful orders concerning the burial of the dead before the city."²³⁷

Corpses were cleaned and sowed into sackcloth. In the cemetery, the dead were to be covered in chalk in order to help preserve them and keep the putrid smell from seeping into the city.²³⁸ The grave diggers were instructed to erect a hut which protected the chalk from rain.²³⁹ Even outside the city walls under layers of chalk, the pile of bodies was a problem. The smell of St. Johannis cemetery was blamed for making many of the local house servants fall ill.²⁴⁰ As populations grew, the sheer number of corpses made burial within the city during non-plague times untenable as well.

When it became clear that burials were to be permanently transferred outside the city, the Imhoff family endowed a new chapel and graveyard to the southwest of the city, St. Rochus chapel. The chapel, which was finished in 1528, gave patrician families a respectable place to bury their dead.²⁴¹ The St. Rochus cemetery slowly accommodated a broader populace

the walls stopped having plague: "you can lock the dead bodies outside your gates, but I would be impressed if you could lock death outside." 52.

Koslofsky makes a slight error regarding Nuremberg saying that they had sovereignty over this land outside the walls. This strip of land between Nuremberg and the Margrave, including the chapel connected to the cemetery, was a huge point of contention, 42.

²³⁶ Mummenhof, *Die öffentliche Gesundheits- und Krankenpflege*, 24-25.

²³⁷ StAN Rep. 53II Verz. III Nr. 7/1; Stadt A6 Nr. 111 2r.

²³⁸ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 29v.

²³⁹ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 p. 23v.

²⁴⁰ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 30v.

²⁴¹ Dormeier, "St. Rochus," 31-52. In 1582, the city opened a plague hospital as a smaller form of St. Sebastian's holding approximately 60 to 100 patients. Porzelt, *Die Pest in Nürnberg*, 86. Kurt Pilz, *St. Johannis und St. Rochus in Nürnberg: die Kirchhöfe mit den Vorstädten St.*

eventually hosting its own smaller plague hospital; however, during sixteenth-century plague outbreaks, the majority of the burials still took place in St. Johannis.²⁴²

In the removal of the dead, the council extended the customary boundary of the burial of the dead from next to the parish church to immediately outside the city. The boundary of purity within the walls could no longer suffer the sheer amount of bodies and accompanying smell. As St. Johannis was widened, it was made more ornate to signal the respectability of extramural burial. In 1506-1508, known sculptor Adam Kraft erected reliefs of the Stations of the Cross. The stations spanned the distance from the castle to St. Johannis; the inhabitants approached Christ's death as they walked to their own burial ground.²⁴³ Their bodies were outside of the boundary of material purity, but not outside the Corpus Christianum.

Purging of the Sick

As the separation of the dead for the purity of the city caused conflict, so did the separation of the living. Regarding the sick, Folz recommended that they should "avoid wandering around" and that people should not "wait on them or speak to them."²⁴⁴ The living sick produced polluting smells and fluids, not unlike corpses, prompting attempts to separate them physically. Forms of plague houses already existed in Marseille (1383) and Venice (1423).²⁴⁵ In 1490 Konrad Toppler, patrician of Nuremberg, died without an heir and willed the

Johannis und Gostenhof (Hans Carl, 1984); R. Endres, "Nürnberger Bildungswesen zur Zeit der Reformation," In *MVGN* 71 (1984), 109.

²⁴² StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481.

²⁴³ Christian Geyer, "Zur Geschichte der Adam Krafftschen Stationen." *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 28 (1905): 351–364, 495–511.

²⁴⁴ Hans Folz, *Die Reimpaarsprüche*, 432.

²⁴⁵ Porzelt, *Die Pest in Nürnberg*, 84. Bühl, "Die Pestepidemien des ausgehenden Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit in Nürnberg," 142. Of the few plague hospitals built outside the city

small sum of 160 G to “a house at St. Sebastian.”²⁴⁶ This donation enabled Sebald Schreyer, Sigmund Bessler, and Conrad and Lienhard Marstaller to establish a hospital “which in the time of pestilence the poisoned pestilent people should on their desire be taken in and have all their spiritual and physical needs looked after.”²⁴⁷

The donation book goes on to say that the hospital was intended for people without the means to flee their own city or home, “in which all of these people could be held contained from others who had been un-poisoned.”²⁴⁸ It was meant for those whose families had been ravaged by plague, but they had survived and suffered alone. Before the foundation of St. Sebastian’s, some of these sick were brought to the central hospital, the Holy Ghost Hospital. In the 1490s, the Holy Ghost expanded its facilities to include a “sick” section in order to separate the polluting sick; however, their separate space was inadequate. A large number of un-poisoned inhabitants “bec[a]me poisoned.”²⁴⁹ In 1494, when the Holy Ghost ran out of room, they used the Holy Cross, northwest of the walls, as an overflow hospital.²⁵⁰ Therefore, Schreyer, Bessler and the Marstellers sought to build the lazaret, “a common house or hospital outside of the city, which was funded with several accruing interest endowments, within which each and every citizen, male and female, their servants, and inhabitants of the city who are burdened with such a disease and for the guests, who lie here attacked by the disease, their needs can be looked

walls in German speaking lands, St. Sebastian’s was the oldest. Others were built in Augsburg, Hamburg, and Regensburg.

²⁴⁶ StadtAN A 21-2 Nr. 116 1r-1v.

²⁴⁷ StadtAN A 21-2 Nr. 116 2r.

²⁴⁸ StadtAN A 21-2 Nr. 116 5v. *daran dieselben alls von andern unvergifften menschen gesundert hetten mügen enthallten werden.*

²⁴⁹ StadtAN A 21-2 Nr. 116 5r.

²⁵⁰ Ulrich Knefelkamp, *Das Heilig-Geist-Spital in Nürnberg vom 14.-17. Jahrhundert: Geschichte, Struktur, Alltag* (Nuremberg: Selbstverlag des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg, 1989), 190-203.

after.”²⁵¹ To provide them with “a place to lie, confession, Communion, physicians, food, drink and assistance and all other necessities.”²⁵²

The interest from Toppler’s original endowment needed to be massively supplemented by other donations.²⁵³ The bishop of Bamberg endorsed the charitable house, and was ready to lay the first stone on Easter Sunday; however, the plans were halted by the council.²⁵⁴ The council generally opposed the hospital as it knew that it would rely on civic resources despite the many admonitions to the contrary by Sebald Schreyer. The council repeatedly asked for expert reports and recommendations to be made, possibly as a stalling tactic. Finally, it was decided that the bishop would lay the first stone on August 5, 1497, but in secret, rather than as a huge public event. To cover the costs, Sebald Scheyer loaned the 6,825 Gulden (4,884 G. For stone and 1,941 G. for brick) to the city accounts.²⁵⁵ Plans stopped and started as donations and loans were secured. One court case from 1502 shows that two parties embroiled in a fight were each required to buy 10 G of stone for the building of the lazaret.²⁵⁶ In 1503, the plans were bogged down once again with heavy debate within the council.

Schreyer continued fighting for the hospital but it met with greater opposition from the outside in 1507, by their neighbor Margrave Frederick of Brandenburg-Ansbach-Kulmbach. The margrave complained about the lazaret to the Swabian League, a group of princes and imperial cities that joined forces for mutual defense and monitoring of constitutional rights in the

²⁵¹ StadtAN A 21-2 Nr. 116 5v.- 6r. *Ein gemain haus oder spital ausserhalb der stat zu pawen und mit ettlichen ewig zinsen zuversehen dahin ein yeder Burger burgerin ir eehalten und Inwoner diser stat/ des mit solicher kranckheit beladen wirdet/ auch gesst[edie] mit solicher kranckhait hie begriffen wurden gelegt/ unnd mit nortruft verseen werden mug*

²⁵² StadtAN A 21-2 Nr. 116 7r. *Mit leger peichten Sacramenten/ Artzten/ Speis und gedranck/ wart und allen anndern nottuften versehen warden.*

²⁵³ StadtAN A 21-2 Nr. 116 6v.

²⁵⁴ StadtAN A 21-2 Nr. 116 23v.-24r.

²⁵⁵ StadtAN A 21-2 Nr. 116 29r.-31v.

²⁵⁶ StadtAN B 14/II P 61r. 15 July 1502.

empire.²⁵⁷ The margrave argued that the building of a large stone structure outside of the city was a large fortification in the *Burggraben*. The *Burggraben* was a particular radius of land outside of the margrave's castle to which he was given rights. In 1427, a *demilitarization zone* of sorts was established in the narrow strip of land to the west of the city between the two powers. The margrave argued that the hospital was established within the limits of his land rights.²⁵⁸ A commission, composed of Dr. Johan Kuchenmaister, Dieterich von Westersteten, Hans von Hurnhaim and Ulrich Strauß von Nördlingen, investigated the margrave's claim that Nuremberg's gigantic stone building was a fortification designed for the margrave's disadvantage. The city could have easily built the hospital up-stream on the Pegnitz on the east side of the city with little opposition, but Nuremberg wanted to build the lazaret at the outflow of the river. The filth, therefore, traveled down-river to the margrave's land and his city of Fürth.²⁵⁹ In 1508, the commission ruled that the building was not a fortification nor was its chapel, and that Nuremberg was within its rights.²⁶⁰

Aside from the opposition of the margrave, the council wanted to use building materials of the lazaret for other purposes.²⁶¹ Financial difficulties plagued the building as its cost soared to over 15,000 Gulden. Around 1515, the final building phase was described by Schreyer. The

²⁵⁷ Michael Diefenbacher, "Nürnberg, Reichsstadt: Territorium," in *Historisches Lexikon Bayerns*, last modified September 6, 2012, accessed March 6, 2014. http://www.historisches-lexikon-bayerns.de/artikel/artikel_45857.

²⁵⁸ Kasimir Brandenburg-Ansbach Markgraf and Georg Brandenburg-Ansbach Markgraf, *Libellus summarius der Herrn Markgrafen zu Brandenburg contra Bürgermeister und Rat der Stadt Nürnberg, ihre Spitalpfleger, auch andere ihre Bürger daselbst. In Sachen das Lazarett und die neuen Gebäude belangend* (Speyer, 1534), 2v.

²⁵⁹ The competition still today between the two cities is so intense that armed guards line the stadiums and train stations when the two play each other in football.

²⁶⁰ Markgraf, *Libellus summarius*, 3ar.

²⁶¹ StadtAN A 21-2 Nr. 116 56, 65r-69r. I have a suspicion that the wood was for the French House. The council wanted to diminish Schreyer's grand plan to accommodate syphilis patients. He was not in agreement.

structure consisted of four parts which together were approximately 200x 90x 20 *Shuhe*.²⁶² In the middle was a path that was 18 *Schuhe* wide for an altar. On the lower level, there was a covered pathway and storage area that joined the four parts of the building. The pathway had a large reinforced gate facing St. Johannis. The wide gate was designed for easy movement of the sick, corpses, personnel and resources without blockages of snow or rain. The rooms were engineered to allow drainage of any water or moisture, and each had windows for appropriate airing out.²⁶³ There were 16 patient rooms designed for two beds each; thus the original design accommodated 32 beds for patients. As sharing beds was common in this period, it would have accommodated approximately 96 patients. However, by 1533, Lazarus Spengler reported 490 inhabitants in St. Sebastian's shoving beds and patients wherever they could.²⁶⁴ Schreyer resigned as overseer in 1516 when the council refused to spend the money on a four-part building, opting for a two-building design. Although Schreyer resigned, it is reasonable that most of his specifications were

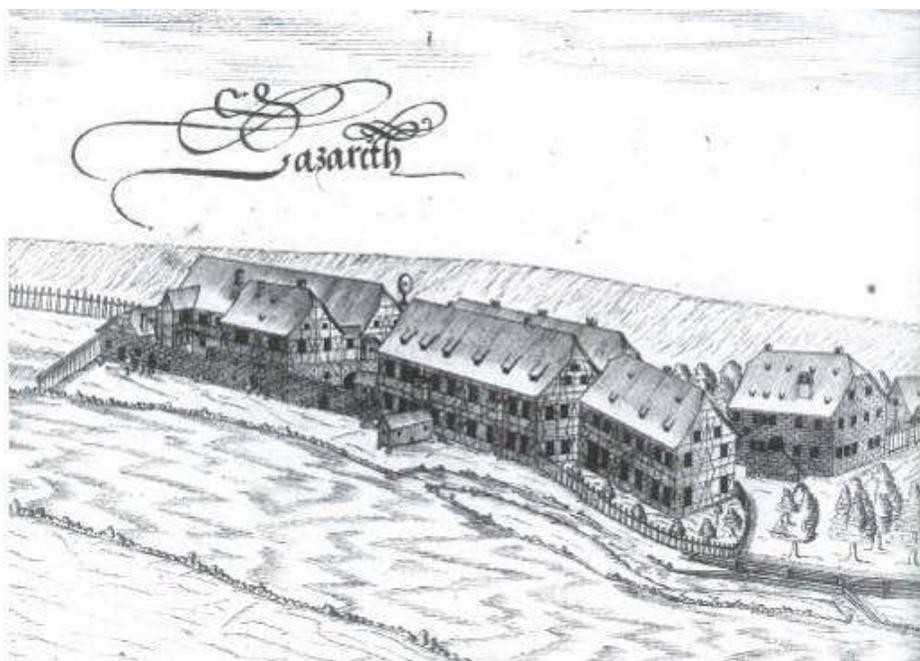
²⁶² *Shuhe* is literally shoe in English. It was approximately the size of a foot.

²⁶³ StadtAN A 21-2 Nr. 116 35r.

²⁶⁴ J.K. Ohlau, "Neue Quellen zur Familiengeschichte der Spengler, Lazarus Spengler und seine Söhne," in *MVG* 52 (1963/64), 242.

applied as they were designed on general principles of plague management of the time. The central conflict was over the wood that would be used for such a large roof to bring the four pieces together.²⁶⁵ (See Image: Lazaret).

Although it was not completely finished until 1528, the St. Sebastian's lazaret took in its first plague victims in 1521, the year after the death of Sebald Schreyer. Few details of the first years were recorded. City chronicler Johannes Müllner simply notes, "On the 17th of October the lazaret was opened. The emperor [Charles V] had decreed that all the sick should be carried out of the city that no one should die in the city and then be buried within the city. [The outbreak] lasted until April of the next year."²⁶⁶ This endorsement of the lazaret by the Emperor reflected



²⁶⁵ Sebald Scheyer gave up his position in 1516 when the council refused to build his four buildings under one roof design. They then only built two buildings close together. The lack of a wagon entrance that Scheyer had argued for may give a hint as to why the sick were transported on chair/stretchers rather than any form of wagon and why the Posslers had to hand-carry baskets with resources (Chapter 3). E. Caesar, "Sebald Schreyer, ein Lebensbild aus dem vorreformatorischen Nürnberg," in *MVGN* 56 (1969), 75.

²⁶⁶ Müllner, *Die annalen Der Reichsstadt Nurnberg von 1623*, 3: 464. *als daß man den siebenzehenden Oct. das Laz. geöffnet. Solchs hat der Rat dem Kayserlichen Regiment zur Nachrichtung und darneben anzeigen lassen, daß sie verfüegen wolten, alle Krancke aus der Statt ins Lazaret zu tragen und niemand, so an der Seuch gestorben, in der Statt begraben zu lasen.*

his general support of extramural burial; it appears that his endorsement of the lazaret was a side product of his support for removing the dead from intramural burial sites (See Chapter 4).

Patients

In 1533, the city used the facilities in earnest, taking in approximately 1,100 patients.²⁶⁷ Between January 1562 and April 1563, 3,349 patients were taken into the lazaret. While 1,606 died, remarkably, 1,671 *wider gesund* returned in health to the city.²⁶⁸ The names of patients who gained entrance to the lazaret are largely lost to history. Accurate records succumbed to the chaos of plague; furthermore, available records used the names of institutions interchangeably and only general descriptions of patients (if at all). For instance, “Jorg Kraltzen the sick day laborer because he worked for so long here, allowed entrance into the lazaret.”²⁶⁹ However, the city of Nuremberg reported who would gain entrance into the lazaret in its overly pious defense of the lazaret complex during its legal proceedings against the margrave. It stated that the Toppler endowment and administration in 1490 was meant “toward use and good, and to honor God, to help the poor citizens, inhabitants, servants, and *fremd* (foreigners) who were blighted with the sickness of plague in Nuremberg to their comfort and charity.”²⁷⁰ This overstatement of altruistic intentions conflicted with the statement in the endowment book that does not mention *fremd*, foreigner or alien, but guests with two important conditions: who fell sick while visiting the city and who lie here incapacitated. The council also massaged the truth in stating that they

²⁶⁷ StAN Rep. 52a Nr. 130 313; there are some reports of the lazaret being used for the English sweating sickness that struck between 1527-1528. Müllner, *Die annalen Der Reichsstadt Nurnberg von 1623*, 3: 586-587. This is consistent with the fact that the *Lepraschau* was locked out of the city in 1528.

²⁶⁸ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 80r.

²⁶⁹ RV 3 July 1562 #1211 14v. *Jorg Kraltzen den Krannken taglohner weil er so lanng hie gearbeit, ins lazaret nemen lasst*. This could be for plague or syphilis.

²⁷⁰ Markgraf, *Libellus summarius*, 2av.

had not kept the complex a secret in 1497 when they laid the first stone. This statement was in complete opposition to the record of the endowment book.²⁷¹ These lies, however, were not but the most brazen the council would tell the margrave about the institution. The conflict would come back in earnest with the building of the French house for syphilis.

What was true regarding the city's claim concerning admittance into the lazaret was that there were far fewer restrictions on who could enter St. Sebastian's, in contrast to the city's leper houses. At the onset of the sickness, symptoms appeared suddenly, and incapacitation came quickly. Unlike other diseases, the city simply did not have the time or resources for a vetting process. Further credit to the council's claim against the margrave was that until the seventeenth-century, the city financed the house from central charitable donations. This central funding was in contrast to care in leprosy or syphilis hospitals, which required personal payment of some kind.²⁷²

It took more than thirty years to build the lazaret; unfortunately, it was destroyed in the Second Margrave's War in 1552. It was then quickly rebuilt and expanded to fit the growing needs of urban poor who could not flee the poisonous airs. In 1562, up to 624 patients at a time filled the complex. This patient load required a staff of more than 50 workers to tend to the physical, spiritual and administrative needs of the sick. By the 1570s, its budget exceeded 8,600 Gulden during plague outbreaks.²⁷³ The lazaret allowed Nuremberg's sick to be held outside the walls. Like the custodianship practiced in Nuremberg's Leprosaria, the city council managed and provided for people in the separated space, separate and together.

²⁷¹ Markgraf, *Libellus summarius*, 4ar.; StadtAN A 21-2 Nr. 116 30v.

²⁷² Markgraf, *Libellus summarius*, 32r.; Carolin Porzelt, *Die Pest in Nürnberg*, 89. The housing cost was free. Toward the end of the sixteenth-century they added a medication and caregiving cost. The first systematic payment plan was mentioned in 1606/7.

²⁷³ StadtAN D 15 S 14 Sebastianspital 1575-1576.

Conclusion

After one hundred years of intermittent plague epidemics, during the last decade of the fifteenth-century, city leaders enacted aggressive measures to maintain material and spiritual purity. Purity in front of God was coupled with purity from poisonous airs. The city needed to prevent *Heimsuchung* and imbalanced humors. The walls were the physical boundaries of protection. All excrement, animal carcasses, trash, foreign sick people, sick relatives, pigs and soiled clothing or bedlinen were either halted at the gates or removed from the city with the cooperation of residents and city workers.

Nuremberg conveyed even its own sick and dead outside the walls. This process was done with care and intention. They were conveyed to designated places of custodianship outside the city walls. Like the leper houses, St. Sebastian's lazaret was a civic space. As the leper houses were gradually taken over by the council, the lazaret was borne in the hands of the council. The city paid massive sums of money for its building and upkeep. It was the first separated contagious disease hospital from which at least some of its citizens and inhabitants were expected to return. For those who did not, the city looked on its extramural burial also as a separated yet together space, as St. Rochus and St. Johannis today are two of the most preserved and revered spaces in the modern city.

II. Syphilis

After the devastating plague outbreak of 1494, there was no time to rest. The disease later known as syphilis began its march from the boot of Italy across Europe. When the first reported case of syphilis breached the city walls in 1496, city leaders implemented a plan drawn from its

experience with previous dangers, i.e. leprosy, the growing poor population, and plague. Syphilis took on attributes from leprosy and plague management. Its first outbreak moved quickly and virulently; thus it was treated like plague. The city council prepared for this new danger in a similar vein to preparation for any other enemy: gather intelligence and develop a strategy to limit the city's vulnerability. They developed and propagated a plan to maintain purity within the bounds of the city; protected this boundary with guards at the gates; identified victims and established a place outside of the walls for their care; acquired medicines and personnel for treatment; determined who received these medical services; and dealt with the financial burden. Eventually, the source of contamination was no longer considered to be general miasma, contamination was more individualized, like leprosy; therefore, its treatment and management focused on individuals.

Humanist Ulrich von Hutten described the symptoms of the disease. The first sign was deep, internal joint pain. The pain sat in the limbs and could manifest in hard knots that seemed to hurt all of the way to the bone. "And the longer the sayde swellinges tarye from rotyng and rypyng, the more pene shall the paciente suffer. And above all other peynes of these infyrmytie, this is the vyolenttest, and that troubleth man moost." Finally he describes the sores that can break out into the secret place particularly in women; "those little prety sores ful of venemus poison, being very dangerous."²⁷⁴ The sores, however, could manifest anywhere on the body after sexual contact.

²⁷⁴ Ulrich von Hutten, *Of the wood called guiacum*, 3r.-v.

On October 4, 1496, council members Imhoff and Koler recommended to the general council, “to contain anyone who would become sick, with French disease in the Holy Cross.”²⁷⁵ The Holy Cross hospital was founded in the mid-fourteenth-century by the Haller family, one of Nuremberg’s most prestigious patrician families. The complex was located immediately outside the city walls on the northwest side between the castle and St. Johannis. It was established to house pilgrims on their way into St. Sebald’s. The complex consisted of a small hostel, chapel and quarters for a priest.²⁷⁶ On September 5, 1496, the city council ordered three caregivers to report to the Holy Cross to care for the patients at the city’s expense.²⁷⁷ Since the Holy Cross had been used as an overflow hospital for plague in 1494, it seemed like an ideal place to house the patients with this new disease a few years later.

When syphilis first swept across Europe, it was incredibly virulent. Authorities knew it was quick spreading and deadly; however, it would take a few decades until its sexual transmission was understood. It was only in the mid-sixteenth-century that Jacob Wimpheling made the first real remark concerning the sexual transmission of the disease; “whoever sets one foot into a brothel, sets the other in the hospital.”²⁷⁸

²⁷⁵ RV 4 Oct. 1496 quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 5. *ob ymant dar an kranck wurd, ob dieselben zum heyligen crewtz zuenthalten werden.*

²⁷⁶ Helmut Haller von Hallerstein and Ernst Eichhorn, *Das Pilgrimspital zum Heiligen Kreuz vor Nürnberg: Geschichte und Kunstdenkmäler* (Nuremberg: Selbstverlag des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg, 1969), 13.

²⁷⁷ Karl Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 27.

²⁷⁸ Robert Jütte, “Syphilis and Confinement: Hospitals in Early Modern Germany,” in *Institutions of Confinement: Hospitals, Asylums, and Prisons in Western Europe and North America, 1500-1950*, eds. Norbert Finzsch and Robert Jütte (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 100. Ulrich von Hutten made the sexual connection. He argued that it was German's wantonness that allowed the disease to spread and he saw the correlation that the young, old and chaste did not get it as often. Ultimately, he advocated that the cause of syphilis was rotten blood. Ulrich von Hutten, *Of the wood called guiacum*, 3r.-4r.

The Nuremberg city council tried to understand this unknown. Explanations for the new disease paralleled their explanations for plague: the wrath of God, foul odors, or the alignment of the stars, from which one could choose one or all of the above. The spiritual countermeasures occurred when the council ordered a guard to march the city's prostitutes to the jail where a bailiff there warned them that their blasphemy and cursing would bring down the wrath of



God.²⁷⁹ When the first “poor daughter” or prostitute from the city’s brothel was accepted into the Holy Cross Hospital, the council’s decree read that she “has confessed and started her penance, and is to be taken into the Holy Cross.”²⁸⁰

Albrecht Dürer took up the astrological explanation in his sketch of a syphilitic man which displays the cosmic event in 1484 thought to have caused syphilis (See Image: Dürer’s Syphilitic man). Besides the celestial and the religious, Nuremberg also sought a material explanation of the disease’s spread akin to the explanation for plague.

The city called together its *ad hoc* collection of physicians to assess the new blight. Hartmann Schedel, humanist, physician and Nuremberg patrician, took notes from the meeting.

In their assessment, two major elements were the possible culprits of spreading the French disease. The first was tainted or sulphuric wine. The other was the observation that it tended to

²⁷⁹ Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 2.

²⁸⁰ RV 31 Dec. 1496 quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 13. *Ein arme tochter, die auß dem tochter haws komen, gepeicht hat vnd ir puß angetreten vnd mit der kranckheyt mala franza beschwerdt ist, zum heyligen crewtz einzunemen.*

creep from one person to another. Schedel even recorded the possibility of “contagiosum vaporem.”²⁸¹ The council also sought advice from authorities in Bamberg. They suggested an investigation into the city’s swine population, stating that pigs and pork production could spread the disease.²⁸² Eventually, the council’s focus shifted to control of bath masters and blood-letters, whose instruments they feared spread the disease. On November 17, 1496, the council decreed, “on payment of 10 G,” that it was forbidden for bath masters (or barber surgeons) to render services to anyone who was very ill.²⁸³

Even more important than protecting Nuremberg’s purity from suspect wine, pigs, and baths was prevention of the spread of syphilis by people already polluted. For syphilis, the council spared no time in establishing a separated space of custodial care outside the city walls; this establishment occurred at the same time as the frustrating starts and stops with the construction of St. Sebastian’s lazaret. The council had commanded that any poor people with “the new scourge to [be sent to] the Holy Cross, where a new room was erected for them to be held.”²⁸⁴ On February 18, 1497, the council instructed the begging-judge to have a bailiff *hinausschieben* (push-on-out) the poor people with the French disease, from the bridges and alleys. If they were extremely poor, they were to give them a few pennies for their journey.²⁸⁵ In

²⁸¹ Sudhoff, “Rat und Ärzte der Stadt Nürnberg und ihr Vorgehen gegen die Syphilis im Jahre 1496. Maßnahmen einiger westdeutschen Städte,” in *Studien zur Geschichte der Medizin* (1912): 22.

²⁸² Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 5.

²⁸³ RV 17 Nov. 1496 quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 8. *Den badern bey x gulden peen zu verpieten, das sie dar ob sein das die schweren krancken nit gepadt.*

²⁸⁴ Ratsbuch Nr. 6 Bl. 198r. quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 9. *Es ist erteylt, den armen krancken lewten, die der newen plage halb der mala franzoss zum heyligen krewtz sein, noch eynen gemach daselbst zu Irer enthaltung zupawen.*

²⁸⁵ RV 18. Feb. 1497 quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 16. *Dem bettelrichter sollen die Statt knecht zugeben zugeben, das die kranckhen an der mala franzoS vff den brucken vnd in den gassen hinaußgeschoben werden, vnd ob diselben so arm sein, das sie nit haben ir eyem ein por groschen vmb got zugeben.*

May 1498, the council stated that anyone who desired treatment in the Holy Cross would be granted entry, or as many as possible. For those who could not fit in the Holy Cross, it was essential that they were not let inside the city. “To the guards at the gate say that they keep watch with diligence, so those blighted with such sickness are not admitted inside.”²⁸⁶

In this early phase of the syphilis epidemic, the boundary of the walls around the city hardened. The council informed the guards at the gates not to admit anyone with signs of the new plague into the city. City leaders were particularly concerned about infected beggars spreading pollution inside the city. Repeatedly, the council admonished the guards at the city gates and increased their number.²⁸⁷ They installed a guard with the toll keeper, “to keep out the foreign sick with the French disease and plague,” and prevent them from being “pushed in” by the crowd.²⁸⁸

To gain insights into syphilis treatment and prevention methods, the council used its famous humanist, Willibald Pirckheimer, to reach out to Italian physicians and other German cities. They drew from their own practitioners to staff the Holy Cross. Hanns Fischer was requested to treat the disease early on in its course and was paid accordingly, but the city wanted to hire a specialist.²⁸⁹ Nuremberg offered the post to Meister Micheln, an official city doctor in

²⁸⁶ RV 14 May 1498 quoted in Sudhoff, “Sorge für die Syphiliskranken und Luesprophylaxe zu Nürnberg in den Jahren 1498-1505.” *Archiv für Dermatologie und Syphilis* 118 (1913): 290. *Dem Armen, so zu dem heyligen kreutz weget [begehrt], wo er vermuglich ist vnd gen kann, in nicht ein zu nemen, auch den thorhutern zu sagen, das sy ir fleissig aufsehen haben, das, die mitt solcher krankheyt weladen [beladen] sind, nit herein gestatt werden.*

²⁸⁷ Sudhoff, “Sorge für die Syphiliskranken,” 299.

²⁸⁸ Ratsbuch Nr. 6 Bl. 253r. quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 22. *Bey den Zollnern vnder den toren zubestellen, die fremden krancken an den franzossen vnd pestilentz nit herein lassen.* RV 9 Dec. 1497 quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 25. *Zu verhuten, das die Armen, so die frantzosen haben, nit herein geschoben werden.*

²⁸⁹ RV 27 Dec. 1496 quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 11. *Zu Hannsen Fischer Bescheyden vnd in der ertzney halb für die plottern zu befragen... Vnd mit den Artz, der sich außgibt er könn für die plottern, im ean ettlichen versuchen lassen vnd ein par gulden darauff*

the city of Ingolstadt. As a sworn city doctor, they offered him citizen rights, an extremely rare honor as foreigners were almost never given rights in the government.²⁹⁰ All other uneducated healers in Nuremberg were ordered to cease their treatments of suspected syphilitics.²⁹¹

The first widespread treatment of syphilis in these early years was mercury. Aside from its unrecognized toxicity, mercury did indeed heal open sores rapidly. Mercury was one of the “purgatives” administered to patients.²⁹² Once the purgatives were inside the system, the patients were wrapped tightly in cloth and made to sweat in a heated room. Mercury caused the patients’ tongue to swell and caused intense pain throughout the body. The sweat was thought to purge the toxins causing the disease and re-balance the humors. In the early sixteenth-century, guaiac wood, a product of the New World, replaced mercury as the primary treatment in Nuremberg. Patients were wrapped to sweat while breathing the fumes from the prepared wood.²⁹³ Nuremberg was so convinced of the efficacy of this treatment that it commissioned its barber surgeon, Franz Renner, who practiced in the French house in the 1550s, to publish a 500-page handbook describing the benefits of the treatment in opposition to mercury.²⁹⁴

In contrast to leprosy and plague, these syphilis treatments gave the appearance of therapeutic success. Syphilis is an intermittent disease, prone to long periods of latency, which could look like healing. Medical and civic authorities were quite confident about their treatments

geben.

²⁹⁰ RV 31 Dec. 1496 quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 12. *Mit statartz von Ingolstat, meyster micheln, zu hanndeln von wegen der ertzney fur die neuen kranckheyt.*

²⁹¹ RV 25 Sept. 1497 quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 12. *Winckelertzen, die nit gelert sein vnd leyb artzney pflegen, wie der abzukomen sey.*

²⁹² Joseph Grünpeck, *Ein hubscher Tractat von dem Ursprung des bosen Franzos, das man nennet die wilden Warten: auch ein Regime(n)t und ware Ertzenney mit Salben und Gedranck, wie man sich regiren soll in diser Zeyt* (Nuremberg: Kaspar Hochfeder, 1496 or 1497).

²⁹³ Ulrich von Hutten, *Of the wood called guaiacum.*

²⁹⁴ StadtBib N. Med. 68. 4° Franz Renner, *Ein new wolgegründet nützlichs unnd haylsams Handtbüchlein gemeiner Praktik aller innerlicher und eusserlicher Erzney wider die Krankheit der Franzosen* (Nuremberg, 1557).

continually using terms such as “cured.”²⁹⁵ In the late sixteenth-century, the term incurable was assigned to patients who had been treated many times. Other patients were chided when they returned for treatments because physicians insisted that the patients had been re-infected.²⁹⁶

The council paid the Holy Cross for treatments with the expectation that patients would later reimburse the city. The council supported the hospital by sending firewood and supplies. They told Willhelm Haller to accept the poor patients for whom the council would lend 100 G from the city’s budding poor fund.²⁹⁷

The Boundary of the Holy Cross

Once the Holy Cross Hospital was established and staffed, the city also instituted admission criteria; for this, the council sought advice from the Duke of Bavaria. The duke responded: “Concerning the sickness, known as the French disease which has broken out among us, we have for good reasons decided not to endure anyone with such sickness other than our needy citizens and inhabitants”.²⁹⁸ In a similar vein, the council, on October 22, 1496, declared that only “citizens and inhabitants” would be admitted into the Holy Cross, and “that no

²⁹⁵ StadtAN B14/II 87 1v. 10 Jan. 1509. *Weil er ihn von der “bösen Frantzosen“ geheilt hat.*

²⁹⁶ Kevin Patrick Siena, *Venereal Disease, Hospitals, and the Urban Poor: London's Foul Wards* (Rochusster, NY: Univ. of Rochusster Press, 2004), and Claudia Stein, *Negotiating the French Pox in Early Modern Germany* (Farnham, England: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2009). StAN Rep. 52b Nr. 234 160r. *Unnd weliche person in solichem haus mit todabgiengen/ die sollen alle auf ainem besundern auch verdeckten wagen/ unnd mit ainen besunde(n) zeichen/ zu ainer unnderschid der wagen Allem vleiß saubern und [v]aschen zulaßen, darzu die [rtt] und leutt meiden/ von dennen Sie solche krankheit ankommen und infieirt worden seyen, damitt sie nicht von neuen mit dieser krankheit befleckt werden.*

²⁹⁷ RV 28 April 1498 quoted in Sudhoff, “Sorge für die Syphiliskranken,” 290. *dem allmußen der armen kranken lewt an den frantzosen zum heyiligen Crewtz zu hinbringung derselben armen kranken menschen, itzo hundert gulden zu leyhen.*

²⁹⁸ RV 29. Jan. 1497 quoted in Sudhoff, “Sorge für die Syphiliskranken,” 288. *Nachdem aber die kranken der platern oder mala francoß genant bey unns ettwas hat eingesprochen, haben wir auß guten vrsachen fürgenommen, ausserhalben vnnser notturffthaben unser Burger und Inwoner nimand mit solcher kranckheit beladen zu gedulden.*

foreigner, who was blighted with this disease and foreign, is accepted in it.”²⁹⁹ This was done “that those, who suffer here with the disease, citizens and inhabitants, and are so poor having no other means to live on their own, are accepted in the Holy Cross.”³⁰⁰ This was the case with a Frau Wagnerin, who was accompanied by her son and daughter. As a citizen and one of the few patients to be listed by name, it was important that she be given priority in the Holy Cross. The council decreed that she be accepted and “if there were people, who were in there who were not citizens or inhabitants and they were capable of walking; [they should] be cast out.”³⁰¹

We do not know the number of people who contracted syphilis in those early years. Records consist only of those cases who were brought in front of the council to decide on whether they were given entry. These were presumably the more dubious cases. In 1498, the council gave the overseer Haller complete power to accept citizens and inhabitants. The category of “inhabitant” was defined as anyone who served in the city for a half a year and had fallen ill while in service.³⁰² Some examples of those who gained entry were school boys from the city’s new humanist grammar school; a women from the city brothel; Torette Ellse; “Jeckle” a form of

²⁹⁹ RV 22 Oct. 1496 quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 7. *Die elenden frembden Person, die iczo im pitall vnd an der kranckhayt mala franczoß kranck sein, sollen ein zeyt lang, biß sie geen mögen, dar Innen enthaltten vnd furder weg gewisen, dar nach sol nymant, der mit diser kranckhayt besuerdt vnd fremd ist, darinn aufgenommen, es werede dann, das ymant daher käme, der so gar krank wer vnd nymandtz het, der solle als in der hohsten not des, biß es besser vmb in wirdt, nit vertriben werden, doch mit wissen eins erbern rats.*

³⁰⁰ RV 22 Oct. 1496 quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 7. *So sollen die Ihenen, die mit solicher kranckhayt beladen hie, burger vnd Inwoner, vnd so arm sein, das sie von eygem vermogen nit zu leben haben, zum heyligen creutz eingenomen.*

³⁰¹ RV 7 Jan. 1497 quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 14. *Es ist erteylt, die wagnerin, ein burgerin mit sampt iren sunlein vnd tochterlin, die alle die elende krankhayt haben, zum heyligen Creutz einzunemen, vnd ob person, die do weren, die nit burger oder inwoner seint vnd wabern mogen, hinwegschieben.*

³⁰² Sudhoff, “Sorge für die Syphiliskranken,” 294.

the name Jacob; a little boy “because he is a child of a citizen;” and a woman with her baby.³⁰³ People who were rejected included a hammerer’s servant and a cobbler’s servant. These two were presumably foreign apprentices or journeymen who had arrived recently to work in the city, and therefore did not meet the required six months.³⁰⁴ One woman was accepted into the Holy Cross for herself, but brought her husband along, to which the council replied: “if she wants to bring her husband along, this should be refused to her or to the husband alone.”³⁰⁵

The single section for syphilitics in the Holy Cross was rapidly expanded to two, and eventually outstripped the facilities. The council responded by beginning to host the syphilitic women with children in the St. Johannis leprosarium.³⁰⁶ St. Johannis was near the Holy Cross, and with some shuffling, it had some room available. In the example of Frau Wagnerin and her children, above, she had the choice of going to St. Johannis or the Holy Cross.³⁰⁷ A week-and-a-half later, there were too many women in St. Johannis. The overseer of St. Johannis was overwhelmed and suggested that syphilitic women should be also accepted into St. Leonard’s, where they would still be “under the supervision of the doctor.”³⁰⁸ It is unclear how long syphilis patients were cared for in these leprosaria; records of the institutions’ later history show that this housing was only temporary.

³⁰³ Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 28, 14; “Sorge für die Syphiliskranken,” 289, 294, 295, 298, 289.

³⁰⁴ Sudhoff, “Sorge für die Syphiliskranken,” 292, 294.

³⁰⁵ RV 2 April 1498 quoted in Sudhoff, “Sorge für die Syphiliskranken,” 289. *wolt die fraw mit den frantzossen zum heiligen allein, so soll man sie einnemen, will sie aber nit allein darin, sonder den man mit, solt man irß ablaenen oder den man allein.*

³⁰⁶ Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 13.

³⁰⁷ RV 5 Jan. 1497 quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 13. *Es ist erteylt von wegen der armen krancken menschen zum heiligen coitz das haws zu Sant Johannß besichtigen, ob noch mer menschen doselbst zu hilf vnd enthaltung einzupringen werden; RV 7 Jan. 1497 quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 14. *Mag es zum Heyligen Crewtz nit sein, zu Sant Johannis.**

³⁰⁸ RV 17 Jan. 1497 quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 14. *vnd die personen der Newen Kranckhey, der sich die ertz vnterziehen, hinüber zu Sant Linhart zu nemen.*

One of the key criteria in early decisions on syphilitics was, “if they are able to walk.” It is similar to the scene in the film “Monty Python and the Holy Grail” where the dying man tries to prove he does not need to be taken to the graveyard because “I feel happy... I think I’ll go for a walk.”³⁰⁹ Despite the preposterousness of this scene in the cult classic film, whether one could walk or not was of vital importance to the physicians’ and council’s decision-making processes. In St. Sebastian’s donation book, there was a hint to this category as it refers to “guests who lie here”; the connection is made explicit with syphilis and foreigners who could not remain if they could walk. The act of walking meant the possibility of caring for oneself. Someone who could walk was not in an emergency state; and therefore, the individual was not the council’s responsibility.

The one exception to the prohibition of foreigners in the Holy Cross was if a foreigner was found lying on the ground and not able to walk, and had no one to carry him out of the city. Out of Christian and neighborly love, the city was obliged to take care of all human beings until they were able to walk. Once they were able, they could effectively walk out of the city. Petitions to enter the Holy Cross were often rejected on these grounds. For example, the Hammerer’s servant was rejected because “he could walk.” When the Franciscan friary petitioned for a monk to be admitted into the Holy Cross, he too was rejected “because he could walk.” The council states clearly in its decree that if a foreigner “can walk, he should be subsequently thrown from this city.”³¹⁰

Being able to walk may have meant that people could provide for themselves, but it also meant that the city risked having sick people roaming and begging in the city. When lepers

³⁰⁹ *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, directed by Terry Gilliam and Terry Jones (Michael White Productions, 1975), DVD.

³¹⁰ RV 20. Oct. 1496 quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 6. *vnd fur gen vnd wandern mag, sol er furderlich von diese gewisen werden.*

begged, they carried clappers and wore layers of clothing to be a buffer between them and the healthy population. Syphilitics did not have the same traditional separators; therefore, the prospect of syphilitics begging was particular threatening.

It is decided in the cases of needy citizens and inhabitants who are burdened with the French disease and do not have food, to accept them into the Holy Cross, where they should be cared for with the necessary food, drink and place to lie down, and with the appropriate equipment to deal with the sickness, that when they can walk, they should be turned out of the city and told that they may not return until they have returned to health.”³¹¹

City leaders shortened the stay in the Holy Cross to no more than two months, even allowing some people only a provisional couple of days. For example, on January 9, 1497, a man was found with the French disease lying on the St. Sebald’s churchyard. He was only to stay four days in the hospital. “If he gets better and he wants to go, send him healed on his way. If he will not be healed bring his case again before the council.”³¹² Theoretically, Nuremberg’s poorer citizens were already on the alms system or the city would give them funds for living in the city without needing to beg. In any case, no one with open signs of syphilis was allowed to beg.

Establishing the French House

By the early 1500s, it became evident that the Holy Cross could not contain all of the cases of syphilis, and at the same time, the fear of syphilis seemed to abate. Since the disease was not as invasive a pollutant as plague, it could be treated within the city. Financial court

³¹¹ Ratsbuch quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 6. *Es ist erteylt die armen vnvermugenden burger und burgerin, inwoner und inwonerin, die mit der kranckhayt der malafranzoß beladen sein, vnd nit narung haben, zum heyligen Crewtz einzunemen, doselbst mit zymlich notturfft essens, trinkenß vnd legers zu versehen, vnd so der krancken sachen also gestallt werden, das sie wannndern mugen, sollen sie hinwegck von der stat gewisen werden vnd ine gesagt, vor vnd ee sie wider gesundt werden nit wider herein zukommen.*

³¹² RV 9 jan 1497 quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 16. *Dem armen krancken menschen mit der bosen plage, der vuff S. Sebolte kirchhoff erfunden ist ligend vnd von Hof ist, ein vier tag beym Spital zuzubringen. Wird sein sach besser, das er geen mag, ine weg zuzufertigen, wirdt er nit besser, wider anpringen*

records in Nuremberg show that private payments to physicians and barber surgeons were common. In 1499, Margreth Müllner was sued for 10 G by Hanns Reuss for French disease treatments; she claimed that it was not her agreed upon price.³¹³ In 1515, Leinhard Roßlein sought the assistance of Hanns Adler for a lesion on his shin caused by the French disease. Roßlein was ordered to pay Adler 6 G.³¹⁴ In 1511, when one practitioner, Hans Schmid sued the wife of Jorg Freund for 20 lbs. He claimed the widow owed payments because he had treated her husband and son. She contended that his payment was forfeited because his treatments had killed her husband.³¹⁵ While there were general bans against bath houses and blood letters serving openly infected syphilitics, it was possible to secure private treatment.³¹⁶

Around this time, the city enacted plans to build a French House in the lazaret complex. It also set up temporary huts within the city. Sometime between 1506 and 1507, the first hut was placed near the Schleifersteg. A few years later, it was moved a few times down river between the Karl's Bridge and the city wall.³¹⁷ There are also reports of syphilis barracks at *Saumarkt* and *Techemairin*. Because these huts were inside the city, they had special restrictions. They were only permitted one room and a kitchen, and could only have a few windows or holes. Such restrictions were intended to both keep the hut small and to minimize the city's exposure to the patients' polluted air. The hut was also not allowed to empty directly into the river. Servants were required to carry their waste water and latrines to the outflow of the river at the city walls,

³¹³ StadtAN B14/II L 147r.-v.

³¹⁴ StadtAN B 14/II 6 97r.

³¹⁵ StadtAN B 14/II Z 252v. Kevin Siena suggests that private practices for syphilis is the beginning of doctor/patient confidentiality as affluent patients would secretly send off for remedies. Kevin Patrick Siena, *Venereal Disease*. 49.

³¹⁶ StadtAN A6 Nr. 309.

³¹⁷ Mummenhof, "Die öffentliche Gesundheits- und Krankenpflege im alten Nürnberg," 304.

but only during the night like the Night-master.³¹⁸ Like the *Siechhaus* used for lepers during the Lepraschau, these huts were located in the *Neu Bau*, geographically the lowest, and therefore, the most polluted part of the city.

When establishing the French house, the council solicited advice from Leonard Held, the overseer of the Saumarkt huts. Held advised various ways to protect the funds of the hospital. He recommended pointing out to patients, as citizens and servants of citizens in the city, that they were required to pay 3 *Ort* or 1 *G* for their medicine. Anyone other than the most suffering patients did not have “rights” to medicines. This was particularly the case with several people who were given admittance even though their parents were not citizens, but they had served in the house of citizens (aka, the new poor who composed this nebulous legal group of servants and apprentices). He also had more creative means for keeping the institution solvent. If a husband wanted to bring his wife along to assist with the nursing, their guild should be required to provide the clothes and wine for her stay. If one patient wished to pay the physician fee for another, that patient would later be reimbursed.³¹⁹ If a servant, or his child, became sick while in service, Held suggested that hospital should admit him; “if he is not able to do his duties, according to the will of God accept him, because he is capable of other things.”³²⁰

These internal miniature hospitals appear to have primarily served patients who had the necessary resources to pay for their care; with such a clientele, these entities were relatively self-sustaining. As an aside, because there would have been fewer city council funding issues

³¹⁸ Mummenhof, “Die öffentliche Gesundheits- und krankenpflege im alten Nürnberg,” 104.

³¹⁹ Held seems to be saying that the city would back up loans given from one patient to another for the covering of medical bills. This assertion by Held was consistent with the many court cases over medicines for the French Disease.

³²⁰ StadtAN D1 Nr. 2 *Desgleichenn wer bey seinen pflichten nicht vermag, der soll umb Gottes willen angenommen werden, so er anders der sachenn vehig ist.*

(and documentation), these houses have been less visible to historians than the Holy Cross hospital. The little huts for the treatment of syphilis seem to have existed until around 1523, when the council ordered patients to be moved to the lazaret complex.³²¹ The first ordinance to clearly delineate tasks for the French house is from 1543. The ordinance opens:

Accordingly, the Almighty, Eternal God daily ravishes (heimsucht), because of our sin among which not the lowest form is plague and the French disease. The poor people, because they are financially incapable of paying for healing, are therefore cut off; however, such sickness will be allowed, as the Holy Scripture clearly lays out, in which he should still come to help his neighbor out of brotherly love of Jesus Christ. Thus the honorable council our lords ordered a lazaret and Hospital to be built before the gate or city, thereby the sick citizens and servants of the city, who are so poor that they cannot afford the healing, are helped.³²²

The rest of the ordinance specifically addressed syphilis treatment. For those who wanted entrance into the hospital, they petitioned the council, and then they were examined by a barber surgeon who decided if the hospital could help. For example, a young “unclean” maid was

³²¹ Mummenhof, “Die öffentliche Gesundheits- und krankenpflege im alten Nürnberg,” 105. Discrepancy over the establishment of the French house was furthered by 17th-century Chronicler Johannes Müllner, who recounted the French House being established in 1509. The source he seemed to pull that information from was the St. Sebastian *Stiftungsbuch* which reported splitting the house into two parts in 1509. However, the plans clearly say for a healthy section for workers and convalesces and not the French House. It is completely unclear when the French House was created and connected to St. Sebastian’s. Both did emerge in the early 1520s, but Sebastian’s was a gigantic stone buildings and the French house was a *Fachwerk* wood building typical of Nuremberg citizens' houses. Johannes Müllner, *Die annalen Der Reichsstadt Nürnberg von 1623*, 3:410.

³²² Stadtan D1 Nr. 2 "Ordnung des lazarets" 46v.- 47r.
Nach deme der Allmechtig ewig Gott unsers Sündt teglichen mit kranckheit unnd annderer straff haimsucht, Unter welchen auch nicht die geringst ist die plag und Kranckheit der frantzosen, damit aber die armen menschen so der hailung nicht vermögen also verderbenn, sondern solcher kranckheit gewehrt werde, dann die heilig schrift clarlich außweist, das aus bruederlichen lieb ein Jeder Christ, Inn der noch seinem nechsenn zw hilff soll kommen, So hatt demnach ein Erbar Rat unser herrn ^ein lazaret und Spittal vor dem thor oder Statt gelegen dartzw^ verordnet, damit den armen mitburgern und ehaltten diser Statt, die der hailung armut halbenn nicht vermögen, geholffen werdt,
 wood – referring to wood house another name for the French House.

brought before the court. They ordered her examined for leprosy. After the examination, it was determined, the “poor young girl Barbara Mainbrecherin because she is not leprous, to be examined by Master Jacob. If she can be helped with wood, it should provide out there.”³²³ As richer patients inside the city had the means to secure their own treatment, the French House was primarily associated with the treatment of poorer people. The city needed a means to care for those made incapacitated with the disease. If someone was too poor to pay, “he could pay 3 Ort weekly all inclusive and be accepted.”³²⁴ For those who were already a part of the city’s alms system, the ordinances boasted that “approximately 300 men and women were healed, and the honorable council paid all of the costs.”³²⁵ Foreigners should only be accepted through great request.”³²⁶

In isolated cases, a few men and women with syphilis were permitted to beg in order to provide for their children. “A poor man, a guard, who has been so long with the evil pox and has many children, is allowed to beg for a day.”³²⁷ Like leprosy, it seems to not have been ideal, but at a distance in extreme circumstances it could be allowed. As with leprosy, separation from pollution was optimal, but occasionally, *guarded* or *reserved*, mercy prevailed over prudence.

³²³ RV 28 Aug. 1562 #1213 13r. *Das arm Maidlein Barbara Mainbrecherin weil es nit Sondersiech, durch Maister Jacoben besichtigen lassen. Unnd wenn [Ime] In holz zu helffen. Soll manns hinaüs verschaffen.* Sondersiech is Nuremberg’s term for leprosy.

³²⁴ StadtAN D1 Nr. 2 "Ordnung des lazarets" 48r. *Wo aber Jemand solcher hailung begert, der des lazaret nicht vehig ist, unnd docht des vemögens, der gibt ein wochenn drey ortt fur alle ding.*

³²⁵ StadtAN D1 Nr. 2 "Ordnung des lazarets," 48v. *Unnd werden des Jars ungeverlich biß in 300 Person ge= hailtt vom mannen unnd frawenn, Unnd was solches alles cost zaltt ein Erbar Rath.*

³²⁶ StadtAN D1 Nr. 2 "Ordnung des lazarets," 48r. *unnd die frembdenn durch große furpitt.*

³²⁷ Mummenhof, *Die öffentliche Gesundheits- und krankenpflege im alten Nürnberg*, 300; Joel Harrington, “Child Circulation within the Early Modern Urban Community: Rejection and Support of Unwanted Children in Nuremberg,” in *Defining Community in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Michael Halvorson and Karen E. Spierling (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2008), 119.

Conclusion

Originally, Nuremberg's syphilis policies were identical to those employed to contain leprosy and plague outside the city walls. The notion that syphilis was as polluting as plague resulted in firm purity restrictions in the city and the removal of the sick to the Holy Cross Hospital. When syphilis did not continue to spread like plague and treatments seemed to work, many prohibitions were relaxed; eventually, treatments were permitted inside the city. On the one hand, syphilis was also like leprosy in that it was consistently present. On the other hand, it was like plague in that its symptoms could be incapacitating, which prompted the need for houses of care. As seen with the Lepraschau, foreign lepers could be simply cast out of the city as they were generally not incapacitated. In contrast, foreign plague patients needed to be hosted in city hospitals as it was generally impossible to discern their status or to merely expel the plague victims who were so ill. As syphilis symptoms could present either way, the council's policies and individual decisions regarding treatment in the city's syphilis houses display the more general philosophy regarding acceptance into the city's contagious disease hospitals: one, remove open signs of sickness and pollution from the city; two, have limited spaces of removed custodianship for its own citizens and inhabitants outside the city; and finally, three, provide temporary caregiving for the completely destitute who did *not* belong to the city, according to the will of God. The establishment of the French house was the next installment in the separate yet together hospitals outside the walls of the city.

III. Together at the Walls

Over the past two chapters, we have explored how the three major contagious diseases were each defined in relation to the walls. For the remainder, I would like to braid together some themes that ran throughout the experiences of these three diseases in Nuremberg.

Purity Maintenance

The walls were the simple physical boundary of the city of Nuremberg. They were the physical means to keep harmful elements out while still filtering in the good. This filter functioned on a daily basis and intensified during times of threat. When threatened, the walls hardened against potential polluting elements, such as when Lepraschau and the All Saints' Day beggars were locked out under threat of plague. The city, thereby, reduced its vulnerability to these elements within the walls. The walls signified protection and integrity. This protection, however, was impossible if the rot was already inside. Lepers were removed from the city as they were determined "unclean," and therefore containing the power to corrupt others. Like white blood cells targeting bacteria ensuring the soundness of the body, bounded units target internal threats to their integrity. Eventually, plague and syphilis were conveyed in like manner outside of the city.

For Nurmbergers, the way to protect themselves against internal rot was to maintain spiritual and material purity. Whether by poisonous airs or the wrath of God, the city sought to prevent *heimsuchen*, the penetration of its walls and the destruction of its homes within. To varying degrees each of the diseases were attributed to both spiritual and material causes. In contrast to modern understanding of contagion, threats to the city's integrity were far ranging, including blasphemy, cursing, corpses, falsified foods, pox on faces, excrement, filth, fornication, soiled clothing, blood, prostitutes, laziness, crowds, foul winds, beggars and pigs.

Although all three diseases presented in radically different ways, their separation outside of the city walls can be attributed to early modern Nuremberg's quest for protection through purity.

Proxy Houses

As Nuremberg needed to re-ensure the boundary of the home inside the walls, it created hospitals in separated spaces. The hospitals took different shapes to accommodate the symptoms and longevity of each disease. The city took on custodianship of patients in these hospitals by providing buildings, oversight, medical treatments, and financial and material security. The hospitals were outside the boundary of purity, but within the boundary of the city's resources and protection; in 1552, when the margrave burned everything in his path on his way to lay siege to the city, Nuremberg ordered the patients of the lazaret to be brought into the city walls and housed in a grain storage unit.³²⁸

As each disease had levels of polluting power, the city shuffled the institutions to accommodate the common need. During times of plague, St. Sebastian's completely spilled over into the French House. In 1562, the French House was instructed not to accept any more of their typical patients. Some patients were moved to St. Johannis and eventually the rest were brought "here inside the city" to the Siechhaus.³²⁹ When syphilis broke out, the council not only co-opted a pilgrim house into the Holy Cross Hospital, but also spread syphilis patients to St. Johannis and St. Leonard leprosaria.³³⁰ This practice of shuffling patients between the houses reinforced their

³²⁸ StadtBib N. Nor. J.B 548. Andreas Urschlechter, *Gesundheitsamt der Stadt Nurnberg:700 Jahre Nürnberger Medizinalwesen: Ausstellung aus Anlass der Eröffnung des neuen Gebäudes des Gesundheitsamtes der Stadt Nürnberg*, StadtBibliothek Ausstellungskatalog 8a. Nr. 55 (Nuremberg 1959), 144.

³²⁹ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 8r.; StAN Rep. 52a Nr. 130 794.

³³⁰ One could also make this parallel with cemeteries: they took the city's resources and space. When extramural burial began, the city co-opted the cemeteries of leper houses for this purpose.

common existence as hosting polluted citizens and inhabitants outside the city. It also shows the perceived hierarchy in the polluting power of the diseases. The disease with the most polluting power was plague, followed by syphilis and then leprosy.

The extent of the regulations on entering the city's houses correlated with the nature of the disease. The disease of leprosy moved slowly and was relatively un-threatening; therefore its victims could go through a vetting process before admittance into a leprosarium. The council was willing to accept citizens, inhabitants, or those who had worked for the city for a certain amount of time; outsiders with leprosy were summarily thrown out of the city, never to partake in the life-long benefits of a leper house. In contrast, plague was considered so potent that it had to be quickly removed from the city; patients swiftly achieved an incapacitated status which made any vetting process useless. The connection was a moot point anyway because any one who could not walk was taken care of by the city "according to the will of God." Syphilis fell in-between. After the initial outbreak, the onset of syphilis was much slower than plague; therefore, syphilis could still be evaluated on an individual basis. The city could then decide who would benefit from the city's treatment, if the individual was an established worker in the city, or if the person was to be accepted based on their incapacitated status. In every case the council's primary objective was prioritizing its own citizens, inhabitants, and servants over foreigners. As they filtered their city walls, they also filtered the patients at the hospital walls.

Geography: Strategic Collapsing

As seen throughout this chapter, Nuremberg grappled with a growing poor population and attempted to limit foreign poor's access to the city. When one looks at those petitions for entrance into the hospitals, it is easy to see the growing anonymity in the city (people outside the

traditional guild oversight systems). The demarcation the “poor woman” or “poor man” (poor designating that they are suffering from the disease not necessarily financially poor although often the two can be meant simultaneously) is often accompanied by the physical space in which they were found in the city. As those individuals were found lying incapacitated in the city and therefore could not walk out of the city, they fell on the civic resources of Nuremberg. A few examples of syphilis show this phenomenon. The council instructed the poor woman on the long bridge to be taken in to the hospital (See Map: Syphilis Geography 1); a women by the Carmilite convent to be accepted (See Map: Geography 2); a poor woman lying at the *Spensetzerin*; and “the maid who served on the *Spitalhof*, hospital yard, who contracted the French disease” (See Map: Geography 3).³³¹ One woman “from the Sand,” an area by the sand mill known for prostitution, was also accepted into the Holy Cross, but the city instructed the rest of the women

³³¹ Karl Sudhoff, “Sorge für die Syphiliskranken,” 289; 293; 295. 21 Juni 1500 quoted in Sudhoff, “Sorge für die Syphiliskranken,” 300. *Der Meyd so zu dem Spitalhoff dienet und die frantzosen gewunen hat zu sant Johans zu nemen.*

there to be lectured and driven out of the city; presumably she was incapacitated but her friends were not.³³² (See Map: Geography 4). The geographic descriptions of these individuals show if they fell incredibly ill inside the city, that they were accepted into the hospital despite their general unknown status.

To make matters more complicated, in the late fifteenth-century, Nuremberg's suburbs, Gostenhof and Wöhrd, were bursting with cheap shacks for housing. Servants who worked in the city could live with their families outside the city.³³³

These suburbs were generally where the "new poor" would stay. Nuremberg feared the number of vagrants, unemployed soldiers, prostitutes and criminals who slipped into the city, prompting its poverty and begging ordinances.³³⁴ It is



unclear to me how many of

the people from these areas were able to use the city's contagious disease hospitals. It seems as though the physical carrying of the sick directly from the suburbs to the hospitals was rare. In

³³² Karl Sudhoff, "Sorge für die Syphiliskranken," 292-293.

³³³ "Die Armenordnung der Stadt Nürnberg. 1522," in *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 10 (1912/1913): 54-55.

³³⁴ Robert Jütte, *Poverty and Deviance in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1994), 36-44.

1562, body carriers complained when they were ordered to carry four people from Wöhrd.³³⁵

However, as city ordinances made numerous references to hosting servants or workers employed by citizens of the city, it seems likely that many of the patients in these hospitals may have lived in these areas. An individual only had to prove that he had been employed in a citizen's household for a certain amount of time, or the employer made the petition for him. Other phrases such as "fell sick while here in the city" lead me to believe that the entrance into the hospital may have been easier if the individual came geographically from inside the walls at the time of falling incapacitated. If this was done on purpose, it could have been *strategic collapsing*.

On July 26, 1499, the council declared that "the foreign woman, who lies under the entrance way to the Hospital, one should accept and care for in the Holy Cross, so that she is healed."³³⁶ (See Map: Geography 5) A common theme during outbreak is people found lying at the city gates. It is possible the gates acted as a bottleneck to traffic. It is where sick were likely to succumb to their illness, but it could have been more strategic than that. As seen above, foreigners or anonymous people found incapacitated in the city were cared for. One man was given entrance into the Holy Cross after he was found incapacitated at the Frauenthor. (See Map: Geography 6).³³⁷ Another example was a woman found on December 30, 1497, "the poor sick women with the French disease, who lies on an alley at the Neuthor with her small child to be

³³⁵ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 p.26r.

³³⁶ RV 26 Juli 1499 quoted in Sudhoff, "Sorge für die Syphiliskranken," 296. *Item die fremd fraw, so vnter dem porttall zu dem spittal ligt soll man gen heyligen creutz nemen vnd pflegen, das sie geheillt werd*

³³⁷ RV 13 Juni 1498 quoted in Sudhoff, "Sorge für die Syphiliskranken," 292. *Wo der torner vff dem frawentorn so krank ist, das er nit webern mag, so er zumheyligen crewtz angenommen werden.*

accepted into the Holy Cross according to God, even though she is not a citizen.”³³⁸ (See Map: Geography 7)

During plague this was also the case. In 1562, the city had a collection of bodies at the Laufertor (See Map: Geography 8). If a corpse was found inside the walls at the Laufertor, Nuremberg brought the body to the large St. Johannis cemetery. When corpses were found immediately outside the gates, they passed the bodies off to be buried in an already overcrowded churchyard inside the suburb of Wöhrd.³³⁹ Nuremberg in this situation was protecting the resources of the St. Johannis cemetery and possibly its resources to transport the bodies there. The sources, however, never explain why there was a pile up of bodies there. Potentially, Nuremberg’s residents merely brought their deceased loved ones to the wrong gates (as they should have brought the bodies to the churchyards, Tiergartenthor or Spitalthor), but why would people from Wöhrd bring dead loved ones toward the city? It makes far more sense that the gates were simply as far as they got. If they could fall incapacitated in the city proper, they must, then, have been taken into the resources of Nuremberg. Nuremberg published and printed a prohibition in Gostenhof, Wöhrd, and all other surrounding villages preventing people from coming into the city without waiting three weeks to ensure that they were healthy again.³⁴⁰ This prohibition coupled with guards at the gates being ordered to find signs of sickness made the gates a natural place to fall incapacitated. Whether individuals were heading into the city for work, dropped off by overburdened loved ones, or actually wanted the care (or burial) of the city of Nuremberg, the sick and dead piled at the walls.

³³⁸ RV 30 Dec. 1497 quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen,” 29. *Die armen kranken Frawen an den Franzosen, pey dem Newenthor an der gassen liegen, mit dem kleynen kindlein zum heyligen Creutz einzenemen durch got, wiewol sie nit burgerin ist.*

³³⁹ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 8v.

³⁴⁰ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 50v.

Second Margrave's War

I will end this discussion of boundaries with Nuremberg's most longstanding boundary dispute: that with the Margrave of Brandenburg-Kulmbach. In 1496, Nuremberg intended on making peace with its old enemy. The two powers celebrated carnival festivities together, but soon afterward the Margrave reported the city to the *Reichskammergericht*, the Imperial court, for abuses of its territorial authority. This conflict, known as the *Fraischprozeß*, involved hostilities in court and on the battlefield; it continued until the end of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806 and the subsequent redefinition of the laws between the two powers.³⁴¹

In the 1520s, the lazaret complex became the focus of the dispute. The margrave's efforts concerning St. Sebastian's in 1507/8 failed to produce his desired effect. With the completion of the French House, the Margrave lodged new complaints to the court. The margrave complained that on the patrician estates, fortified gates, watchtowers, dikes and even cabinets were erected to the margrave's disadvantage. He maintained that the court had ignored the construction of the French House, which the overseer of the Holy Ghost Hospital had ensured would only be 50 Shuhe but was actually 70 x 80 Shuhe with a strong chapel as well.³⁴² "Thus," he argued "there is a common lament, call, and witness from everywhere in the Empire against Nuremberg."³⁴³

Nuremberg replied that every political entity had the right to simple watch towers and gates for his own protection and that it had no intention of transgressing their neighbor's rights in

³⁴¹ Emil Reicke, *Geschichte der Reichsstadt Nürnberg*, 472; Diefenbacher, "Nürnberg, Reichsstadt: Territorium"; Horst-Dieter Beyerstedt, "Fraischprozeß," in *Stadtlexicon Nürnberg (on-line)*.

³⁴² Markgraf, *Libellus summarius*, 5r.

³⁴³ Markgraf, *Libellus summarius*, 5r. *ist zu Nurnberg/ auch allenthalben im Reich ein gemein geschrey/ ruff und leumut.*

building a few hospitals and churches for the “poor pestilent people.”³⁴⁴ The council claimed that if it had been cleared of any wrongdoing concerning the construction of St. Sebastian’s lazaret, then surely the new addition for the poor people afflicted with the French disease should not have presented a greater problem; after all, it was only built of wood, and not stone, like the lazaret. And, no, the windows were not shooting holes.³⁴⁵ The tone of the response grew in intensity. The city claimed that it was only out of jealousy that the Margrave protested and why would a defensive building be an offensive problem to the Margrave? (thus, implying the margrave’s intent to set siege to the city). Nuremberg claimed that Charles IV had given the city rights for up to a mile outside of its walls.³⁴⁶ The city map produced by Georg Nöttelein, which I referred to in my Lepraschau discussion, was produced to give evidence during these proceedings. The map shows the fourteenth-century expansion of the city walls and the original area to which Nuremberg was given rights. The issues continued to be debated on paper until the second wave of the Schmalkaldic war in 1552 with a villain of cinematic proportions.

Albrecht Alcibiades, Margrave of Brandenburg-Kulmbach, was famous throughout Europe for being a fierce warrior. He was employed by both the King of France and the Holy Roman Emperor. He used the general tumult in 1552 to besiege Nuremberg, claiming that the Protestant city was an enemy of the Catholic Emperor.³⁴⁷ The margrave burned every possible village in connection with Nuremberg. The sick from the lazaret were taken into the city’s grain house. People from the suburbs ran into the city although it could not take all. Able bodied beggars were outfitted with guns and extra walls of sand were erected around the Holy Cross

³⁴⁴ Markgraf, *Libellus summarius*, 2ar.

³⁴⁵ Markgraf, *Libellus summarius*, 3ar.

³⁴⁶ Markgraf, *Libellus summarius*, 4av.

³⁴⁷ Gerald Strauss, *Nuremberg in the Sixteenth-Century: City Politics and Life* (New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1976), 183-184.

Hospital and chapel which was fitted with shooting holes.³⁴⁸ The margrave took prisoners along his path. In one cinematic scene, he drunkenly ordered nineteen prisoners hanged in the middle of the night, and the next morning asked where the prisoners were.

As the margrave headed to the city burning and pillaging, he reached the long-contested lazaret complex on May 15. Because it did not appear fortified, the margrave confidently walked into the lazaret; it was a trap. A few soldiers held the hospital-turned-fortification, including a drummer who fell wounded with a shot to the ankle. The distraction of the margrave's troops staved off his attack on the St. Johannis city section. Clearly all of Nuremberg's promises about the neutral state of the lazaret were patently untrue. Incidentally, only one person who died during the siege was allowed to be buried outside the city, the drummer boy named Hans Ott. During a cease fire, he was processed to St. Rochus Chapel where he was ceremoniously buried with his drum and flute.³⁴⁹ Not long after the initial attack, the St. Sebastian's lazaret, chapel and French House were burned to the ground.

In the end, Nuremberg paid the margrave 200,000 G. Less than a year later, he returned on another pretext attempting to extort more money. The Emperor, who had already had a falling-out with the margrave, brought his troops down on him. The emperor re-ensured the city's constitutional connection as an imperial city and its semi-autonomous political state. It has been argued that the city never fully recovered from this war.³⁵⁰ It was at this point that the council exacted economic policies aimed at defending its own guilds. Rather than choosing to expand regional trade, the mindset of protecting the guilds behind the walls stifled the city's

³⁴⁸ Ernst Mummenhof, *Altnürnberg in Krieg und Kriegsnot*, vol. 2 (Nuremberg: Schrag, 1919). 32-40; StAN Rep. 52a Nr. 130 542.

³⁴⁹ Mummenhof, *Altnürnberg in Krieg*, 22.

³⁵⁰ Strauss, *Nuremberg in the Sixteenth-Century*, 186-187.

future economic growth. While many other cities would soon find their walls obsolete, Nuremberg stood obstinately behind its medieval walls.

Conclusion

The irony of the story of these hospitals is that by modern medical standards, they did little or nothing to help stop the spread of disease. Leprosy, the disease which separation might actually help to prevent, was ritualistically allowed contact through the Lepraschau and begging. A primary avenue of plague contraction was through fleas moving from rats to humans, certainly through hospital windows and city walls. Removing patients in the worst phases of syphilis outbreak obviously did not protect sexual partners when they were let back in. However, in early modern Nuremberg the hospitals helped preserve the emotional safety of those within the walls and provided for Nurembergers outside the walls. In a sense these practices defined the city more powerfully than the margrave, who could surround every inch of the city walls. Although the foundations of these buildings were fraught with controversy, every single one of them would be rebuilt within a few years of the margrave's destruction. Thus, the walls were the physical boundary of purity of Nuremberg, but not of communal identity.

The comparison of the management of these three diseases produces some guiding principles which will be carried throughout the rest of the work. One, while early modern authorities did not understand germ theory, polluting elements such as the sick, corpses or objects could contaminate anything in close proximity. These elements needed to be moved outside a barrier of protection; in the case of Nuremberg it was the walls. Two, the orchestration of pollution in the city was geographic, whether with distance outside the city or on the outflow of the river. Three, when it came to openly-contaminated humans, the city had two choices: they

could either be banished from the city or housed in an external hospital for care. Four, the city had limited resources to give to these separated hospitals. This limitation was protected through as much control on admittance as possible, prioritizing its own inhabitants over outsiders. I will explore the provision of these limited resources in a variety of ways throughout the upcoming chapters.

Chapter 3:

Working Bodies as Mobile Boundaries: Workers Acting as Buffers in the Hospitals

In Chapters 1 and 2, I explored how the desire for purity within Nuremberg sparked the need for contagious disease hospitals outside of the city walls. The walls of the city and hospitals became the physical spatial boundaries dividing the pure from the sick. In this chapter, I slide the conceptual idea of boundaries from physical space to that of behavior, both behavior as stipulated and behavior as acted out. The city council and educated medical practitioners determined extensive behavioral guidelines for workers in each hospital, prescribing in what manner they were to attend the sick. These behavioral boundaries were channels within which hospital workers were to conduct their tasks. The council, then, depended on the workers for corporal implementation.

Joel Harrington, in his recent book, *The Faithful Executioner*, shows the importance of executioner Franz Schmidt's corporal implementation of city council dictates. "Without the executioner's carefully orchestrated, highly visible, and often brutal assertion of civic authority, secular rulers knew that 'the sword of justice' would remain an empty metaphor and that their self-proclaimed role as the guarantors of public safety would be regarded as meaningless."³⁵¹ In the same way, corporal care in Nuremberg's contagious disease hospitals was crucial to the city council's paternal role as guarantors of health and safety.

The idea of civic health care is generally undervalued in this period. Early modern hospitals have been dismissed as places of actual medical care. But survival from disease had less to do with medical knowledge, and everything to do with physical caregiving. The

³⁵¹ Joel F. Harrington, *The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth-century* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2013), 430-432, Kindle.

difference between a hospital being the caricatured “death house” or an institution of civic health care resided not in how close or far away their doctors were to modern medical understanding, but rather in the tending of fires, the dabbing of foreheads, and the holding up of life-sustaining food to famished lips.³⁵² Medical historian, Mary Lindemann, argues, “...It is well to bear in mind that the responses of early modern people to incursions of disease were rational and carefully gauged; some actions, it seems, had positive effects. A light diet, sufficient water, rest, and cleanliness did no harm and good nursing saved lives.”³⁵³

With proper food, water, and warmth, cast-out lepers could live out their lives and syphilis patients could recover from intermittent, utterly debilitating attacks. Even in plague hospitals, patients survived. In 1576, out of the 1,470 people taken into the lazaret, 752 were returned to health.³⁵⁴ This chapter explores how hospital administrators, cooks, go-fers, and caregivers defined contagious disease care in accomplishing these tasks. I argue that the shape of civic health care in Nuremberg, as a cerebral projection of the council, was made corporal in the mobile bodies of the hospital workers.

Chapter Outline

This chapter is divided into three sections. The *first* section explores the foundation of the

³⁵² Michel Foucault made these hospitals notorious as instruments of categorization, containment, and ultimately oppression by power hungry authorities. He uses the image of the leper as the foundation for the later discipline houses and the hospitals for the insane: “What doubtless remained longer than leprosy, and would persist when the leprosy houses had been empty for years, were the values and images attached to the figure of the leper as well as the meaning of his exclusion, the social importance of that insistent and fearful figure which was not driven off without first being inscribed within a sacred circle.” Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (UK: Routledge Classics, 2005), 4.

³⁵³ Mary Lindemann, *Medicine and Society in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 203.

³⁵⁴ StAN Rep 52b. Nr. 253

behavioral guidelines through the hospital ordinances of educated medical practitioners and paternalistic city council members. The behavioral boundaries reflected the best medical knowledge of the day; the council's administrative parameters; and a wealth of broader cultural differentiations such as purity, cleanliness, gender, and family status.

The *second* section focuses on boundaries within the hospital walls. It shows how behavioral dictates replicated broader cultural structures in the demarcation of tasks for workers. Male workers, as the guards and go-fers, worked on the border between the hospitals and the outside world. Working within the hospitals, predominantly female workers held patients over the boundary between life and death. Cooks provided life-giving food, and maids maintained a cleanliness and purity of air believed vital for patients' recuperation. In all of these positions workers both breached boundaries and then in the work of their body became a new boundary. The intensity of this paradox culminated in the position of the caregiver, who *physically touched the patients*. With her body she crossed the cultural border between purity and sickness. She allowed all others in the city to maintain their separation, and at the same time, she suspended the sick citizen or inhabitant of Nuremberg over the very threshold between life and death. The work of her body became the ultimate boundary-crosser and re-creator.

Finally, in the *third* section, I use instances of disobedience as a means of showing that there was no one-to-one correlation between behavioral prescriptions and their implementation. Even when hospital ordinances were strictly followed, there was ultimately an infinite number of ways they could be followed. The behavioral boundaries can give the historian an outlined choreography of the hospitals or a "range of experiences and choices available."³⁵⁵ Disobedience reminds the historian that every physical act of the worker in every moment was a singular event.

³⁵⁵ Joel F. Harrington, *The Unwanted Child The Fate of Foundlings, Orphans, and Juvenile Criminals in Early Modern Germany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 10.

The hospital workers' reiteration of their tasks created and recreated the bounds of civic health care in the praxis of their bodies. This boundary was ever-changing, and intrinsically mobile. These working bodies were the bouncers, buffers, and boundary makers of sixteenth-century Nuremberg.

I. The Foundation of the Behavioral Boundaries

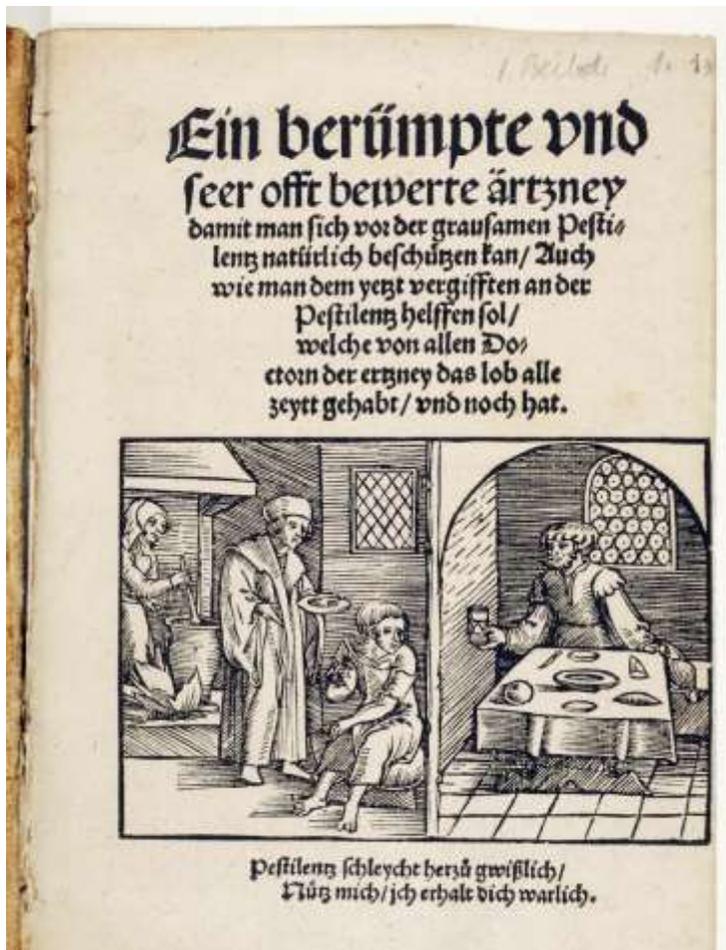
The Role of the City Council

The city council in consultation with educated doctors and tenured administrators created the hospital ordinances, or for the purpose of my study, the behavioral boundaries. The members of the city council saw themselves as playing the paternal role of leaders and protectors of the city. These prescriptions did not arise ex nihilo, but reflected varying aspects of the broader culture.

The behavioral standards reflected the best medical knowledge of the day. When the new scourge of syphilis ripped through Europe in the 1490s, city council members were in constant conversation with Italian doctors and magistrates, seeking the latest in effective prevention and treatment.³⁵⁶ During syphilis and plague outbreaks, the council collected their own doctors into a College of Medicine to determine the best strategies for Nuremberg.³⁵⁷ They printed plague regimens, advice books on how best to avoid plague, and handbooks on how to homebrew

³⁵⁶ Karl Sudhoff, "Die ersten Maßnahmen der Stadt Nürnberg gegen die Syphilis in den Jahren 1496 und 1497. Aktenstudien," *Archiv für Dermatologie und Syphilis* 116 (1911), 13.

³⁵⁷ Dr. Hartmann Schedel, humanist, physician, and creator of the famed *Nuremberg Chronicle* collected papers from the early College of Medicine established for syphilis prevention and treatment. Karl Sudhoff, "Rat und Ärzte der Stadt Nürnberg und ihr Vorgehen gegen Syphilis im Jahre 1496. Maßnahmen einiger westdeutschen Städte," *Studien zur Geschichte der Medizin* (1912), 20-30.



prophylactics.³⁵⁸ (See image: Home Remedy).

The reigning medical knowledge of the day, Galenic medicine, blamed miasma or foul odors for corrupting the balance of humors in the body. In the ordinances, the most important medical guideline for the workers was the separation of the dirty from the clean. This separation applied to space, food, water, clothing and people. These Galenic ideas of

separation also resonated with the broader cultural value of separating polluting elements from the pure (See Chapters 1 and 2). It was not enough to give these dangerous elements their own building, but any hope of patients' recovery, it was believed, was also dependent upon their continued separation of harmful elements within the hospital.

In creating these behavioral structures, the council drew on the cultural topos of obedience to a father figure. These ordinances were written, as stated in the 1572 lazaret ordinance, by “the honorable and wise city council of Nuremberg, our most charitable, awe-inspiring, loving Lords, out of genuine fatherly provision...to common use and betterment.”³⁵⁹

³⁵⁸ StAN Rep. 53II Verz II Nr. 7/1; StAN Rep. 63II Verz. III Nr. 133; and StB. N Med 86.4°

³⁵⁹ StadtAN A6 Nr. 328 1v. *Derwegen hat ein E. und W. Rath/ der S. N./ unsere Großgunstige gebietenden liebe herren/ auß Vaterlicher wolgemeinter fürsorg... gemeinem nutz zum besten*

The father as the authoritative figure was used broadly in religious and political literature of the time. Early modern scholars have written extensively on the use of fatherly topoi as a means of capitalizing on traditional power structures, relating the *hausvater*, father of the house, to the *landesvater*, father of the land.³⁶⁰

The council's role as the father has two meanings within the hospitals. First, the ordinances called for obedience to worldly authorities as if they were the father of the home. In the case of the hospital, he was the hospital administrator, the proxy of the city council.

Second, the fatherly topos is poignant here because the behavioral boundaries in the hospitals reflected prescribed gender roles in the home.³⁶¹ The council appealed to their inhabitants to give over their sick loved ones, for both “males and females, as male and female attendants (zu wartern und wartterin)” were prepared to receive the sick in the hospitals.³⁶² When the tasks within the hospital ordinances were listed, men primarily took public and administrative roles while women cooked, cleaned, and nurtured. The hospitals replicated the model of the home. The home was where one was brought into the world, nurtured when sick, and ultimately died. The bed itself was a threshold between life and death: in the consummation of a marriage, conception of children, lying-in after child birth, and in the preparation of the soul before

³⁶⁰ Joel Harrington, “Hausvater and Landesvater: Paternalism and Marriage Reform in Sixteenth-Century Germany,” *Central European History* 25, no. 1 (1992), 74. Robert Muchembled connects the role of the *Hausvater* to the rise of the absolutist state in *Popular Culture and Elite Culture in France, 1400-1750* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1985). The role of the *Hausvater* has also been connected to the theology of the Reformation in Gerald Strauss, *Luther's House of Learning: Indoctrination of the Young in the German Reformation* (New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1978), and Lyndal Roper, *The Holy Household: Women and Morals in Reformation Augsburg* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

³⁶¹ John Henderson, *The Renaissance Hospital: Healing the Body and Healing the Soul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 203.

³⁶² StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 28r.; StAN Rep. 53II Verz. III Nr. 62 and StadtAN A6 Nr. 154. *Mann und Weybs person/ die der kranken wartung alhie in der stat zu gebrauchen dienstlich*

death.³⁶³

In almost every case, the behavioral boundaries were drawn on the familiar. However, the majority of the ordinances supported a phenomenon that was largely a break with their culture: the nurturing of sick loved ones outside of the home. Citizens and inhabitants of Nuremberg were hesitant to carry their family members to hospitals.³⁶⁴ These domestic cultural structures provided a level of emotional safety to a scary situation.

In order for these hospitals to be of “common use and betterment,” the ordinances had to be upheld and hospitals had to provide genuine care. The council attempted to ensure the system by strategically placing administrators to uphold these behavioral dictates.

The Overseers

The highest level of authority in each contagious disease hospital was the *Pfleger*, or overseer. Most charitable houses in Nuremberg were originally founded by religious orders; however, over time their original endowments ran out. The city council saved the institutions from bankruptcy but at the cost of a civic overseer. He was a figurehead whose main role was to ensure that the institution functioned properly, and did not burden civic resources.

The overseer position was typical of early modern authority systems. The central authority, in this case the city council, delegated an overseer to have full accountability over the

³⁶³ Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual: An Interpretation of Early Modern Germany* (London: Routledge, 1997), 10, 154, 165; Diana Webb wrote about the bed being the center of religious devotion. Diana Webb, "Domestic Space and Devotion in the Middle Ages," in *Defining the Holy: Sacred Space in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, eds. Sarah Hamilton and Andrew Spicer (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 38. In Hayley Rucker's unpublished work *Translating the Body: Ritual Healing and Liminal Space in the Possession of Nicole Obry*, she explores the bed as central liminal space connecting family structure, daily religious practice, place of healing, and the world of the spirits in the exorcism of Nicole Obry. Hayley Rucker, "Translating the Body: Ritual Healing and Liminal Space," unpublished manuscript, 14.

³⁶⁴ StAN Rep. 60a Nr. 1213 36r. RV Wed. Sept. 9, 1562.

discipline and solvency of the institution. He typically came from an elite background and was a member of the city council himself. He conducted civic and religious work to reinforce his place and his family's name in the city.

Although it was possible that the overseer never physically visited the property, he was responsible for the institution providing services for which it was endowed. He was generally credited with composing the individualized hospital ordinances; however, because most of the ordinances were consistent for hundreds of years, it seems doubtful that many of the overseers felt the responsibility to change them greatly.³⁶⁵ He was also credited with determining punishment for workers' misconduct. These punishments were generally fees which were to be collected by the Hofmeister, the highest on-site authority.³⁶⁶

The overseer gave updates to the council and wrote expert reports on how the institution could function better and, of course, more cheaply.³⁶⁷ They took varying amounts of responsibility for their institutions. Some institutions fell into decline through neglect, such as the St. Leonard's female leper house, which had to be supported by approximately 1,000 Gulden a year by the St. Jobst leper house.³⁶⁸ Other overseers invested great sums of their own money to keep their institutions functioning. In 1505, Nuremberg patrician Ulrich Starck revamped St. Johannis leprosy hospital including an overhaul of the donation system, decent record keeping, and updating of house ordinances. According to his account book, he wanted to "profit the leprous and the current overseer, who is next to come" by providing accurate and extensive

³⁶⁵ Examples of crediting the overseer with ordinances is seen throughout my study. A particular example is in the French House where they actually posted under the title, "Ordnung/ wie es mit pflegung der Kranken im lazaret gehalten werden/ und sich dieselben dagegen widerumb erzeigen sollen." StadtAN A6 Nr. 328; StadtAN A6 Nr. 298.

³⁶⁶ StadtAN A6 Nr. 298.

³⁶⁷ StadtAN A 26 Rep. 90 Nr. 106 .

³⁶⁸ StadtAN A 26 Rep. 90 Nr. 109. St. Leonard's received its money from St. Jobst.

reports of the house's assets.³⁶⁹

The overseer's stake in the functioning of his respective hospital created a direct connection between the council and the upholding of the behavioral boundaries. Since 1567, the ordinances for the French House were printed on a large broadsheet and posted on the hospital walls in the name of the overseer, a member of the Schlüsselfelder family. It called workers to live obediently and carry out the ordinances "throughout all points, as it applies to them, and not going against them even in the slightest, under threat of the hereupon prescribed punishments."³⁷⁰ While the overseer may have been given credit for the functioning of the hospitals and the fulfillment of ordinances, behavioral dictates could not be enforced without administrators on the grounds.

The Hofmeister and Sick Masters

The Hofmeister, literally translated the court master, is so named because he was the highest level employee located on the facilities. As such, he was the eyes and ears of the overseer. In contrast to the overseer, the Hofmeister generally occupied his position permanently, and it was his main source of income. He usually lived with his wife and sometimes family in a special area of the institution, where the family could also have servants of their own.³⁷¹ He ran the day-to-day tasks ensuring obedience of workers, fulfilling medical provisions, and monitoring daily income and expenditures. It was his job to appeal to the Holy Ghost Hospital,

³⁶⁹ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 1r. *sundersichen do selbst zw nutzt und einem itzlichen pfleger der hernach kompt zu einer pesserung zu untter richten was das gotzhawß und die armen von zinsen auff zu heben haben.*

³⁷⁰ StadtAN A6 Nr. 298 *durch aus in allen puncten/ so vil sie berurt/ bey den darauf gesetzten peenen und straffen gehorsamlich gelebt/ unnd nichgegangen auch darwider im wenigsten nicht gehandelt werden.*

³⁷¹ StAN Rep. 52b Nr. 253 5r. Tasks of the Hofmeisterin, wife of the Hofmeister, are coupled with the Hofmeister in seventeenth-century ordinances. StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19. 1r.

the central city hospital, when his hospital needed medical or food supplies. He monitored aspects of the physical facilities such as the cleanliness of the floors and chambers, and he was to report damage to the building due to snow or rain.³⁷²

He was not only to monitor the physical needs of the hospital, but also the behavioral boundaries. He was to act as a buffer in all incidences of conflict. Any complaint or feeling of deprivation was to be reported to him to keep patients or workers from acting out or fighting.³⁷³ If someone acted in a way “without doing that which a Christian is obligated...” he had the authority to punish patients or workers “... as indicated by the Lord overseer in his expert advice.”³⁷⁴

During intense plague outbreak, the lazaret employed extra administrators to aid the Hofmeister. In 1562, they employed Ennders Waidennlich, a craft worker, as an assistant to the Hofmeister. He and his wife moved into the lazaret and earned approximately 3 1/2 G for a few months of service. The lazaret also employed extra bookkeepers and recorders to track the unprecedented onslaught of daily costs and movement of people in and out of the hospital.³⁷⁵

In the leprosy houses, the lepers took care of most administrative functions on their own. Each house elected a Sick Master, *Siechmeister*, in a similar way to abbot or abbess. The Sick Master (who could be male or female) was accountable to the city’s overseer exactly like a Hofmeister. The houses also elected a variety of other positions that collected the communal

³⁷² StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 1r.

³⁷³ StAN Rep. 52b. Nr. 234 157r.

³⁷⁴ StadtAN A6 Nr. 298. *Wie dan() one das ein Christ dem andern zuthun schuldig/ welcher sich aber dessen waigert/ und durch den hofmeister/ dem herrn pflger angezeigt/ bey desselben gutachten sol es stehen/ was er dem ungehorsamen für ein straf auflegen wolle.*

³⁷⁵ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 3v.- 4v. In 1562, I have the first records of the council trying to keep track of the proper names of the dead and sick although none of these records seem to survive.

alms, maintained discipline, or managed food stores.³⁷⁶

The Hofmeisters' and Sick Masters' tasks were parallel to that of the overseer. The biggest difference between the positions was the everyday presence of the Hofmeister. The city council depended on this interlocking administrative system to maintain the behavioral boundaries as they had stipulated in order to provide contagious disease care for the city. The Hofmeister was given the incentive of earning between 26 to 52 G a year, a generous sum, if he could maintain the behavioral structure of the hospitals in a way that pleased the higher powers.³⁷⁷ The Hofmeister connected the cerebral tasks of the council and overseers to the corporal tasks of the workers.

II. The Body-Ballet of the Hospital Workers

Geographer David Seamon argues that any given place is alive with each individual moving in a "body-ballet." In the simplest tasks of walking, washing, or tying ones' shoe-laces, there is a rhythm. When multiple people carry out their "body-ballets" in the same space, a "place-ballet" is created. It is a "kind of unchoreographed yet ordered practice that makes the place just as much as the place's more static and bounded qualities do."³⁷⁸ The static hospitals walls alone would be mere stone structures or wooden huts, no different from death houses. They only became hospitals in the "place-ballet" of the hospital workers and patients.³⁷⁹ I now turn to

³⁷⁶ St. Leonards StadtAN A 21-2 Nr. 150; StadtAN D7 A 1a; StAN D15 J VI Nr. 4.

³⁷⁷ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 49 14v. For reference a school master would have received about 50 Gulden a year. Harrington, *The Faithful Executioner*, 233. Kindle.

³⁷⁸ Tim Cresswell, *Place* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2004), 7. David Seamon, "Body-Subject, Time-Space Routines, and Place-ballets," in *The Human Experience of Space and Place*, eds. Anne Buttimer and David Seamon (New York: St. Martin's Press 1980), 148-165.

³⁷⁹ Allen Pred argues that any construction of human settlement reflects unequal power distributions. As such, the hospitals were standing monuments to the council's paternal power (Chapter 1 and 2). The physical layout of these hospitals impacted in a very real way how the

the physical workers of the hospital beginning with the workers that conducted their jobs on the physical spatial boundary of the hospital: the bouncers and buffers.

Guards and Go-fers

For the separated hospitals to function, there needed to be human bodies who guarded its physical separation and brought it supplies. In prescriptive ordinances, men were called to carry out these buffering jobs. During plague outbreak, a range of guards were employed around the city to block people from going into harmful physical places, such as infected bath houses and homes infested with disease.³⁸⁰ They also kept harmful people out of the city. Guards were posted on the gates blocking foreigners or anyone with open signs of sickness from entering the city; however, guards were also used to protect the St. Sebastian's lazaret (Chapter 2).

In 1533, the council stated that the guards were needed specifically to keep inhabitants from searching for loved ones within the hospital.³⁸¹ Everyone was to give the hospital a wide berth during plague outbreaks. When there were finally no new cases, a white cloth was to be hung out the window as a signal to the city center. It was only after the cloth hung for four weeks that people could walk near the lazaret again.³⁸² The guards also protected the hospital from

place ballet was acted out. Allen Pred, "Place as Historically Contingent Process: Structuration and the Time-Geography of Becoming Places," *Annals of Association of American Geographers* 74, no. 2 (1984): 279-297.

³⁸⁰ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 481 43v., 66v.

³⁸¹ Charlotte Bühl, "Die Pestepidemien des ausgehenden Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit in Nürnberg (1483/4 bis 1533/34)" in *Nürnberg und Bern: Zwei Reichsstädte und ihre Landgebiete*, eds. Urs Martin Zahnd and Rudolf Endres (Erlangen: Universitätsbund Erlangen-Nuremberg, 1990), 141; Ernst Mummenhoff, *Die öffentliche Gesundheits- und Krankenpflege im alten Nürnberg* (Neustadt an d. Aisch: Schmidt, 1986), 102.

³⁸² Bühl, "Die Pestepidemien," 141.

thieves who broke into the lazaret looking for resources or loot from dead patients.³⁸³ In reverse, the guards kept contaminating people and objects from slipping out of the hospital. In the 1580s, the tasks of guards were tightened because of reports of workers selling tainted hospital goods to the public. An attendant and watchman were posted at all times to ensure that no workers, errand boys, maids, or patients went into the city. They were directly responsible for the keys of the building and answerable to the Hofmeister.³⁸⁴ These guards, as bouncers, physically stood on the boundary between the lazaret and the outside world.

While these houses were guarded, they were not meant to be impermeable. Caroline Rawcliffe, in her work on medieval English leper houses, argues that the myth of the extreme separation of lepers was augmented by nineteenth-century historians, who advocated the quarantine of lepers in the contemporary British colonies. She contends that there was always a dynamic relationship between the sick and healthy in the period.³⁸⁵ Rawcliffe exposes the need for connection between the hospitals and the city center. The practical reality was that all of the contagious disease hospitals needed continual supplies from the city.

German leper houses employed the important, but rarely talked about, *Glockler* or *Einsammler* for this purpose. The Glockler, from the German word for bell, was a healthy man who served as an errand runner. He walked into the city ringing a bell, which announced to parishioners it was time to donate to the poor lepers. Bearing an image of the saint of his respective hospital on his basket, he collected vital food to bring back to the hospital. He secured any necessary utensils or tools for the kitchen and acquired the wood for heating. He also

³⁸³ Franz Schmidt, "The Diary of Franz Schmidt," trans. Joel Harrington, *unpublished manuscript*, n.p.

³⁸⁴ StadtAN B19/1 484 11r.-12v.

³⁸⁵ Carole Rawcliffe, *Leprosy in Medieval England* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2006), 13-39.

conducted general maintenance around the house such as heating the bath water for servants and inhabitants.³⁸⁶

A similar go-fer position was employed by the St. Sebastian's lazaret, in the *Possler*. Possler, coming from the German word *Bosssel* or side work, was a go-fer who brought food, beer and wine from the city center to the lazaret.³⁸⁷ He was generally a farm hand with significant strength. He hand-carried food in a sealed basket to the lazaret, a significant distance outside the city.³⁸⁸

These bouncer and buffer positions were held by men. It was men who were allowed to project a public face from the hospitals to the city. They recreated the traditional boundaries of gender roles by being the buffer between the public city and the vulnerable patients and predominantly female workers within. In the work of their bodies, or dance of their bodies, they represented both connection and separation. On the one hand, their presence connected the resources of the city to the separated hospitals through donations or city funds; on the other hand, they allowed everyone else in the two groups to remain wholly separated.

Internal Spatial Boundaries in the Hospital

Within each hospital, the healthy hospital workers and the sick patients were ideally separated. These boundaries were first clearly laid out in the foundation of medieval leprosy houses. The slow moving nature of leprosy meant that inhabitants were ambulatory, making fraternization between healthy workers and the unclean sick difficult to prevent. The possibility

³⁸⁶ StadtAN D7 Nr. A2a; Walter Steinmaier, *St. Jobst: das Aussätzigenspital am Empfangsweg des Kaisers: Herrscherkult und Siechenhaus: Ein Beitrag zum Stadtausbau unter Karl IV. und zum Spitalwesen der freien Reichsstadt Nürnberg* (Nuremberg: Mabase, 2006), 45-46.

³⁸⁷ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 6r.

³⁸⁸ StAN Rep. 52a Nr. 130.

of this connection called for strict rules partitioning the two groups in the functions of everyday life: workers could not eat with the inhabitants, sit with them in the courtyard, or linger for conversation.³⁸⁹

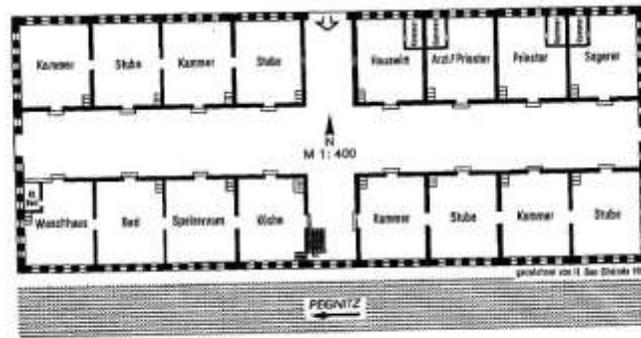


Abb 2: Grundriß: Erdgeschoß des Sebastianslazarets nach Sebald Schreyers Beschreibung

The incapacitating nature of plague and syphilis meant that it was generally not as difficult as in the leprosy hospital to control wandering patients; however, interactions between the healthy workers and sick were strictly proscribed. In the early planning stages of the St. Sebastian's lazaret, Nuremberg patrician, Sebald Schereyer's original proposal was altered to include two fully separate houses. Expert opinions submitted to the council advocated the need for a completely separate building for the healthy. The new building in the complex was designated as the worker or healthy quarters.³⁹⁰ It was particularly important to identify when a patient had begun to return to health. At which point, the patient was to be moved to this section for convalescence.³⁹¹

Historian Charlotte Bühl and architecture student Georg Ruhl created an image of Sebald Schereyer's plan for the layout of the lazaret (See Diagram of Sebastian's). This multi-floor building had twenty-four rooms. The basement held eight of these rooms for the workers and

³⁸⁹ StAN D15 J VI Nr. 4 65v.

³⁹⁰ There is some discrepancy on this. The 1625 Johannis Müllner chronicle states that the extra building added in 1509 was designed for syphilis patients. Documents from 1509 show the different buildings to be this division between the healthy and the sick. StAN A21-2 Nr. 116 38v. Johannes Müllner, *Die Annalen der Reichsstadt Nürnberg von 1623*, edited by Michael Diefenbacher and Walter Gebhardt (Nuremberg: Im Selbstverlag des Stadtrats, 2003) 3: 410.

³⁹¹ StAN A21-2 Nr. 116 p. 38v.

those returning to health. The upper rooms (shown here) were all used for the sick and for the care of the sick.³⁹² Once completely separated from the sick quarter, both workers and patients had to wait three to four weeks in a convalescence room before they were allowed reentry into the city.³⁹³ The room itself served as a buffer, a liminal space of waiting.

The Cook

Looking again at Buhl's diagram of St. Sebastian's hospital, the most essential and dangerous rooms are in the lower left hand corner. From right to left, the kitchen, the dining area, the bath, and the laundry room flow outward with the Pegnitz River. Each room represents an isolated component of purity maintenance in the hospital.

The kitchen was the most guarded of rooms in these hospitals; it was off limits to anyone except the cook or workers with particular need. Patients were explicitly forbidden from entering.³⁹⁴

Even leprosy houses, which could administer and conduct most tasks for themselves, employed a cook. She lived in a separate designated area, sometimes with her own family.³⁹⁵ By waking up very early in the morning, she was to ensure her timely completion of the first meal.³⁹⁶ The cook, or in the larger hospitals also the kitchen maids or a male baking journeyman, was to have "good quality" meals prepared and ready to serve at very precise times throughout the day.³⁹⁷ The standard and special holiday menus were designated by the ordinances. The cook

³⁹² Bühl, "Die Pestepidemien," 148-149.

³⁹³ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481. Four weeks were stipulated for special situation such as when an orphan was allowed to go back into the civic orphanage 35v.

³⁹⁴ StAN D15 J VI Nr. 4 65v.

³⁹⁵ StadtAN D5 Nr. 9 10r.; StAN Rep. 52a Nr. 183 20r.

³⁹⁶ StAN Rep 52b 65r.

³⁹⁷ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 49 (1975/6) 23v.

did not distribute the meals herself. After preparation, she passed the food to the caregivers. She earned between 29 pfennig a week or 6 G a year for her work in a leper house, which seems competitive with the general earnings of a cook. She could earn up to 42 pfennig a week or 8.67 G a year in St. Sebastian's during a plague outbreak.³⁹⁸

As she was exclusively in charge of the kitchen, she also had to clean after the meal. She had a tub for washing set in the kitchen, which was to be covered at all times in order to keep anything unclean from falling inside of it. The cook and her assistants washed the pans, bowls, utensils, and plates, and kept them clean and properly organized. Cleaning at night promptly after the meal was as important as serving the morning meal on time.³⁹⁹ The kitchen itself had to be clean of any smells which could permeate the hospital.⁴⁰⁰

The cook prepared the food and cleaned in the kitchen and, in some hospitals, her own designated quarter. The physical boundary of the kitchen was based on both purity and cleanliness (See Chapter 1). The hospital needed to keep food production pure: storage, the cook herself, and the air quality pure after meals. But it was the cook performing the “body-ballet” of her tasks that provided an additional boundary. Her job was life-sustaining; without her production of food, the patients of the hospitals would starve the same as they would starve if they were simply lying on the streets without the city's care.

Washerwomen

³⁹⁸ StadtAN D07 Nr. A2a 26r.; StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 49 (1574). By means of comparison, Joel Harrington states that rent in the slums outside the city center was approximately 6 Gulden a year. Harrington, *the Faithful Executioner*, 233. Kindle.

³⁹⁹ StAN Rep. 52b Nr. 234 65r.

⁴⁰⁰ StAN Rep. 52b Nr. 234 48v. After the St. Jobst leprosy house was burned down during the first Margrave's war in the 1440s, the house was expanded to include a fully separated kitchen. Steinmaier, *St. Jobst*, 47.

All the contagious disease hospitals needed the service of washerwomen. The larger plague and syphilis hospitals kept one or more on staff. These women handled what early modern minds considered the most dangerous element during the time of plague, the clothing of dead or infected people. She washed the bedding and clothing in the special room on the edge of the hospital with the farthest connection between the hospital and the river outflow. In later years, they city erected a wash-hut underneath the hospital complex.⁴⁰¹

The clothes were to be washed a minimum of three times, after which the tub was to be immediately emptied.⁴⁰² In the French House, where care of syphilis required bandages on open lesions, she washed the bedding, gown, bandages and the sick person himself. Special attention was paid on days that the patient was swaddled and made to sweat as a part of their treatment; the bedding was to be changed so that the patient could be free from the dangerous smells that it absorbed.⁴⁰³

During busy times, the hospitals employed extra short term washerwomen to assist. It is possible that Nuremberg's women took on this job as supplemental income. In the account books, the women appear clearly named, for example, "on August 28, Barbara Schmidin was accepted as a wash maid for ten weeks for 1 Gulden, 5 Thaler and 18 pfennig" or 42 pfennig a week.⁴⁰⁴ Other women listed in this year were Gertraut Pirckenawerin, Anna Bischoffin, Barbara Ayrmenin, Barbara Wagnerin, and Margaretha Flickin, each earning 42 pfennig a week.

Maids

The position of maid seems to be a catch-all term for a woman whose tasks in the

⁴⁰¹ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 19r.

⁴⁰² StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 p.19r

⁴⁰³ StAN Rep. 52b Nr. 234 58r.

⁴⁰⁴ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 49 (1574).

hospital were not connected to treatment of the sick. The specification of these women's tasks depended on the size of the hospital: the greater the amount of work, the greater the designation between positions.⁴⁰⁵ In the French house, her position appears distinct from the cook, washer woman and caregiver, with little further explanation.⁴⁰⁶ Thirty to forty percent of young women in early modern Germany worked at some point as a maid. After puberty, young women worked in the houses of families in order to earn a dowry and ideally the skills necessary to run her own future home.⁴⁰⁷ Presumably in the hospitals, they cleaned the floors, spread new straw, emptied chamber pots, and tended fires. They were to keep the servants' quarters clean as well as those of the sick. Of particular concern were the clothes used for the female menstruation both in the hospital and servants quarters as the foul and moist air from these pieces of cloth, it was thought, could be hazardous to patients' recovery.⁴⁰⁸ Washerwomen and maids protected the patients from something their bodies caused themselves: impure smells.

According to Galenic theory, the healing of syphilis and plague victims was only possible through the purging of toxins and the rebalancing of the humors. Foul smells generally saturated any gathering of people in a closed building, much more a hospital designed that could, if necessary, accommodate 624 people (and more than fifty servants).⁴⁰⁹ Patients needed zero contact with old bedding, straw, and clothes, and constant airing out of enclosed spaces.⁴¹⁰ Although this cleanliness did not reach modern standards of sanitation, it probably provided some level of help and comfort for the patients. These women crossed the boundary between the dirty and the clean; in the work of their bodies, they created and maintained the boundary for

⁴⁰⁵ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 49 5v.

⁴⁰⁶ StAN Rep. 52b. Nr. 9. 61r.

⁴⁰⁷ Joel F. Harrington, *The Unwanted Child*, 23.

⁴⁰⁸ StAN Rep 52b. Nr. 234 8. 58r.-v.; StAN D1 Nr.2. 54r.

⁴⁰⁹ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 8r.

⁴¹⁰ StAN Rep. 52b. Nr. 234 Nr. 6; StAN D1 Nr. 2.

others.

Touch in the Early Modern World

While the hospitals were divided into healthy and sick sections, there needed to be people who could cross the barrier and actually place hands on the patients. Touch in the early modern world was powerful. In the early modern worldview, the touch of a dishonorable person, such as an executioner or skinner, could result in permanent social alienation, or the touch of a saint could bring healing to a life-long disability. Even early modern physicians did not physically touch patients. They remained in the world of the theoretical, observing flasks of patients' urine.⁴¹¹

Touch reaches the most intimate of boundaries; the boundary between a single human body and the world. Unlike the other five senses, "touch insists on the corporeal because it relies on contiguity or proximity for its operation."⁴¹²

Barber Surgeons

There was a limited number of people who were allowed to touch the bodies of patients. One person who was allowed was the barber surgeon.⁴¹³ I will not expound on barber surgeons here because my work is not on the official medical treatment of disease. Both their treatments

⁴¹¹ Michael Stolberg, "The Decline of Uroscopy in Early Modern Learned Medicine (1500-1650)," *Early Science and Medicine* 12, no. 3 (2007): 315-316.

⁴¹² Elizabeth D. Harvey, *Sensible Flesh: On Touch in Early Modern Culture* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 2.

⁴¹³ There were a number of different positions demarcated in early modern Nuremberg: Bath Masters, Barbers, Barber Surgeon apprentices, Blood-letters, Wound-doctors or "body" doctors, all of whom conducted a range of physical medical services.

and social status have been well explicated elsewhere.⁴¹⁴ In the hospitals of Nuremberg, barbers were paid quarterly for their occasional services for the lepers. In the syphilis hospital, they seemed to make regular visits.⁴¹⁵ St. Sebastian's plague hospital had one official barber surgeon from the guild on staff along with two bath masters and multiple assistants.⁴¹⁶

While the *touch* section of my chapter primarily focuses on women as caregivers, I do not want to undervalue the contribution made by these barber surgeons and their servants. They show two important points: one, the employment of barber surgeons displays the concerted effort of the council and administrators to treat disease with what they viewed as the best medicine of their time. The council's use of manpower and resources reaffirms the hospitals were not only seen merely as death houses. Two, barber surgeons were only able to touch sick bodies with an amount of dishonor. Although they were the primary medical practitioners of the early modern cities, they always held a semi-dishonorable status.⁴¹⁷ Educated physicians could avoid the taboo as healers because they never crossed the boundary to touch the sick. The other group that seemed to avoid the dishonor of touching the sick was women. The boundaries of touch pollution were gendered.

Women and Care-Giving

Throughout history, women have occupied a large portion of health related professions. This fact is particularly visible when one considers that most employees in the health industry

⁴¹⁴ Robert Jütte, "A Seventeenth-century German Barber-Surgeon and his Patients," *Medical History* 33 no. 2 (April 1989): 184-198.

⁴¹⁵ StadtAN D4 Nr. 239 21v. StadtAN A6 Nr. 298.

⁴¹⁶ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 49 (1575-1576). In 1570s account books from the lazaret, the Barber Surgeon was paid from 46 G a quarter year, when they added a second he was paid 39 G. However, his assistants, multiple, were paid a combined total 6 G.

⁴¹⁷ Kathy Stuart, *Defiled Trades and Social Outcasts: Honor and Ritual Pollution in Early Modern Germany* (Oxford, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 105-111.

are not doctors. Throughout the medieval and early modern period, female healers provided women with herbal remedies to regularize periods, act as birth control, or induce abortions.⁴¹⁸ Some women even practiced a form of general healing.⁴¹⁹ Throughout the period, however, increased professionalization of medicine with academically trained doctors and city controlled apothecaries pushed women out of the role of healer, doctors or barber surgeons.⁴²⁰ The majority of medical care, however, was not conducted by doctors or barber surgeons, and certainly not in offices or hospitals. Women were the primary caregivers in the home. They inherited generations of knowledge in nurturing the vulnerable: the young, the sick and the dying. The majority of remedial care took place in the home with treatments and herbal brews crafted and implemented by women. The essential connection between women and health fostered support for female midwifery, one of the few women's professions condoned in the "public sphere" of early modern German society.⁴²¹

Other female caregivers in late medieval Europe were Beguines. They were a group of lay nuns who lived in a semi-monastic situation. They served their community in a number of ways but were well-known for care for the sick and dying in the community.⁴²² Women's almost

⁴¹⁸ Ulinka Rublack, "The Public Body: Policing Abortion in Early modern Germany," in *Gender Relations in German History: Power, Agency, and Experience from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth-century*, eds. Lynn Abrams and Elizabeth Harvey (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 57-80. See also Barbara Duden, *The Woman Beneath the Skin: A Doctor's Patients in Eighteenth-Century Germany* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1991); Robert Jütte, *Ärzte, Heiler und Patienten. Medizinischer Alltag in der frühen Neuzeit* (Munich: Artemis & Winkler, 1991).

⁴¹⁹ Merry E. Wiesner, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 84.

⁴²⁰ Wiesner, *Women and Gender*, 95.

⁴²¹ Merry E. Wiesner, "The Midwives of South Germany and the Public/Private Dichotomy," in *The Art of Midwifery: Early Modern Midwives in Europe*, ed. Hilary Marland (London: Routledge, 1994), 89. See also Helen King, *Midwifery, Obstetrics and the Rise of Gynaecology: The Uses of a Sixteenth-Century Compendium* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007).

⁴²² Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies: Beguine Communities in the Medieval Low Countries, 1200-*

mystical knowledge of the body was seen as both holy and also potentially demonic. It has been argued that this intimate knowledge of the body with its weakness and strengths was a partial explanation for the disproportionate persecution of women as witches during the European witch craze.⁴²³ As mothers, caregivers and midwives, women had a particular power that held people over the threshold of life and death.

Caregivers

The woman who primarily touched the patient was the caregiver. The term *Warterin* literally translates as waitress, but the term had a range of meanings such as a female nurse, orderly, attendant, guard or caregiver. I have chosen caregiver because it most accurately describes the tasks done by these women in the hospitals. In early modern cities, caregivers were often employed individually by rich families to care for their sick or elderly members. These women seem to have come from lower classes of the city or the surrounding area. During plague outbreaks, the city needed a huge number of caregivers. At one point, we have a record of the Nuremberg council mustering their *Almosenweiber*, or women who received alms from the city, to be caregivers in St. Sebastian's lazaret.⁴²⁴

A caregiver looked after the basic physical needs of patients such as dabbing their sweat, giving them water, making the bed, and helping them in and out of their beds for cleaning. In

1565 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), 68.

⁴²³ Jonathan Durrant, *Witchcraft, Gender and Society in Early Modern Germany* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 189; Alison Rowlands, "Monstrous Deception: Midwifery, Fraud and Gender in Early Modern Rothenburg ob der Tauber," in *Gender in Early Modern German History*, ed. Ulinka Rublack (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

⁴²⁴ Carolin Porzelt, *Die Pest in Nürnberg: Leben und Herrschen in Pestzeiten in der Reichsstadt Nürnberg, 1562-1713* (St. Ottilien: EOS, 2000), 98-99.

many cases, they applied treatments ordered by barber surgeons or doctors.⁴²⁵ While the cook prepared the meals in her separated kitchen, the caregiver was the one who came into close enough contact with the patients to distribute the food. They were “to take care of all [the patients’] other needs and refreshment.”⁴²⁶

As they worked closest to the patients and beds, they also conducted more practical duties around the hospital. They were responsible for ensuring the continual use of clean bedding and securing that the fire pit did not ignite the surrounding hay on the floors.⁴²⁷ The fires they maintained probably contained the specialized herbs, burned as a form of humoral purity maintenance. This task of watching the fire displays that the caregivers were responsible for consistent monitoring, in contrast to intermittent visits from administrators, doctors, or barber surgeons.

While the majority of ordinances show that females conducted these care-giving jobs, there were also male *Warter* listed exclusively in the St. Sebastian’s plague hospital.⁴²⁸ As stated earlier, the term *Warter* had multiple meanings. It is impossible to tell how the tasks were divided between male and female caregivers. Hospitals divided their lodging into male or female rooms. One possibility is that the male patients had predominantly male caregivers conducting the more sensitive tasks of care-giving; however, this conclusion seems shaky when one considers that there were no male caregivers in the syphilis hospital. The French house was staffed by a Hofmeister and then four women: wood-maid (see below), wash maid, under-maid and cook.⁴²⁹ If women were not allowed to give care to men in those private ways, male

⁴²⁵ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr 19 23r. See also wood-maid section.

⁴²⁶ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 23r.- 23v. *und andere nottdurfft und Labung zutragen und reichen.*

⁴²⁷ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 23r.

⁴²⁸ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 28r.

⁴²⁹ StAN Rep 52b. Nr. 9 61r.

caregivers would have been mentioned for syphilis, where there were lesions on sensitive places such as genitals. The gender of the caregiver, it would seem, did not need to match with that of the patient.

It seems more plausible, then, that these men conducted the more physically taxing tasks of the St. Sebastian hospital, as discussed above. In a duty book from the turn of the seventeenth-century, all care-giving is listed under the female term; the male term is never mentioned while other positions such as guards and Posslern are listed.⁴³⁰ These go-fers moved large amounts of food and firewood to their useful places. The term *Warter* could have also simply applied to the aforementioned guards. When both the male and female term, *Warter* and *Warterin*, are listed together, they were paid the same. In one source, they were paid 36 pfennig a week with 63-pfennig (1/4 Gulden) bonus at the conclusion of their services.⁴³¹ When guards' and female caregivers' tasks are divided, they are again paid the same.⁴³² I am not arguing that male workers in the hospital never touched patients or took on responsibilities of the caregiver, but I am arguing that the primary role of caregiver was assigned to women.

In a similar vein to caregiver, the French House employed a *Holtzmagde* or wood-maid. Her name comes from her central task of preparing and applying the guaiac wood treatment. Syphilis in this period was notoriously treated with mercury, but by the mid-sixteenth-century, the city of Nuremberg was an avid proponent of guaiac wood, a new treatment brought from the New World.⁴³³ The job was a big responsibility and quite dangerous; in 1572 the wood-maid

⁴³⁰ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 pg. 21r-23v.

⁴³¹ StadtAN B19 Nr. 481 28r.

⁴³² StadtAN B19 Nr. 481 5r. The authorities start the salary at 24 pfennig and the price goes up to 36 and eventually 42 when plague prices rise and their need for service personnel increases.

⁴³³ Franz Renner, *Ein New wolgegründet nützlich und haylsams Handtbüchlein gemeiner Praktik aller innerlicher und esserlicher Erzney wide die krankheit der Franzosen* (Frankfurt 1578). StB N. Med. 68. 4°.

accidentally burned down the French House when heating water for the wood treatment. The fire caught surrounding trash, extra paper, and wood storage before engulfing the entire building and killing two patients.⁴³⁴

Besides preparing the wood, she administered sleeping drafts to patients. During the summer, she was to give the draft two hours after sundown and in the wintertime, when the night was longer, three hours after sundown. She was to administer the central purgation medicine around four in the morning. It took approximately five hours to activate, at which time, around nine o'clock, the physician would observe the patient. She then was to give the patients clean and warm herb broth to drink followed by an hour of fasting.⁴³⁵

Another woman mentioned in St. Sebastian's during plague was the midwife. She is not mentioned in any ordinances, but she appears in the council's decrees and account books. She was given a weekly salary of 29 pfennig as well as a bonus of a Gulden.⁴³⁶ Midwives hesitated in helping sick pregnant women. The council repeatedly admonished midwives to do their duty during plague.⁴³⁷ In 1543, the wife of a man named "twelve-toed" Heftleinmacher, was the victim of lack of assistance by a midwife. When "twelve-toed" died,

he left behind a wife with a pregnant body. When the sickness also attacked her and caused her to go into labor, the baby ejected from her and fell dead onto the earth. No one wanted to take care of her; she, suffering, took a cleaver and hacked off the umbilical cord and therefore in agony died.⁴³⁸

Any dip in a pregnant woman's health could result in premature labor, which is why the city needed to staff the lazaret with a dutiful midwife during an outbreak.

⁴³⁴ StAN Rep. 52a 130 850.

⁴³⁵ StadtAN A6 Nr. 298; StadtAN A6 Nr. 328. Calculated from general numbers of female servants in these hospitals.

⁴³⁶ StAN Rep 60a RV #1215 Sat. 24 Oct. 1562 and StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 49 (1575-1576).

⁴³⁷ StAN Rep 60a Nr. 825 14v. RV Mon. 21 July 1533. *Die hebammen zu beschick und iren bey Iren pflichen zu bevelhen wo sie zu den schwanger frawen geordert werd das sie widig seyen.*

⁴³⁸ Müllner, *Die annalen der Reichsstadt Nurnberg von 1623*. 3:724.

Cüstorin

When the number of patients increased, the larger hospitals created the position of the Cüstorin as head of the caregivers. The Cüstorin, related to the word *custos* or guard in Latin, was first seen in nunneries as a custodian or administrative housekeeper.⁴³⁹ She was an older, trusted woman who at other points occupied more menial positions in the hospital, such as washerwoman.⁴⁴⁰

The Cüstorin conducted a seemingly odd collection of import and menial tasks. She ensured the most important medical tasks were fulfilled: medicines that the doctors or barber surgeons ordered were administered, patients were adequately covered and sweated, and the maintenance of clean sheets. She was also to “observe and make note” how each patient was doing, noting how strong or weak each patient was.⁴⁴¹ She had the responsibility of determining when patients were healthy enough to need “healthy” sheets. These sheets were part of a delicate balance which could have determined someone’s continuous rise to health. To apply potentially toxic sick sheets to someone on the mend could result in the patient’s downward turn. When a patient died, she was to personally collect the tainted sheets, the most poisonous items in the hospital, for special washing.⁴⁴²

Almost trivial in comparison to these medical tasks, she was to be there for the patients’ comfort “day and night, providing them with warm water as needed.”⁴⁴³ She was to speak with

⁴³⁹ *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob und Wilhelm Grimm*. Online-Version s.v. "Küsterin."

⁴⁴⁰ There is a record of St. Sebastian dismissing the service personnel at the end of a bout of plague, the Cüstorin was retained but only as a washer woman. StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 49 (1575-1576).

⁴⁴¹ StAN Rep. 52b Nr. 9 64r.

⁴⁴² StAN Rep. 52b Nr. 9 64r.-65r.

⁴⁴³ StAN Rep. 52b Nr. 9 64v.

the patients in the morning and at night to “ask, what he desired and what he would like to eat.”⁴⁴⁴ Specifically, she was to inquire about their daily meat consumption. If the patient preferred wine soup or an egg instead of his allotted meat, she was to see that it was provided for him. She was, then, to keep track of all of this information.⁴⁴⁵

This Cüstorin held an extremely high position within the house. In account books for St. Sebastian’s, she is listed with the highest administrators. Sometimes she was given equal pay as the Hofmeister, a half Gulden a week, which was three times the pay for a normal caregiver, washerwoman, or maid.⁴⁴⁶ The fact that a woman was raised to this status gives more credence to my early assertion that women were the central caregivers in St. Sebastian’s.

In this physical caregiving, these women were instructed to never ignore or circumvent patients, to work without snarls or groans but “with compassion and patience.”⁴⁴⁷ Hospital ordinances were replete with admonitions for workers to conduct their tasks with willingness, hard work, and obedience, but caregivers are given the rare instruction to *Mitleid*. *Mitleid* has the same meaning of compassion as its Latin roots in English; they were to *suffer with* the patients. Within the behavioral boundaries, these women were to cross the divide between the sick and healthy, to physically care for the patients through *touch*, but how much more powerful was it to touch the soul? Social theorist Brené Brown tells the story of her husband’s medical residency in a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. She was pregnant at the time and with every sad story of premature births and deaths, she asked her husband “what was the race of the mother, age,

⁴⁴⁴ StAN Rep 52b. 64v. *soll sie das kranckh fragen, was es beger. Und wol möchte essen auff begern desselben.*

⁴⁴⁵ StAN Rep. 52b Nr. 9 64r-65r.

⁴⁴⁶ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 49 1574; StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 5r. Although in actual financial records from the early 1570s she earns about 96.9 pfennig, which was less than the 126 pfennig that would equal a half Gulden.

⁴⁴⁷ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 23r.-23v. *mit denselben mitleidlich und gedultig sein.*

class... health background?" Anything, she now admits, to differentiate the horror from her own situation.⁴⁴⁸ In a panic stricken city where most people sought to differentiate themselves from the horror, these women were to cross physical and emotional boundaries. She was to merge with the suffering patient through compassion. Perhaps in stating this behavioral prescription, the council sought to pry the fingers of mothers and wives from their sick loved ones in the hope that there would be compassionate female caregivers awaiting them in the hospital. In a replication of the home, these women were called to be civic nurturers.

Women and gender historian Merry Wiesner almost sarcastically notes that while women were deemed too weak for participation in almost all early modern guilds, no one ever challenged women in the "danger or drudgery of working in these hospitals."⁴⁴⁹ In the touching of patients, these workers crossed the boundaries between the healthy and the sick. They touched sick bodies, dirty sheets, and dirty dishes. Through the everyday routines of their bodies, they gave food to unclean mouths and medicine to putrid sores. In the work of their bodies, they became the space within which sick bodies could heal. Post-structuralist Julia Kristeva argues that women's bodies are the space and the materiality, or the *Chora*, through which the world was born and has its being and, in this case, gave it being back and died.⁴⁵⁰

III. Outside the Behavioral Boundaries

⁴⁴⁸ Brené Brown, *I Thought It Was Just Me: Women Reclaiming Power and Courage in a Culture of Shame* (New York: Gotham, 2007), 149-150.

⁴⁴⁹ Wiesner, *Women and Gender*, 94.

⁴⁵⁰ Kristeva in *The Power of Horror* states that it is the maternal body which gave its substance. Both the maternal body and child were indistinguishable until the child became a speaking subject able to separate "me" and other, between "me" and (me)mother." The child rejects this bounded materiality and enters the symbolic world of paternal discourse and law. Julia Kristeva, *The Power of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 13-15. Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual: An Interpretation of Early Modern Germany* (London: Routledge, 1997), 171.

Disobedience is one of the few clear pieces of evidence in the early modern period to prove that everyday people were acting agents and not merely automatons directed by larger authorities or forces. In the realm of gender history, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich has famously recounted, “well-behaved women seldom make history,” but the axiom could be extended to most people of the lower classes and certainly workers in these hospitals.⁴⁵¹

Disobedience displays two crucial points. The first point is that each individual weaved his/her own “body-ballet”; disobedience is only a hint into the infinite ways workers could complete the tasks (or not). Post-colonialist theorist Homi Bhabha uses an example of cricket to describe the manifestation of hybrid identity in British-occupied India. The Indians played cricket within the original rules and confines of the British, but they would add special yells or ways to run.⁴⁵² In the same way, even in perfectly following the prescribed behavior paths of the hospital ordinances which I have described throughout these pages, each worker or collection of workers still “did it their way.” Disobedient moments are merely records of the few times people were caught stepping out of these prescribed behavioral boundaries.

The second point is that disobedience illuminates the dependence of the city council on the obedience of workers in their bodies. If a caregiver, for some reason of her own, decided to withhold a patient’s food, that individual could easily have found himself outside of the provision of civic health care. Through each individual worker’s intelligence, perceptions, and personality inclinations, they made decisions and through those decisions singular actions. These actions in bodies formed the real shape of contagious disease care in Nuremberg.

⁴⁵¹ Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, “Vertuous Women Found: New England Ministerial Literature, 1668-1735,” *American Quarterly* 28, no.1 (Spring 1976), 20. Although often attributed to Eleanor Roosevelt or Anne Boleyn.

⁴⁵² Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge 1994), 93.

Ordinances inculcated that the hospital workers were to be obedient, hard-working and patient, leading one to conclude that they were often unruly, lazy, and impatient. They conducted their tasks with disobedient tongues and attitudes. Both patients and staff were repeatedly rebuked for having loose tongues, complaining, fighting, or for holding secret conversations.⁴⁵³ Women in St. Leonard's and men in St. Peter's were threatened with heavy fines for talking to servants of the opposite-sex or for speaking "anything that could be unchaste, insulting or abusive".⁴⁵⁴

Workers were repeatedly admonished to be "diligent" in their tasks. Patients complained of maids not doing their jobs.⁴⁵⁵ Punishments had to be put in place for caregivers or cooks who were slow with patient's food or medicine. The wood-maid in the French house had a very narrowly prescribed time to give sleeping drafts and wood treatments. If she gave them to the patients one hour too late or too early, she was penalized 12 pfennig, or almost a third of her weekly salary.⁴⁵⁶ If not done correctly, there were additional punishments of 4 pfennig or about a tenth of her weekly salary.⁴⁵⁷

They often conducted their tasks with extortion. Caregivers, maids, gravediggers, errand runners, and even religious personnel were explicitly forbidden from extorting "additional funds" when doing their job in the lazaret. They were to serve their patients from their "free good will" because all their pay came from the council's gracious wage.⁴⁵⁸ Patients also complained of the

⁴⁵³ StAN D15 J VI Nr. 4 65v.

⁴⁵⁴ StadAN A 21-2 Nr. 150 171v; StadAN D07 A 2b 3v.-4r.

⁴⁵⁵ StadAN B19/1 484 5v.

⁴⁵⁶ StadAN A6 Nr. 298.

⁴⁵⁷ StadAN A6 Nr. 298; StadAN A6 Nr. 328 Calculated from general numbers of female servants in these hospitals.

⁴⁵⁸ StadAN A6 Nr. 328.

workers “robbing and plundering” their personal possessions.⁴⁵⁹ Executioner Franz Schmidt recorded in his journal a case in October 1585 of a Possler pilfering patients’ goods.

Hans Hofmann from Obersdorf, a thief. Stole clothes from the sick, infected people in the Lazaret [hospice] and had violated the ban six times. Because he was caught in the act at the Lazaret, he was not given the usual trial, but rather an Honorable Council ordered the sentence to be read in front of the Lazaret by a town beadle. He was then led out [to the gallows] and executed here at Nuremberg with the rope. Such a proceeding had never been heard of or happened before...⁴⁶⁰

Another chronicle recounted that the city was so afraid of Hofmann’s impurity from touching the tainted clothing that they hung him in the area of the lazaret, using the lazaret’s prayer leader for his religious aid.⁴⁶¹

They also disobeyed in ways unrecorded. A maid from St. Leonard’s leprosy house, who served wine, was threatened by the council for performing some unknown deed with a barber. The most obvious guesses are something sexual or having to do with stealing the wine, but the council only records later that if she did not confess she would be thrown in jail.⁴⁶² Male workers were often reproached for stalking or attacking the night maids.⁴⁶³ Plague workers were chided for having sexual relations with patients. On September 6, 1585, the new Hofmeister of St. Sebastian’s, Herman Stadtknecht, was told a cautionary tale of the previous Hofmeister Lucas Helm, who had had careless relations with women in the lazaret. One of the women became pregnant during her treatment in the lazaret. Helm claimed to have been engaged with her, but as his wife had also just died of plague only a few month before, the situation was completely unpalatable to the council. Helm and his new bride were then forbidden to enter the city for three

⁴⁵⁹ Porzelt, *Die Pest in Nürnberg*, 93. *rauben und plünderdern*.

⁴⁶⁰ Franz Schmidt, “The Diary of Franz Schmidt,” n.p.

⁴⁶¹ StAN Rep. 52a Nr. 130 900.

⁴⁶² StAN Rep. 60a Nr. 830 RV Sat. Nov. 29 1533.

⁴⁶³ StadtAN B19/1 484 4v.

years.⁴⁶⁴ This case was to serve as a warning to the new Hofmeister lest he be tempted by the female patients because his wife had also recently died. The overseer warned him that he “not so hastily and incautiously marry, [if so] then it should happen that he will reap the same punishment.”⁴⁶⁵

The oldest trick in the book was simple embezzlement of hospital resources. While Jesus had the power to turn water into wine, the workers in these hospitals had the power to turn wine into water. Watery wine was a continual complaint in the lazaret. The Hofmeister was investigated for throwing parties with hospital food. His highest offense was drinking the wine meant for patients and then watering it down.⁴⁶⁶ Food and drink was the absolute greatest expense in the hospital (See Chapter 5). The amount that workers were to eat was as clearly specified as the patients’ diet in the hospital ordinances.⁴⁶⁷ In the 1570s, an overseer of the Lepraschau complained that they could not supply sufficient food to the needy lepers without the workers gorging and binging.⁴⁶⁸

The city council inlucated to the administrators that the job of monitoring the bread, meat, and beer supplies was their responsibility.⁴⁶⁹ The Cüstorin in the lazaret was to speak with the patients personally about the amount of meat they had eaten that day.⁴⁷⁰ The information could have been of aid in medical decisions, but the real reason seems to be unlocked in the ordinances for the caregivers. The ordinances forbade caregivers from taking left-over food

⁴⁶⁴ StadtAN B19/1 484 2v.-3r.

⁴⁶⁵ StadtAN B19/1 484 3r. *und nicht so jehling und unfursichtig heuraten, dan da es solt beschehen, wirdt er mit gleicher straff heimgesuch() werden.*

⁴⁶⁶ StadtAN D1 Nr. 2 92r.

⁴⁶⁷ StadtAN D07 Nr. A2a 25r.

⁴⁶⁸ StAN A26 Rep. 90 Nr. 109.

⁴⁶⁹ StadtAN D1 Nr. 2 47v.

⁴⁷⁰ StAN Rep 52b p. 65r; StAN Rep 52b Nr. 9 64v.

because it caused squabbles and competition among them.⁴⁷¹ Further, the ordinances cited the temptation to “steal or withhold food” from the sick for sale was too great. No food was to be furtively sneaked out of the house “as has sometimes occurred.”⁴⁷² Instead, all extra food was then to be taken to the Hofmeister who was ultimately accountable for it.⁴⁷³

Drunkenness among all levels of hospital employees was one of the largest problems. The lazaret had an onsite jail with shackles where it would place *volgesauffen* or grossly intoxicated workers. For example, one report stated that two drunken Posslern were thrown in the lazaret jail on rations of bread and water; upon leaving the lazaret, they were banished from the city.⁴⁷⁴

Progressively from the 1560s through the 1580s, the city council practiced increased oversight on the administration of the hospital, ensuring the limited resources and personnel were used in the prescribed way. If the Hofmeister, in particular, was disobedient in his delegated responsibilities, then there was no hope of the rest of the boundaries holding their prescribed forms. In 1585, the highest offices in the lazaret drew the most censure from the council. The Hofmeister, pastor, and Cüstorin reported on each other and were reported on by council servants. The council replaced both the Hofmeister and Cüstorin a number of times during the outbreak. In early September, a new Hofmeister was strictly warned to not be like the last, he would have to clean up his act particularly in relation to food and drink.⁴⁷⁵

On September 15, 1585, the Cüstorin Anna Vischerin was dismissed for not fulfilling her

⁴⁷¹ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 23v.

⁴⁷² StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 23r. *und solche nicht wie etwas geschehen- das krancken nichts entwenden noch abtragen.*

⁴⁷³ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 23.

⁴⁷⁴ StadtAN B19/1 484 5r. A note indicates that the jail was out of use at the time, so instead they were simply kicked out.

⁴⁷⁵ StadtAN B19/1 484 2v.

duties; she was also sneaking lazaret resources and patients' clothing in a basket out of the hospital. The council gave permission for her corporal punishment, jail, and subsequent life-long banishment from the city for ten miles.⁴⁷⁶ Two days later, the old Hofmeister Lucas Helm was brought up on charges for various misdeeds and his new careless marriage. Lucas Helm, wife Katerina, and Anna Vischerin were called to raise two fingers and swear to their banishment.⁴⁷⁷ In the next month, the Hofmeister Conrad Merckel, his wife, and another Cüstörin were accused of selling the clothes of dead patients. They were condemned to an old Nuremberg tower for fourteen days. After it was determined that the three were not infected, they were moved to the jail.⁴⁷⁸ The delegated role of the administration in Nuremberg's hospitals became accountable to centralized monitoring.

Unfortunately, from the sources we are not privy to the manner in which the hospital workers conducted their tasks, whether they “whistled while they worked” or not, but we do know that workers certainly stretched the behavioral boundaries dictated by the council with disobedience. The disobedient acts of workers show both the role of the individual in shaping care in the hospitals (in positive or negative ways) through their own actions, but also the threshold through which individuals could test those boundaries before being purged by the council. Efforts to tighten and monitor the boundaries were progressively made at a time when the city was particularly concerned with its resources, which will be explored in later chapters.

Conclusion

Within these hospitals stood a myriad of concentric and overlapping boundaries.

⁴⁷⁶ StadtAN B19/1 484 8r.

⁴⁷⁷ StadtAN B19/1 484 9r.-9v.

⁴⁷⁸ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 540 1r.

Boundaries between the sick and healthy, the pure and impure, the clean and dirty, male and female, the body and the outside world, and, finally, between life and death. The council and educated advisers built contagious disease care on the idea of these boundaries. They prescribed parameters to maintain them. While these constructs may be easy to delineate in the mind or on paper, in the real world they cannot be maintained without working human bodies as bouncers, buffers, and boundary makers.

To what end? The warmth, food, and care found in the hospitals gave infected citizens and inhabitants a place to go in their vulnerability and a hope of recovery. The city spent vast sums of money for that hope. In the work of these bodies, the sick citizens or inhabitants were told that they were home, that they could be nurtured. In the work of these bodies, they were told that they were not merely a part of the city when they were strong contributing members, but also when they were weak, and thereby, they were ultimately told that they belonged.

The behavioral boundaries should have demarcated a clear shape of contagious disease care in Nuremberg; however, as it was ever dependent on workers' minds and bodies, it was an ever-changing, wibbly-wobbly shape that looks more solid the further away one's perspective. In the next chapter, I will look more closely at how the council used incentive and threat against body carriers, Posslern, and grave diggers in order to try to stabilize the form of contagious diseases care in Nuremberg.

Chapter 4:

Working Bodies as Mobile Boundaries: Workers Processing and Purging in the City

On the seventh of October during the catastrophic plague of 1562, the city council of Nuremberg met to discuss the rampant problem of unruly body carriers in its city. During outbreaks of plague, body carriers became one of the most visible groups in the city. They



transported afflicted bodies outside of the walls: the sick to St. Sebastian's lazaret and the dead to St. Johannis cemetery. Unfortunately, they were also notorious for extorting money, food and drink from vulnerable families. The over-taxed, low-in-number council continuously amended their decrees aimed at the body carriers. Despite the fact that the council dealt with a myriad of other major catastrophes associated with plague, such as food shortages, trade stoppages and city-wide looting, disobedient workers were a central fixture in the council's legislation. Although the council enjoyed a European-wide reputation for power, it was still dependent on the cooperation of these unruly, disreputable body carriers to enact their plans for adequate

contagious-disease separation and care (See Image: Body Carriers).

The cornerstone of Nuremberg's management of plague was the physical separation of polluting elements from the healthy. In Chapters 1 and 2, I explored how the walls of the city provided the physical boundary of contagious disease separation and the emotional projection of safety within its bounds. The walls signified home; however, as the sick citizens and inhabitants of Nuremberg themselves proved to be the most virulent pollutants, the city established hospitals outside the walls to care for those individuals; the patients were to be treated there until they could return again healthy *wider gesund*. The hospitals were founded in mimicry of the home - a home away from home; it was ideally a place of protection and compassion. In Chapter 3, I explored how the workers within the hospital performed "body-ballets," becoming the boundary of Nuremberg's contagious disease care in the actions of their bodies as they fulfilled or withheld their tasks. This chapter looks at plague workers within the city; it follows contagious disease care employees as they performed their "body-ballets" across the city's landscape.

The outbreak of plague sparked the need for intense orchestration and the use of many working bodies. The council needed workers to bring resources from the city center to the extramural hospitals. It also prompted leaders to find sources of miasma and transfer them out of the city by means of designated pathways. As with the workers inside the hospitals, they performed a more-and-less choreographed dance. Their acts of disobedience tested the powers-that-were in the city center, but their general obedience enabled the system to work.

Chapter Structure

The *first* section of this chapter will focus on the paths of the contagious disease workers as part of a broader culture of procession and purgation in early modern cities. It explores how

these workers crossed the boundary between the sick and the healthy in the work of their bodies ultimately to reinforce the boundary of contagious disease separation. Posslern, or errand runners, processed on a path that brought city resources to loved ones in St. Sebastian's lazaret, and body carriers purged the city of the corrupted sick and dead. Other workers such as washerwomen, guards, gravediggers and caregivers also acted as buffers while accomplishing their tasks in the city. Through the work of their bodies, the sick, dead and polluted objects within the city were transferred out of it. This isolation and conveying of harmful elements was spatially orchestrated.

The *second* section functions in parallel with Chapter 3. It shows the council's "behavioral boundaries," which established the channels within which contagious disease workers were to travel. Disobedience shows the workers' resistance to these prescriptions. The council increasingly used the threat of punishment and the incentive of money to try to sure up those channels. The council's dictates may have been the intended disease care; however, the actual shape of disease care was created in the praxis of the physical work.

Finally, my *third* section focuses on the city council's attempt to allay fear during plague. The orchestration of pathways helped to impart a sense of security. The inhabitants needed to believe that cooperation was their best chance of survival; the submission of body carriers and other workers to the will of the council was the key to this plan. The separation of pollutants, care for the sick in hospitals, and, ultimately, the reintegration of the healthy was the intended trajectory of contagious disease care in Nuremberg, but it was ever dependent on these mobile bodies.

I. Procession and Purgation

Processions were standard-fare in early modern cities. Religious orders, city leaders, and guild members all formed themselves into particular lines, on particular days and times, in a particular order, in particular clothing to proceed on particular pathways for prayer, funerals, announcements of nobility, festivals and feasts. Scholars have analyzed procession as physical, visible and spatial reinforcement of early modern political and religious power structures. In Ulrike Strasser's study of female sexuality in Bavaria, she opens with the procession of Duke Maximilian I to the great gothic city hall and central market to erect a golden statue of Mary. It was an emblem merging political dominion, Catholicism, and female chastity.⁴⁷⁹ In Duane Corpis's study of the bi-confessional Augsburg, procession was a means of staking out territory and contesting opposing claims to religious dominion.⁴⁸⁰ In Barbara Diefendorf's study of confessional competition in Paris, procession was ultimately the ritual act of unity, in which "the body social, the body political and the body of Christ were so closely intertwined as to be inseparable."⁴⁸¹ Procession clearly illustrates the connection between civic and religious power structure and paths. Humanist geographer Allen Pred argues that paths are always alive with

⁴⁷⁹ Ulrike Strasser, *State of Virginity: Gender, Religion, and Politics in an Early Modern Catholic State* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 1.

⁴⁸⁰ Duane J. Corpis, "Losing One's Place: Memory, History, and Space in Post-Reformation Germany," in *Enduring Loss in Early Modern Germany Cross Disciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Lynne Tatlock (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 339, 336-337; See also Frauke Volkland, *Konfession und Selbstverständnis: reformierte Rituale in der gemischtkonfessionellen Kleinstadt Bischofszell im 17. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005) and Natalie Zemon Davis: "The Sacred and the Body Social in Sixteenth-Century Lyon." *Past & Present* 90 (1981), 40-70.

⁴⁸¹ Barbara B. Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross: Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth-Century Paris* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 48. See also Philip M. Soergel, *Wondrous in His Saints: Counter-Reformation Propaganda in Bavaria* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 83-89; Steve Hindle, "Beating the Bounds of the Parish: Order, Memory, and Identity in the English Local Community, c. 1500-1700," in *Defining Community in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Michael Halvorson and Karen Spierling (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2008), 206.

unequal power distribution that projects institutional structures.⁴⁸² Nuremberg's processional paths were woven through its central monuments of institutional power: the city hall, city market, and two major parish churches.⁴⁸³ These visible structures created the paths that reinforced meaning within the community.

Procession visibly and spatially elided the body of Christ, the Corpus Christianum, with its secular jurisdiction. God had consecrated social orders and charged both leaders and followers to maintain suitable distinctions within this jurisdiction, but bodies required both leaders (heads) and subordinate parts (eg. feet) in order to function well. It essentially stated, "You are a part of the body of Christ Nuremberg branch."

In order to maintain this purity in medieval political thought, the purging of pollutants was as important as processing. These pollutants could be moral, religious or material. Ritualized funeral processions brought dead bodies out of the city to cemeteries and surrounding chapels as they were forbidden to be buried in the city. Nuremberg's *Lepraschau* (leper examination) brought homeless lepers into specified places within the city for charity, spiritual service, and physical examination. The city's sworn doctors diagnosed any new cases of leprosy so that anyone within the city who was polluted with the *abscheulich*, or disgusting illness, could follow the lepers out of the city into their new isolated homes. In Lyndal Roper's study of Augsburg, prostitutes were ritually banished on St. Galli's day as a symbol of the city's moral and sexual sobriety.⁴⁸⁴ Another account of purging was famously sculpted on the town church of

⁴⁸² Allen Pred, "Place as Historically Contingent Process: Structuration and the Time-Geography of Becoming Places," *Annals of Association of American Geographers* 74, no. 2 (1984): 279-297. These ideas are also prevalent in Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

⁴⁸³ Andrea Löther, *Prozessionen in spätmittelalterlichen Städten: politische Partizipation, obrigkeitliche Inszenierung, städtische Einheit* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1999), 41-49.

⁴⁸⁴ Lyndal Roper, *The Holy Household: Women and Morals in Reformation Augsburg* (Oxford:

Wittenberg, in which Martin Luther would later preach. A relief on the side of the church shows an image of a pig defecating on Jews as a monument to their expulsion. Nuremberg followed suit by expelling their Jewish population in 1498.⁴⁸⁵ Many of their books were cannibalized and the materials co-opted into municipals records, some of which, somberly, I used to write this research. Early modern cities purged themselves continuously of Jews, witches, Anabaptists, criminals, adulterers, or adherents to rival confessions. Depending upon the situation, the purged individuals were either removed from the community through banishment or death, or they were restored to the community through confession and reintegration.⁴⁸⁶

One of the most visible forms of purging was the pathway of the executed criminal. In 1617, George Karl Lambrecht, a miller and day laborer, was convicted of counterfeiting gold and silver coins. His processional path visibly crossed all powerful civic and religious monuments of Nuremberg. It began with the ringing of St. Sebald's bells. Then the criminal was brought out of the dungeons at the city hall and escorted by a line of priests, city councilors donning brilliant dark robes, and the heads of the city's craft guilds. They processed from the city hall, completed the full alignment at St. Lorenz, and then exited out the southeast Frauentor, where the Ravenstone awaited the execution; the soon to be executed man wept along the way pleading to the people for forgiveness. While forgiveness from God could be achieved for Lambrecht, as indeed one chaplain confirmed his journey to heaven, he was still to be ritually purged from the

Clarendon Press, 1989) 83,113, and 118.

⁴⁸⁵ Johannes Müllner, *Die Annalen der Reichsstadt Nürnberg von 1623*, eds. Michael Diefenbacher and Walter Gebhardt (Nuremberg: Im Selbstverlag des Stadtrats, 2003) 3: 162. The Jewish community's expulsion may have been connected to the mass amount of outbreak of plague and syphilis between 1494-1497.

⁴⁸⁶ R. I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe, 950-1250* (Oxford, UK: B. Blackwell, 1987). A good example of reintegration is Margo Todd's analysis of confession in Scotland. Margo Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 106.

pure city.⁴⁸⁷

The maintenance of purity, both physical and spiritual, was heightened during plague. In 1483, the council ordered “every day after vespers [during] the reigning pestilence to praise the heavenly queen Mary by singing the antiphon [call and response singing] *Salve Regina* with the servants singing the collect, and in their godly houses between here and Egidien, hold biweekly processions to call on God to impart grace against pestilence.”⁴⁸⁸ Twice in 1533, seven years after the Reformation, the council ordered both parish churches to raise processional prayers for the city.⁴⁸⁹ Although plague was attributed to a number of causes, worldly and other-worldly, the most uncontested solution was repentance and a plea for God’s mercy. The council tells the inhabitant “to lift up his heart and mind to God the Father through a genuine, strong [and] constant faith in the gracious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ...who has mercifully forgiven us our sin through the suffering and death of Christ, and who will truly and certainly give us eternal life when this life is over.”⁴⁹⁰

During periods of outbreak, an intense search for tangible pollutants was also underway. As discussed in previous chapters, contagious disease was thought to be caused by miasma,

⁴⁸⁷ Joel F. Harrington, *The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth-century* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2013), 33-52. Kindle.

⁴⁸⁸ Heinrich Dormeier, “St. Rochus, die Pest und die Imhoffs in Nürnberg vor und während der Reformation,” *Anzeiger des germanischen Nationalmuseums* (1985): 35. *der regierenden pestilenz halber alle tage nach der vesper zu lob der Hymelkunigen Marie die Antiphon Salve Regina zu singen mit der dazu dienenden collecten und in iren gotheusern zwischen hie und Egidii die wochen zweimal proceß halten und got umb mittelung seiner gnade der pestilent und auch des gestengen dürrer wetters halben demütigklich anzeruffen.*

⁴⁸⁹ Charlotte Bühl, “Die Pestepidemien des ausgehenden Mittelalters und der Frühen Neuzeit in Nürnberg (1483/4 bis 1533/34),” in *Nürnberg und Bern: Zwei Reichsstädte und ihre Landgebiete*, eds. Urs Martin Zahnd and Rudolf Endres (Erlangen: Universitätsbund Erlangen-Nuremberg, 1990), 159-160.

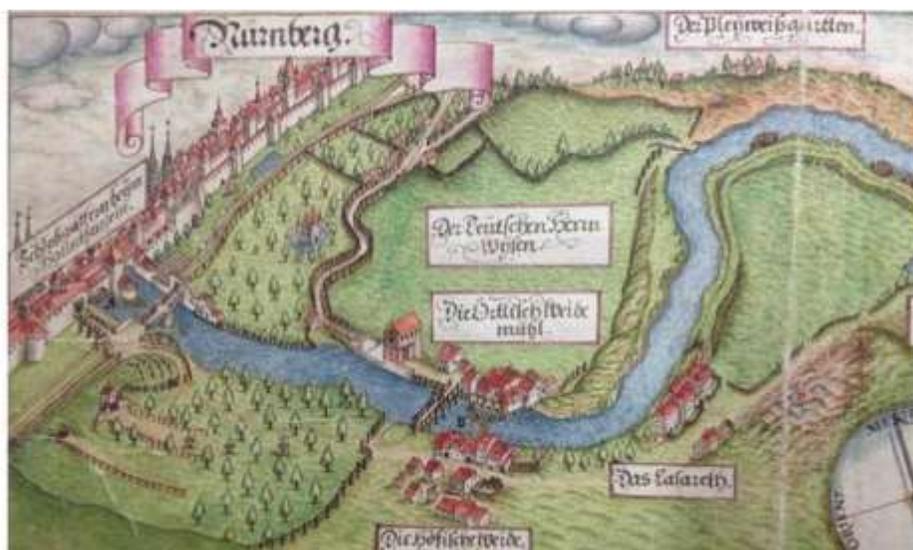
⁴⁹⁰ Ronald Rittgers, “Protestants and Plague: The Case of the 1562/3 Pest in Nürnberg,” in *Piety and Plague: From Byzantium to the Baroque*, eds. Franco Mormando and Thomas Worcester (Kirksville, Mo: Truman State University Press, 2007), 139.

corrupted odors. The city restricted where one could relieve oneself, dumped spoiled or smelly food in the river, and marched the pigs out of the city. None of these items brought corrupted odors like the sick and dead inhabitants. The city therefore created contagious disease hospitals to host these polluted bodies until they were buried or cleansed and reintegrated.

While not as majestic as processions or as horrific as executions, the paths of contagious disease workers were the conduits flushing the polluting elements out of the city: both bodies and objects. The system also relied on errand runners, or Posslern, who could bring pure food and supplies to the polluted space of hospitals. The essential separation of the polluted sick and

the pure healthy was only possible through the work of contagious disease workers who could cross the boundary of separation and then recreate it.

Like procession, their



paths were alive with civic, religious and cultural meaning (See Image: Path to Lazaret).

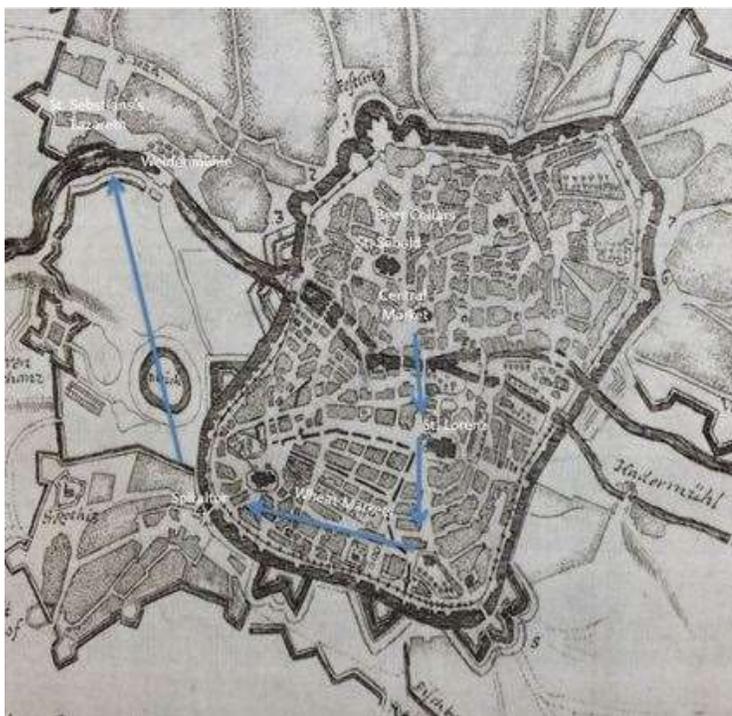
The Paths of Contagious Disease Workers

This next section explores the roles of errand runners, body carriers, gravediggers, guards, washerwomen and caregivers. It follows the projected spaces and paths of these workers as they processed through the city and purged it of contagious disease.

Posslern

Medieval leper houses are the most stereotyped example of contagious disease segregation; however, we must rid ourselves of the myth of the total isolation of these institutions.⁴⁹¹ Healthy workers needed to move supplies into these hospitals. As discussed in Chapter 3, *Glocklers* were the most basic connection between the isolated leper houses and the city center.

The Glockler was a healthy man who bore an image of the saint of his respective hospital on his basket. He walked into the city with his basket ringing a bell, from which he gets his name. The bell announced to parishioners it was time to donate food to the lepers. He also hauled wood and other supplies to the leper house. When they went into the city, the Glocklern were limited to



begging and gathering supplies in their respective parishes: St. Johannis and St. Jobst in St. Sebald's parish and St. Leonard and St. Peter in St. Lorenz's parish.⁴⁹² The two parishes were divided by the Pegnitz River in the center of the city. The presence of the Glockler reinforced the

⁴⁹¹ Carole Rawcliffe, *Leprosy in Medieval England* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2006), 13-39.

⁴⁹² StadtAN D7 Nr. A2a; Walter Steinmaier, *St. Jobst: Das Aussätzigenspital am Empfangsweg des Kaisers: Herrscherkult und Siechenhaus: Ein Beitrag zum Stadtausbau unter Karl IV. und zum Spitalwesen der freien Reichsstadt Nürnberg* (Nuremberg: Mabase, 2006), 45-46.

relationship between the houses of charity and the inhabitants of the city, funneled through the parishes. They brought the pure and life-giving element of food to the poor souls in the leper house.

In replication of the Glockler, the city established the Possler or errand runner, who carried supplies between the city central market and the St. Sebastian's lazaret. (See Map Blue Arrows). The Possler, coming from the German word *Bossel* or side work, was a go-fer.⁴⁹³ He was generally a farm hand who took on the work temporarily.⁴⁹⁴ With great strength, he "hailed bread, meat, and others things into the lazaret" in a basket.⁴⁹⁵ His prescribed path was from the central market and the Holy Ghost Hospital through the southwest Spitaltor to the lazaret.⁴⁹⁶ In the central market, he gathered vegetables, meat, salt and fish. On the south side, he could go down through *Johannesplatz* or the more southern St. *Jakobstrasse* for wheat, or walk through *Königsstrasse* to gather wood but still continuing out the southwest Spitaltor.⁴⁹⁷

In the first half of the sixteenth-century, the city had used other errand runners and side workers to carry the beer to the hospital. However, their tendency to wander off the path and linger too long at the lazaret convinced the council to transfer the task to the specified Posslern.⁴⁹⁸ Beer fermentation was located at the north end of the city, where beer brewers dug a series of tunnels for the beer's storage and fermentation.⁴⁹⁹ Seemingly the beer and wine would

⁴⁹³ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 6r.

⁴⁹⁴ StAN 52a Nr. 130 900.

⁴⁹⁵ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 6r; StAN Rep. 52a Nr. 130.

⁴⁹⁶ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 7r.-7v.

⁴⁹⁷ Analysis based on maps and article: Michael Diefenbacher, "Märkte in der Reichsstadt," and "Der Rat wirtschaftet," in *Der Nürnberg-Atlas: Vielfalt und Wandel der Stadt im Kartenbild*, eds. Wolfgang Baumann and Hajo Dietz (Cologne: Emons, 2007), 32-33, 37.

⁴⁹⁸ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 7r.-7v.

⁴⁹⁹ These cellars are still a tourist spot after saving the lives of most of the inhabitants of the city during the allied bombings of 1945. There were also breweries located throughout the city. "Historische Felsengänge Nürnberg," Nürnberger Kellerverwaltungsgesellschaft, accessed

have been the heaviest objects carried to the lazaret, yet the Posslern were still instructed to carry them down to the far southwest gate and then uphill to the lazaret. Even when carrying the heaviest items, it was expressly forbidden to use a cart. The council feared that a cart “even with a locked lid” was not secure enough “to look after” these valuable supplies.⁵⁰⁰

The limitation to hand-carrying meant that the Posslern would have been constantly moving and visible. They emerged from their post at central city hospital with large padlocked baskets and moved through the city’s central markets. The central market was the site of all Nuremberg social life and power. It hosted royal tournaments and traditional rituals such as the city’s carnival ritual, *Schembartlauf*.⁵⁰¹ As their path weaved through markets, they would have traversed paths similar to other processions, for example, the paths Emperor Friedrich III took on his mid-fifteenth-century royal processions through the city.⁵⁰² As the heart beats in sending blood to the limbs, the Posslern connected the central market, as a place of life, purity and production to the functioning hospitals outside the city. Unlike their predecessor, the Glockler who gathered his resources from the parishes, the Possler represented the resources of the common funds being spent on the city’s separated loved ones.

Body Carriers

In contrast to the Possler, the path of body carriers was not supposed to be as visible.

Body carriers came from the ranks of day laborers, soldiers, or any form of dishonorable, or low-

November 19, 2013, <http://www.historische-felsengaenge.de/fuehrungen/historische-felsengaenge.html>

⁵⁰⁰ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 6r.

⁵⁰¹ Marcia Reed, “Fireworks and Fish Baskets: The Schembart Festival in Nuremberg,” *Getty Research Journal* 4, no. 4 (2012): 145-151.

⁵⁰² Reinhard Seyboth, “Nürnberg Beziehungen zu Kaiser und Reich,” in *Der Nürnberg-Atlas*, 26-27.

status occupation. When the city council began to prepare for plague outbreak, they ordered four body carriers to each of the two church parishes, as it took four carriers to carry one deceased adult on a stretcher; they no longer used carts stereotypical of medieval plague.⁵⁰³ In 1520, they hired eight carriers per parish, and in the catastrophic plague year of 1562, their number increased to twelve carriers at St. Lorenz and eight at St. Sebald's.⁵⁰⁴

The process of getting the sick and dead out of the city varied. Ideally, the call came from a barber surgeon or personnel in the central hospital. Body carriers could also be beckoned to houses; however, they were forbidden from entering the homes.⁵⁰⁵ In the city's general plague regimen, the council advocated that sick loved ones be brought to the churchyard and left in the city's care at that point.⁵⁰⁶ The churchyard was the historical cemetery, but by the beginning of the sixteenth-century any burial in the city was seen as possible contamination, particularly during plague. While burial there was forbidden, the churchyards were still the central hub of sick and dead bodies waiting to be conveyed to their final destinations. Indeed, the number of bodies was so large that they had to expand the St. Lorenz's churchyard to accommodate the waiting sick and dead.⁵⁰⁷ The city posted two barber surgeons at the churchyards to aid the sick and help with directing the carriers.⁵⁰⁸ There were more carriers posted at St. Lorenz than St. Sebald. Seemingly, there would have been a closer connection between St. Sebald and the lazaret due to their proximity; however, St. Lorenz was almost double the distance to the lazaret, which may have been the practical reason for more carriers.

In 1562, the city council changed the method of carrying the sick from a stretcher to an

⁵⁰³ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 20r.

⁵⁰⁴ Bühl, "Die Pestepidemien," 157. StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 21v.

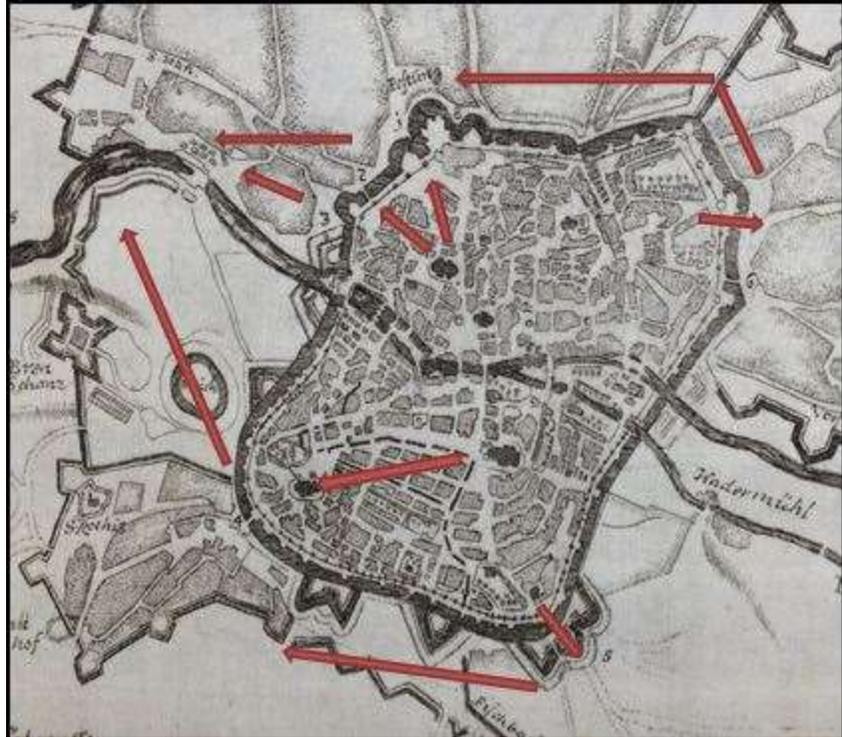
⁵⁰⁵ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 21r.

⁵⁰⁶ StAN Rep 53II Verz. III Nr. 62; StadtAN A6 Nr. 154.

⁵⁰⁷ StAN Rep. 60a #1213 43r. Wed. Sept. 16, 1562.

⁵⁰⁸ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 23v.

upright chair. One reason for the change was that the chair only needed two carriers, as seen in the image. Families paid 16 pfennig per carrier for each person carried. A sick adult took two carriers, and a dead adult required four. A sick or dead child required only two carriers, and they were paid 8 pfennig



each.⁵⁰⁹ Carriers were admonished that even if the family could not pay, the carrier was to go ahead and bring the individual to the hospital, and the overseer would reimburse him later at the cost of the city.⁵¹⁰ Carrying hours were only early in the morning before daybreak or almost mid-day between 11 to 12.⁵¹¹ Carrying before day break may have been an attempt to lessen the visibility of the carrying and flush out the pollutants before the day began. The mid-day carry probably sought to clear the city of bodies before any midday break and, more importantly, before the afternoon heat. When they were not carrying bodies, body carriers were to wait diligently in their hut on the parish churchyards.

In opposition to the Posslern, body carriers were told numerous times to “avoid the wide allies and plazas like the market place as much as possible.” They were to go out a western gate

⁵⁰⁹ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 21v. (and 21v. messed up numbering in the source).

⁵¹⁰ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 S. 16v.

⁵¹¹ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr.14 p. 15v. In the 1580s, they add a third carrying time at night before the gates are locked in the evening. StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 483.

as soon as possible or simply “the closest gate to carry the sick person behind the walls.”⁵¹² The body carriers’ exact paths are impossible to discern because they were to glide through the small alleys avoiding the major thoroughfares (my map gives some approximations). They would have carried the sick from the two parish churchyards to the lazaret and the dead to the gravediggers positioned at the southwest Spitaltor or northwest Tiergartentor (See Map red arrows).

While the city was commanded to let the body carriers carry all of the sick and dead, it was statistically implausible that they could have done so. We have statistical data, albeit spotty, from 1562. Using these numbers and what is possible to discern from the city’s landscape, we can reconstruct a portion of what could have been seen and experienced in the city during the worst waves of plague. Seeing as the body carriers were restricted to two carrying hours a day or perhaps no longer than an hour in the early morning, the carriers would have made about three to four trips a day at quick walking pace. This produced around 506 possible carries which would have been divided by four for dead bodies or by two for the sick or a child. My calculations approximate that there could have been 10-20 bodies carried on these paths discussed above in any given carrying hour. Logically the dead bodies were quicker to carry because they traveled a shorter distance to the gravediggers at the Spitaltor or Tiergartentor; it is also possible that fewer carries were feasible when the carriers had to walk around the city walls which would have been a distance up to 2 ½ to 3 miles instead of less than one when walking directly.

The body carriers could not have covered the number of sick and dead during the worst waves of outbreak; therefore, presumably family members would have also carried the dead to the city gates and assisted their sick loved ones to the parish churchyards. As an example, the first week of October 1562, 154 sick persons were carried to the lazaret at a rate of

⁵¹² StadtAN D15 S14 Nr.14 p. 15v.; StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 21v.

the city. They then buried the plague victims in the city's St. Johannis cemetery.⁵¹⁴ Theoretically, the bodies were to be carried directly out of the city, as city leaders wanted no sick or dead bodies to remain in the city for more than six hours after death.⁵¹⁵ If bodies were brought to the gates after night fall, the gravediggers stored them in the Zwinger, until around daybreak when the gates were opened.⁵¹⁶ While it was best that bodies were carried out of the Tiergärtentor and Spitaltor, bodies were brought to all gates. Gravediggers were tempted to use the Neutor as it was the most direct path to the St. Johannis area outside the city. This movement occurred particularly when the Tiergärtentor was overcrowded. It is unclear exactly why, but the city leaders wanted to limit this practice; it is possible that they used the gate as a major trade thoroughfare as Neutor is on the trade route from Frankfurt am Main.⁵¹⁷ This prohibition is particularly interesting in light of the fact that the body carriers are advised to take any gate on the western walls, which would have included the Neutor, to get the sick out of the city. If bodies could not fit through the Tiergartentor, they were to be brought to the St. Lorenz gravedigger stationed at the southwest Spitaltor. From there, the bodies were to be carried out of the gate through the left-hand side of the gate.⁵¹⁸

There was also an accumulation of bodies at the inner Laufertor. This illegal pile-up of corpses is further evidence that not all of the body carrying in the city was conducted by official body carriers and gravediggers despite the council's repeated admonitions. All bodies located at

⁵¹⁴ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 28v. St. Rochus chapel dates to 1517/8. It was endowed by the Imhoff family to have an honorable place to bury the patrician families that could no longer be buried in the city. In the 1580s the city also erected another lazaret on St. Rochus, and later in the century the cemetery is used for general burial. During the years of my study, the bodies from the city were mostly sent to St. Johannis cemetery.

⁵¹⁵ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 43v.

⁵¹⁶ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 28v.

⁵¹⁷ Michael Diefenbacher, "Nürnberger Handel um 1500," in *Der Nürnberg-Atlas*, 31.

⁵¹⁸ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 28v.; StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 17v.

the inside of the Laufertor were to be moved to a *Schiessgraben*, a defensible area located outside of the city walls. Bodies from inside the city that had a particular place to be buried in St. Johannis were to be carried around the outer walls to St. Johannis cemetery. Any anonymous bodies or bodies appearing at the outer wall were to be taken to the parish church cemetery in Wöhrd, the suburban area to the east of city. The gravedigger was absolutely forbidden to accept any bodies not from the city proper.⁵¹⁹

The preparation of the bodies was done by *Seelnonnen* or *Seelweiber*, soul nuns, a group in Nuremberg about whom we know little. These women were a tertiary or lay religious order. They were first documented in Nuremberg in the early 1520s by the Nützel patrician family. Soul nuns occupied the pious work often conducted by religious orders, and they remained long after the Reformation. In non-plague years, they tended to the bedridden sick and sewed bodies into cloth in preparation for burial.⁵²⁰ They were also to watch diligently for corpses that had died of plague and make sure the contaminating bodies were quickly and unceremoniously removed from the city.⁵²¹ The bodies were then laid in a common or mass grave, *Totengruben*, as coffins were not used until the seventeenth-century.⁵²² The gravediggers then covered the body in layers of earth and chalk; this was the final physical barrier between the polluted dead bodies and the city.⁵²³

Neither the city nor the hospitals could have survived with complete isolation from one another. The pathways of the Posslern, body carriers, and gravediggers, were allowed spaces of

⁵¹⁹ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 8v. The gravediggers would have also brought the deceased from the lazaret to St. Johannis. They were paid between 10 pfennig per body. In 1574-1575 the gravediggers buried 437 people for over 17 Guldens. StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 49 25v.

⁵²⁰ StadtAN D1 Nr. 728.

⁵²¹ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 26r.-26v.

⁵²² Carolin Porzelt, *Die Pest in Nürnberg: Leben und Herrschen in Pestzeiten in der Reichsstadt Nürnberg, 1562-1713* (St. Ottilien: EOS, 2000), 107.

⁵²³ Porzelt, *Die Pest in Nürnberg*, 108.

boundary crossing between the healthy and the contaminated. In the strength of their arms and movement of their legs, these workers cycled elements in and out of the city and hospital which enabled the rest of the healthy population to maintain its separation.

Isolating Contagious Disease Workers

Up to this point I have discussed the paths of workers bringing resources, the sick and the dead out of the city; however, there were also pockets of allowed pollutants which remained in the city. One example of care taking place within the city occurred when a Franciscan monk fell ill with syphilis. The monk had been cared for within the friary inside the city walls. When the brothers could no longer care for him, they supplicated the city council to allow him entrance into the Holy Cross Hospital. The council responded that he did not qualify for entrance into the hospital, and that he would need to be cared for completely within the confines of the friary. Alternatively, the infected monk would be forced leave the city.⁵²⁴

Throughout the sixteenth-century, there was a growing trend toward private care houses within the city for pay or for charity.⁵²⁵ In September 1497 during the early virulent outbreak of syphilis, one pious, rich woman informed the council that God had instructed her to take care of poor souls blighted with the French disease. The council consented, on the condition that she only care for sick citizens and inhabitants, no foreigners.⁵²⁶ During bouts of plague, many individuals withheld themselves from the lazaret out of fear. The council debated what to do

⁵²⁴ Karl Sudhoff, "Die ersten Maßnahmen der Stadt Nürnberg gegen die Syphilis in den Jahren 1496 und 1497: Aktenstudien," *Archiv für Dermatologie und Syphilis* 116 (1911), 6.

⁵²⁵ Porzelt, *Die Pest in Nürnberg*, 102. Toward the end of the sixteenth-century, the city encouraged this practice as it took pressure off of civic resources.

⁵²⁶ Sudhoff, "Die ersten Maßnahmen der Stadt Nürnberg," 20. This example and the priory example of the monk bring up the question: who was allowed access to the city's hospital? I took up this theme in Chapters 1 and 2.

about these individuals.⁵²⁷ Rather than fight them, the council stated that their ability to stay within the confines and comfort of the city depended on that individual's resources to keep himself insulated. Wealthy inhabitants employed caregivers for these tasks. Although not an official caregiver in the lazaret, her tasks were stipulated among those of lazaret employees; she was seemingly a lazaret employee by proxy.

The caregiver in the city fulfilled the same tasks as the caregiver inside the hospitals: serving the patient with compassion and patience, giving proper food and drink, and tending the patients' fire. She was to ensure that all contaminated laundry was safely transported to the lazaret. But, most importantly, she acted as a proactive guard. Her job was to keep out any visitors. No one but the doctor was to visit. She also protected the city from the polluted person, making sure the sick person stayed within the confines of the home. The caregiver herself was then limited in her own movements; she was only to fulfill tasks outside of the home on behalf of the sick individual.⁵²⁸

Another contagious disease worker functioning in the city was a washerwoman. As another lazaret employee by proxy, she cleaned and fumigated houses that had been infested with plague. She expunged pollutants by scrubbing the walls, tables, chests, and closets.⁵²⁹ She gathered any infected clothing and bedding and carried them to the lazaret. The cloths were not

⁵²⁷ Also, if you look at the numbers that died in the city in comparison to the numbers that were carried to the lazaret and the general proportion of the forms of plague infection, it seems very likely that the inhabitants held love ones back from the lazaret. The septic form of plague, which was transmitted from blood to blood and killed within a day, was not as common as the peripheral infection which manifested in the lymph nodes causing the "buboes." As this form of infection killed within two to four days, they would have had time to go to the lazaret. There was also a pulmonary version of plague which was slower as well. Irwin Sherman, *Twelve Diseases that Changed our World* (Washington, DC: AMS Press, 2007), 68-83." StAN Rst Nbg. Rep. 60a #1213 36r. RV Wed. September 9, 1562.

⁵²⁸ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 21r.-21v.

⁵²⁹ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 19v.

even allowed to stay overnight. While carrying the dangerous clothing, she was to avoid the central market or other large streets. Like the body carriers, she was to carry them “every time” immediately behind the walls through the narrow little allies, to be washed underneath the lazaret in the outflow of the river.⁵³⁰ The washerwoman was sent with a guard. His job was to keep people out of the infested house while it was being cleaned and fumigated. He protected the houses from looting, but he also kept looters from bringing dangerous polluted objects out of the home. He was also charged with recording the names of remaining household members and adding yet another layer of protection around any contaminated cloths on their path to the lazaret.⁵³¹

The city council itself had some contagious disease workers buffering them in the city hall. The space of the city hall was fumigated daily. It employed a barber surgeon who was strictly forbidden from seeing other patients. The council employed buffering errand boys; it would not even interact with the Plague overseer because of his close proximity to other plague workers. The council orchestrated city policies through an intense isolation and hand-to-hand relay system.⁵³²

Withholding from Community

As we saw in the last chapter, the city utilized workers as buffers. These buffers could cross the boundary between the sick bodies and pure healthy. The working bodies inside the

⁵³⁰ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 19r.-19v.

⁵³¹ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 12r.-13r. In William Naphy's study, these fumigators were the biggest problem in the city, comparable to the body carriers in Nuremberg. In my studies, I did not find wild and disobedient fumigators in Nuremberg. William Naphy, “Plague-Spreading and Magisterially Controlled Fear” in *Fear in Early Modern Society*, eds. William Naphy and Penny Roberts (Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press), 28-43.

⁵³² StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 54r-55v.

hospital not only made care for contagious disease possible, but also allowed the rest of the populace to be separated from the contaminating elements. Workers inside the city needed to buffer with their bodies at a much higher level, as they were also thought to carry some risk of infecting the healthy population. As they did not have the physical sequestering of the hospital, they were required to create their own isolation from society within the city.

As part of the insulating role of the caregiver, she was to withhold herself from the community. She was not to “go into any house, and during this time of care giving, she was not to visit other people, on the contrary she was to withhold herself from all society.”⁵³³ This prohibition of socializing was a common theme for contagious disease workers. Washerwomen who worked within the city were to avoid churches, bath houses, the city hall, markets, and taverns.⁵³⁴

Body carriers were confined to the churchyard, where the city erected a special hut for them to live in during plague. The carriers often tried to take on side work such as woodcutting or other day laboring tasks. Since there was a fair amount of spare time between carrying hours, however the council ordered “that they were to be made to remain in their huts, which were erected on both St. Sebald and St. Lorenz. Additionally [the council] ordered them to remain there, and not to go among the people or also do any other work, on the contrary they had to wait until they carried again.”⁵³⁵ The council was especially afraid that the inhabitants who employed the body carriers were “unaware of the fact that they had been used as carriers,” and thereby that

⁵³³ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 21r-21v. *und zu gehen, Sie selben auch verfordert in kein hauß gehen, und in zeit solcher wartt, zu andere Leuthen nicht kommen, sondern sich aller gemainschafft enthalten.*

⁵³⁴ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19r.-19v.

⁵³⁵ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 23r. *Das sie auch imm iren hutten (Die mann Inen auff bede kirchhof Sannt Sebaldt unnd Laurentzen, an die dartzu verordennten ort mach() lassen) pleiben, nit unndter die leuth gehen auch sonnst kein anndere arbeit thun, sonnder allein nochmaln diesen tragen außwarteten u.*

they had been tainted by the touch of the sick and dead.⁵³⁶ While restricting the carriers' mobility was in keeping with the restrictions given to caregivers and washerwomen, it also made sense on a practical level as body carriers comprised the most opportunistic group of thugs in the city.

Gravediggers, though they generally held a semi-dishonorable designation, were not accustomed to limitation of movement in the city. This unrestricted mobility was in opposition to executioners and skimmers who were restricted from going into common places and taverns.⁵³⁷ However, during plague, gravediggers were no longer allowed to visit large gatherings, churches, markets, or taverns. To their great dismay, the city council rejected all petitions to resume community in the tavern.⁵³⁸ Interestingly, they did not appear to have the same ardor in petitioning for the right to return to church.

The only contagious disease worker who was unimpeded in his movements in the city was the Possler.⁵³⁹ Stationed at the city's central hospital, the Possler's job necessitated that he maneuver through pure places, such as the markets. The Possler, it seems, did not take on the fear of pollution that workers who touched contaminating patients did. Although Posslern are mentioned in lazaret account books, their tasks are never broadly described; however, from other sources, I would surmise that, like the cook, the Possler was only allowed minimal contact and movement when entering the lazaret. It is possible that he was only allowed in the healthy

⁵³⁶ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 22r. *doch den leuten unbewußt, das sie leichträger gewest gebrauchen lassen.*

⁵³⁷ Kathy Stuart, *Defiled Trades and Social Outcasts: Honor and Ritual Pollution in Early Modern Germany* (Oxford, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 103-104. Stuart posits that in some places across the empire gravediggers were considered dishonorable. On the other hand, in her work she primarily found them in and out of the poorer guilds such as that of the weavers. They were also allowed to be citizens.

⁵³⁸ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 28v.

⁵³⁹ The central hospital, *Das Heilig Geist Spital*, in the city tried not to keep contagious disease in the Hospital. They employed people to inspect for contagious disease and then bring them out to the other hospitals. Later in the sixteenth-century, they do have a contagious disease room for suspected cases.

section or in the external covered area that the founders were so keen to build for the easy transport of goods. Safeguarding the Possler from pollution was consistent with the city's ethic of keeping the food production pure as well. On November 16, 1562, the council was horrified to hear a tale of four Posslern, who instead of handing the tasks and money to body carriers, were carrying infected bodies themselves and pocketing the money. This disobedience was a *beschwerlich und abscheulich* "an onerous and utterly disgusting" practice.⁵⁴⁰ The council responded by moving these tainted Posslern to the ranks of the body carriers. They then commanded them, like the body carriers, to "avoid the market and the common streets as much as possible."⁵⁴¹

All of these workers conducted their tasks in close proximity to contaminating objects and people. Their bodies acted as buffers surrounding the dangerous elements and then conveying them out of the city: caregivers in individual homes, washerwomen in the homes of the sick and dead, and body carriers in the huts on the churchyard and on pathways. These important roles required that special safeguards be put into practice in order to protect the city's population.

II. Wandering from the Narrow Path

The city council installed behavioral boundaries within which contagious disease workers were to conduct these tasks. The behavioral boundaries were then enforced through overlapping systems of administration. In 1562, the council created a position of Plague overseer as the central coordinator of plague administration in the city.⁵⁴² The overseer collected information to

⁵⁴⁰ Stadt B19/1 Nr. 481 27r.

⁵⁴¹ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 21v.

⁵⁴² Carolin Porzelt, *Die Pest in Nürnberg*, 63. In the 1580s, there was an explosion of

pass to the council, ensured plague workers accomplished their tasks, and paid the employees their weekly salary. As we have seen in the last section, the behavioral boundaries marked the workers' paths between the hospitals and the city center. While geographer Allen Pred points out the importance of power structures on paths, he also argues that it is individuals who must every day in every minute make decisions, concerning actions and movements. For Pred, this physical human movement in endless reproduction and recreation makes paths "human and object biographies."⁵⁴³ While the council created behavioral boundaries, they were merely prescribed channels within which the workers were to accomplish their tasks. It was up to the workers to determine how they would follow the channel or if they would wander from the proverbial narrow path.

Leonard Cammerer, the plague overseer in 1562, complained that he was not able to conduct any of his personal business affairs because he constantly had to shoo and direct the body carriers, errand runners, and other plague workers.⁵⁴⁴ Inhabitants continually complained about body carriers who thought drunkenly rolling dead bodies off of stretchers was hilarious. They were known to *saufen und fressen* ("gorge on food and binge drink") in inhabitants' houses. They extorted families out of valuables and money, demanding tips and extra incentive to get one's family members safely to the lazaret. They walked through the streets, often drunk, intentionally scaring people, laughing and swearing as well as harassing and molesting the female servants.⁵⁴⁵ They took the most crowded streets and complicated pathways as they taunted the populace. They leaned the stretcher jokingly from side to side, setting it down while

administrative positions including a plague deputy, a head plague medical doctor, and a lazaret pastor as the head of spiritual services. It was like they were taking a three-pronged approach to administer plague.

⁵⁴³ Tim Cresswell, *Place* (Malden, MA.: Blackwell Publishing 2004), 7.

⁵⁴⁴ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 20r.

⁵⁴⁵ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 p.15v; StadtAN B 19/1 Nr. 481 22v.

underway, taking rest, making weird cries or even attacking the sick with their laughing and cursing.⁵⁴⁶ The city council bristled at the “profuse complaints” of the people against the carriers on account of their deliberate attempts to terrify the city.⁵⁴⁷ The body carriers wanted to be terrifying because the more fear they instilled, the more they could extort the populace.

One example was when three carriers, Jorg Kerl, Jorg Hanless and Conradt Alfeldt were chided by the council for not upholding their ordinances. They spent their days in their little huts on the parish churchyard completely drunk; carried craft-guild apprentices who had not died of plague to the wrong places; helped themselves to items from plague infested houses; and instead of alternating in conducting their tasks, the three simply sent the youngest carrier to do all of their work.⁵⁴⁸ After a number of warnings, they were subsequently banished.

Workers were continuously reprimanded for trying to elicit “extra incentive” or extortion from victims. Even from within the hospitals, workers were capable of extorting patients or stealing their things. When a caregiver worked for a family, she had set prices. “They should be allowed, consistently and sufficiently, the weekly wage of a *Gulden*, as well as the appropriate waiting money also for payment, in all truth and with no falsehood.”⁵⁴⁹ Extortion was so prevalent among the gravediggers that the council ordered that a board be posted in the churchyards stating the exact amount of their fees so that they could no longer overcharge the inhabitants.⁵⁵⁰

Posslern were generally more trusted than body carriers. They held one of the two keys

⁵⁴⁶ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 15v.

⁵⁴⁷ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 26r.

⁵⁴⁸ StadtAN B19/1 484 13r.-13v.

⁵⁴⁹ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 21v. *Sie sollen sich auch an der Cost, und Wochentlichen belohnung eines gulden, auch dem ordentlichen wartgeldt, settigen und benüegen laßen, allen getrewlich und ohne gefehrde.*

⁵⁵⁰ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 29v.

for their food basket while the *Hofmeister* in the lazaret held the other.⁵⁵¹ But, these errand runners too could take advantage of their position. As seen in the last chapter, a former farmhand turned Possler, Hans Hoffman, “was judged with the rope [for] steal[ing] and selling sick patients’ money and clothes.”⁵⁵² However, because of the horrible stink, “he [Hans] himself became infected.”⁵⁵³ Drinking was the biggest issue with the Posslern, which is consistent with the fact that they were usually adolescent males.

In 1592, Hans Pömer was known for his daily drinking, cursing, carousing, and exchanging lewd comments. He was arrested for assaulting the Weinkellner and put in stocks for eight days on bread and water. Apparently, he was given extra grace because his father held an important position in the city’s war office.⁵⁵⁴ He was allowed back in his post, but he was warned that if he drank again, the hospital would no longer pay him his drinking money. Posslern Hans Rössner and Hans Resth were imprisoned in the lazaret because they got drunk and wandered into the city.⁵⁵⁵ They were repeatedly punished for drunkenness, harassing females, and cursing, and they were finally banished.⁵⁵⁶

Contagious disease workers also stole their colleagues’ jobs. I showed earlier an example of Posslern who carried bodies to pocket the carrying fees. Body carriers, in like manner, also tried to circumvent the gravediggers so they could keep the gravedigger’s fee.⁵⁵⁷ This prospect was particularly terrifying in light of the spiritual ramifications of an improper burial.

⁵⁵¹ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 6v.

⁵⁵² StAN Rep. 52a Nr. 130 900.

⁵⁵³ StAN Rep. 52a Nr. 130 900.

⁵⁵⁴ Ulrich Knefelkamp, *Das Heilig-Geist-Spital in Nürnberg vom 14.-17. Jahrhundert Geschichte, Struktur, Alltag* (Nuremberg: Selbstverlag des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt, 1989), 94-95.

⁵⁵⁵ StadtAN B19/1 484 4v.-5r.

⁵⁵⁶ StadtAN B19/1 484 9v.

⁵⁵⁷ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 23r.

Gravediggers, too, tried to carry the dead from inside the city. Body carriers complained that “all bodies *belonged* to them to carry.”⁵⁵⁸ The council censured the gravediggers and declared that they were not allowed to transfer bodies inside the city unless a body carrier was physically too weak and exhausted to bring the corpse the whole way.⁵⁵⁹

The council wanted to plan the contagious disease workers’ paths, schedules, and manner in which they were to complete their tasks. Disobedience here shows that there was a difference between these behavioral boundaries as prescribed and as acted out. Returning to Allen Pred and David Seamon’s idea of “body-ballets,” workers, in big and small ways, had to make decisions about how to follow these behavioral boundaries or whether to, indeed, stay within them at all. Disobedience is merely an example showing the infinite ways in which workers completed their tasks. As it was different every day in every way, the boundary of disease care was ever-changing and mobile.

The Carrot and the Stick

City leaders knew that the unruly body carriers and plague workers would not be brought under submission without proper financial incentive. The fact that these tasks took place in the city meant that the stakes were higher, in terms of polluting the healthy. Hospital workers did not have the freedom of motion that contagious disease workers in the city had. All the way up to the top, Leonard Cammerer himself was ensured loyalty to the council through payments, which were far more than the dreams of most of these workers. When Cammerer complained that the contagious disease workers were causing him to neglect his business affairs, the council awarded

⁵⁵⁸ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 21v. *alle leicht gehortem Inen zu hinaus tragen.*

⁵⁵⁹ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 18v.

him a gift of 10 G on top of his usual pay.⁵⁶⁰

In non-plague times, a body carrier would receive approximately half a *Gulden* weekly, which was increased to 1 G during outbreaks. In 1574 when the scourge of dysentery spread over the city, the body carriers complained that they were not paid enough. Having carried sixteen people out of the city and into the lazaret, and sensing the oncoming plague, they knew they could receive double their weekly pay.⁵⁶¹ Throughout the course of the plague, that payment was even doubled again to ensure their obedience. “Also henceforth weekly, for their effort and work, 2 G will be given to each, on the condition that they extort extra reward from no one...” conducting their tasks “... free-willingly and immediately without talking back, and when they carry someone out [of the city], from now on, [they] come directly back.”⁵⁶²

Some perspective on how much money this is: if the body carrier worked for about 10 months, they received approximated 72 G from the city alone. Additionally, they received another Gulden approximately every 16 carries from the families’ fees. A very elite job of a school-teacher in this time was paid approximately 50 Gulden a year.⁵⁶³ Clearly, the body carriers had the city leaders over the proverbial barrel. In September 1562, the Plague overseer, Cammerer, was once again beleaguered by the carriers when they were called to carry a few people from the suburb of Wöhrd. The council ordered that the carriers should do their job with their standard salary and no longer bother Cammerer. But they also informed Cammerer that if it would make things easier, he could pay them a half to a whole Gulden. In Cammerer’s accounts, he did pay them a whole extra Gulden just to get the task done.⁵⁶⁴

⁵⁶⁰ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 20r.

⁵⁶¹ StAN Rep. 52b Nr. 253 5v.

⁵⁶² StadtAN b19/1 p. 24r.; StAN Rep 60a. #1213 6v. Sat. Aug. 22, 1562.

⁵⁶³ Harrington, *The Faithful Executioner*, 233. Kindle.

⁵⁶⁴ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 26r.

It was standard practice that any civic worker who dealt with plague received extra money. In William Naphy's study of Geneva, the high pay of plague workers made them subject to accusations of plague-spreading for their continual work security.⁵⁶⁵ By comparison, Nuremberg's lazaret workers earned much more money per week during an outbreak than in other hospitals; however, contagious disease workers inside the city were consistently paid even more than those in the lazaret. A caregiver in the city was paid 1 G weekly and extra money at the end of her service.⁵⁶⁶ Posslern earned 50 pfennig a week, or about 1/5 Gulden. While this is far less than the body carriers, it was an extraordinarily high sum for an errand runner. In this job, he made more money than caregivers, guards, cooks, and washerwomen in the hospital.⁵⁶⁷

The council was not certain that it could ensure the obedience of the plague workers with the carrot alone; increasingly, it referred to the stick. The council empowered the Plague overseer to withhold their weekly payment from the city as a warning, but with the next infraction the overseers had the authority to banish them, to "*werfen* [throw] them out of the gates." After this, they were prohibited to come within five miles of the city.⁵⁶⁸ For a willful and cheeky attitude, the guidelines recommended a half to a whole year of banishment. Or, finally, they would have

⁵⁶⁵ Naphy, "Plague-Spreading," 28-43.

⁵⁶⁶ This payment is over five times what a caregiver in the hospital made. The high wage, as set by the city council, ensured that only the rich inhabitants could afford a private caregiver; thus less contagious sick would stay inside the city.

⁵⁶⁷ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 49 (1575) 24r.

⁵⁶⁸ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 p.25r.; StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 S. 16r.-16v. Banishment was a standard punishment in early modern cities, but banishment brings up an interesting question posed to me by Charles Zika at the 2013 Sixteenth-century Society and Conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico. How were these awful body carriers reintegrated into society after plague? As I do not have any sources that answer this question, I would guess that the use of banishment as a threat must mean that it was indeed punishment for the body carriers not to live in the Nuremberg area after the outbreak. Either the body carriers were the normal criminal/day laborer/ ruffians in the city who just took the job on during plague, or it is also possible that they wandered from town to town following outbreak. How did they spend their money? Seemingly, body carriers would be an even greater disturbance with all that money after outbreak, like soldiers or sailors on leave.

to report to the council for bodily punishment befitting the infraction.⁵⁶⁹

The city council's attempt to coax workers into the behavioral boundaries affirmed that there were indeed two levels of boundaries here. They needed not only to set the mandates. They needed willful minds to decide to follow them, and following that, for bodies to act out the essential tasks.

III. From Fear to Trust and Cooperation

In order for their plan to be successful, the city council needed their behavioral boundaries to be upheld by the inhabitants as well as the workers. They needed the population to hand over their sick loved ones to body carriers and to report deaths in their homes so washerwomen could clean and fumigate them. However, in such life or death situations, the inhabitants may not have wanted to open their vulnerability to the extortion of thugs and to rely on those thugs to get to the hospital. The cooperation of workers, staying in their prescribed pathway may have encouraged people that there was life and hope in complying with the council's plan. There was power in the visible workers. The image of drunken, loitering body carriers was very different then the image of carriers quickly, efficiently and respectfully conveying the sick out of the city.

The biggest problem with the functioning of the city during plague was flight. Anyone who had enough money and connections fled Nuremberg for neighboring cities. Nuremberg patrician, Martin Behaim, wrote in a letter that one third of the population fled in 1533.⁵⁷⁰ In one plague year, 1505, out of the thirty-four families eligible for membership in the city council,

⁵⁶⁹ StadtAn B19/1 Nr. 481 24v.

⁵⁷⁰ Charlotte Bühl, "Die Pestepidemien," 127.

fifteen families had completely fled and were conveniently held up outside the city.⁵⁷¹ Flight from fear made the integral functions of the city almost impossible to fulfill.⁵⁷² Theoretically, the removal of the sick, dead, and tainted objects should have encouraged people to stay.

For those who remained in the city, the council imparted “fatherly advice” which was crucial to the system. The council asked its inhabitants to abide by the extra purity laws and to fulfill one’s duties whether one was a member of the city council or a body carrier. Trust in the council’s plan was akin to trusting in God; it also showed a love of neighbor and citizenly duty by protecting those who might become infected. One example of this belief is seen in the task of the soul nuns in the lazaret. The council contended that the soul nuns, through “utility and piety,” served the subjects and inhabitants diligently. It should be “with all diligence, not out of obedience but as it pertains to a citizen’s duty.”⁵⁷³ Having adequate workers respectfully filtering in and out of the city was vital to ensuring that people would send their infected loved ones to the lazaret, and that they would not flee the city.

Workers as Emblems

Body carriers who gleefully hoisted up sick and dead bodies, while gnashing their teeth and taunting already frightened citizens, did not inspire general confidence. Sick people were afraid to go to the lazaret, where they would be completely cut off from their loved ones, and their families feared a visit from body carriers who could eat them out of house and home.⁵⁷⁴ The council repeatedly chided workers for intentionally scaring people, and, as we have seen in this

⁵⁷¹ Bühl, “Die Pestepidemien,” 130.

⁵⁷² StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 26r.

⁵⁷³ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 26r. *dero unterthanen und Verwanthen nutz und frommen (Als Ihenen solchen Crafft Ihrer Burgerlichen Pflicht, ohen diß gehorsamblich zuthuen gebühret.) mit allem fleiss.*

⁵⁷⁴ StAN Rep. 60a #1213 36r. RV Wed. September 9, 1562.

chapter, struggled to keep contagious disease workers within behavior boundaries. The workers' obedience was necessary to win trust for the council and its civic system of contagious disease separation and care. The workers themselves in their visible bodies ideally served as a reminder: There is a plan, trust us.

In completing their tasks, the bodies of contagious disease workers were not only the physical arms and legs of the council of Nuremberg but the visible emblem of that civic disease care. We have already seen that errand runners had high visibility in the city. The errand runner, unlike their Glockler predecessors, bought the food from the central city market and the central city purse. Their pathway was regal, crossing the paths of earlier imperial and civic processions. Further, it connected the market, which the city intended to keep pure, to the pure sections in the hospital. The Posslern visibly reminded the city of their loved ones, or of their possible future, in the separated space of the lazaret. Through the body of the Possler, the council communicated that the boundary of their civic provision stretched beyond the safety of the walls to the lazaret. The sheer weight of food on the muscles of these men reflected the city's willingness to pay for that most important resource of the lazaret.

In contrast to the Possler, the tasks and paths of the other contagious disease workers were not as visible. Because they were purging the sick, dead, or corrupted clothing, their pathways always avoided the populated avenues in the city. However, when these workers were seen, as grim as their tasks may have been, they worked in specified places of contagious disease care and along those important paths conveying pollutants out of the city. The allowed moments of visibility of these plague workers communicated a message to the city. They reinforced the council's resolve to remove pollutants and keep the city pure. The washerwomen and guards' visible presence at their neighbors' balefully emptied houses also spoke to this resolve. As they

cleaned and fumigated houses, their image possibly loosened the grip of a mother on her sick child, as she looks at her other children and remembers the council's warning that sickness seems to spread from the foulness of a sick person to another.

The city designated "plague paths and places" reminding the populace that the lazaret was not abandonment, but it was a part of a system. The churchyards, as frightening as their image must have been, were not sewers of the city, but the most historically sacred spaces of the city's landscape. This sacred space was a reminder that their loved ones were left to this "conveyor belt"

processing to their proper place. The gravediggers and their menacing jobs at the city's gates conveyed the inhabitants' dead loved ones to their final



end. It is important to point out that the gravediggers, while not probably the chummiest of neighbors, were not social outcasts to the extent of the executioners. Bodies, during plague, were entrusted to the city's very particular gravediggers for a respectful and Christian burial as much as possible even in a mass grave.

The way that body carriers were instructed to ferry bodies in the city was designed to reduce fear. As seen earlier, the council introduced the use of the chair to carry the sick to the

lazaret in 1562; carriers were fully forbidden to carry a sick person on a stretcher.⁵⁷⁵ (See Image: Body Carriers 2). As discussed above, it was a pragmatic move as the chair only took two carriers; however, the chair had psychological ramifications as well. If both the sick and the dead were carried on a stretcher with a cloth over them, people did not have the hope that some were only headed to the lazaret, from which many would indeed survive. If uncovered, the image of death and sickness was frightening. The chair and the sitting up posture of the sick person was a symbol of life, and possible respect, instead of dead weight.

The council also feared that an overwhelming amount of empathy would make people fall sick. The chair was to be covered with a thick black bent cloth *pogentuch* in order to obscure the image of the sick person from onlookers.⁵⁷⁶ This cloth was particularly important in the case of a publicly sick woman. They feared that the sheer image would cause such fright as other women imaged their own possible futures, that they would simply fall sick from the sight. The significance of the change is seen in that name the *body carriers* was permanently changed to *body and chair carriers*; surely a far more inviting designation that pointed to survival.⁵⁷⁷

For a city council trying to create a boundary between the polluting sick and the healthy, they needed the populace to trust and cooperate. The system relied on the cooperation of each component, from the illustrious city council members to the wives of poor guildsmen. The working bodies of these contagious disease employees not only crossed the boundary between the sick and the healthy, providing the physical means for separation, but they took on the emblematic role of displaying the system that the council had created for contagious disease separation and care.

⁵⁷⁵ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 21v.

⁵⁷⁶ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 2r.

⁵⁷⁷ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 15r.

Conclusion

The paths of contagious disease workers can be seen on Tim Cresswell's three levels of analysis: natural, social, and symbolic.⁵⁷⁸ The pathways showed the physical strategies for dealing with elements which were by their nature toxic; food could be taken on open and crowded pathways while the sick and dead had to be carried on narrow, secluded paths. On a social level, the body carriers' dishonor and unruliness called for the council to impart strict spatial orchestration as to clearly define where the carriers should be at all times. Carriers and workers were paid absorbent fees in hopes that their physical bodies did not step a toe out of line. Finally, at the level of the symbolic, the image of physical workers on their paths of disease separation and care signaled the provision made by city leaders. They were not only the physical embodiment of the Council's will, but they were the symbolic embodiment of care to be found in the city's lazaret. The citizens and inhabitants had to open their vulnerability, for the council to take on their responsibility.

The council needed to end the belief that the most empathetic thing one could do was to care for one's loved ones in the home. They needed to convince their inhabitants that the most compassionate choice for a sick loved one was to entrust him to the lazaret "for spiritual and bodily service."⁵⁷⁹ The inhabitants needed to see the polluting sick and dead on a separate, other, but *cared for path*, either back to health and the city, or to the cemetery and to God.

The separation of pollutants, care for the sick in hospitals, and ultimately the reintegration of the healthy was the intended shape of contagious disease care in Nuremberg, and it was ever dependent on these mobile bodies.

⁵⁷⁸ Tim Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place: Geography, Ideology, and Transgression* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 156-158.

⁵⁷⁹ StadtAN A6 Nr. 154.

Chapter 5:

The Bounds of Resources:
On Food, Finances, and Faith

The nature of food as a tangible boundary calls for different levels of analysis than city walls or working bodies discussed in earlier chapters. Food creates or indicates an infinite number of facets in life. Food is the basis of large economic cycles. It mediates man's relationship to nature and survival. It brings the rhythm of labor and, then, the taste of the season. Each piece of food has its own finite life-cycle: it is planted (or is born), ripens, and rots. Each morsel has its own path into peoples' mouths, from seed and cultivation, to transport and market, and finally, to the kitchen and table. It demarcates cultures by symbol, custom, and habit. In religion, food is a primary means of devotion. As the supreme illustration of man's communion with God, Christ's body and blood are consumed through bread and wine.

Though modern minds think little of food shortage, early modern populations were always under threat of starvation or unrest because of hunger. At any point, war, crop failures, or plague could cut populations off from their food supplies. In the second half of the sixteenth-century, Europe experienced a well-documented trend of inflation and population increase; it also experienced a drop in temperature which decreased food production.⁵⁸⁰ Food stuffs were subject to economic cycles that caused prices to dramatically rise and fall. To limit this vulnerability, civic leaders attempted to regulate and monitor food commerce within their domains. In Nuremberg, grain prices tripled in the famine years of 1571 to 1578.⁵⁸¹ During that

⁵⁸⁰ Andrew B. Appleby, "Epidemics and Famine in the Little Ice Age," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 10, no. 4 (April 1, 1980): 643–663.

⁵⁸¹ Until 1578 when the council took steps to allow a market correction. StAN Rep 50a Nr. 32 2316r.-v.; Werner Bauernfeind, *Materielle Grundstrukturen im Spätmittelalter und der Frühen*

time, the council imported massive quantities of grain from Bohemia at public expense.⁵⁸² For the normal Nuremberg inhabitants, the city council's extensive regulations were designed to create a dome-like protection over food purchase within the walls, but in Nuremberg's hospitals, food procurement was even more direct.

The contagious sick were the most vulnerable of Nuremberg's inhabitants. They were incapable of caring for themselves, and they were dangerous to their peers, thus necessitating their removal to hospitals outside the city walls. One could view this removal as a lessening of responsibility toward them; however, because the city moved the sick completely beyond family and social-networks who would normally have supplied them with necessary nutrition, their removal actually intensified the city's responsibility toward them.⁵⁸³

This chapter explores how Nuremberg's sick and dependent bodies were sustained through the food supply of the city center. Their consumption mirrored Nuremberg's food culture both on normal days and during holiday celebrations. Their nutritional plan was neither extravagant nor meager; in fact, many patients probably ate better in the hospitals than in the normal course of life. Food was the greatest expense in the functioning of the hospitals. The council appointed an overseer to manage their fund; ensured that there were no food shortages; and covered any shortfalls in the hospitals' endowments. In a very tangible way, patients were connected to the city with every morsel.

Neuzeit. Preisentwicklung und Agrarkonjunktur am Nürnberger Getreidemarkt von 1339 bis 1670 (Nuremberg: Stadtarchiv Nürnberg, 1993), 232, 220, 202, 219.

⁵⁸² StAN Rep. 52a Nr. 32 228 4r.-2316r.

⁵⁸³ Within communities, people enter into a system of interlocking vulnerabilities, most acutely expressed through the reliance on food production from sources outside of themselves. Whoever protects and directs that food supply, like a parent to a child, accepts the responsibility for the vulnerable recipient. In the early modern period, Nuremberg's city council eagerly took on this responsibility.

Chapter Structure

My chapter is divided into three sections. The *first* section covers provision of food in the hospitals. It looks at the variety of foods they consumed, revealing how their diets went beyond basic sustenance, still low-cost but designed to ameliorate health. The *second* section looks at the protection of food. It explores how the council sought to protect food commerce in the city and in the hospitals from scarcity, adulteration, and material corruption. As the cost of food rose, the council placed increasing administrative protections on all parts of the food supply. The *third* section brings these practical evaluations to the level of the symbolic; the food supplied to the hospitals was not only financially practical but displayed the rhythm of Nuremberg's religious year. As the sick took part in the religious feasts and fasts, they proved themselves participants of the city, not only in a logistical manner, but in the *performative* body of Christ in Nuremberg.

I. Provision

What They Ate

If one acknowledges that Nuremberg accepted the responsibility of feeding its contagiously sick inhabitants, the next question must be, in what manner were they fed? While administrators and medical authorities crafted their diets with frugality in mind, they did so with respect for both the healthful wisdom and the cultural mores of Nuremberg.

The oldest surviving cookbook in Germany comes from Würzburg, *Das Buch von Guter Speise*, dating back to 1350.⁵⁸⁴ The earliest known cookbook appearing in Nuremberg, however,

⁵⁸⁴ Ken Albala, *Food in Early Modern Europe* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group,

the *Küchenmeisterei*, only appeared in the affluent years of the late 1480s. These cookbooks offered many varieties of early modern cuisine in urban south Germany including chicken filled pastries, pork torts, fancy egg dishes, almond milk and cherry-pear compote.⁵⁸⁵ Unfortunately, the cookbooks only show exceptional dishes; they do not provide a glimpse into the common food experience of Nuremberg's poorer inhabitants.

Class divisions laid down the most essential food boundary in the early modern world. Nuremberg experienced a disparity in food culture between the rich, poor, and all the levels in



between. The affluent ate pork, beef, venison, white (soft wheat) bread, pies stuffed with chicken, egg or various sweet fruit mixtures, and wine. The poor would have primarily subsisted on a diet of porridge, dark breads, cabbage, root vegetables, cheap beer, and possibly pork or pork fat

on special days.⁵⁸⁶ In a great historical irony, the need for humbler people to resort to plants and whole grains made their diets actually more nutritious than the rich.

2003), 189. See also "Historische Küche-Mittelalterlich kochen," *Das Mittelalterkochbuch*, accessed June 27, 2014, <http://www.dasmittelalterkochbuch.de/index.shtml>.

⁵⁸⁵ *Küchenmeisterei* (Nuremberg, 1496). *Münchener DigitalisierungsZentrum Digitale Bibliothek* also has copies from Passau 1486, Augsburg 1497 and 1507, Mainz 1487, and Strasbourg 1516.

⁵⁸⁶ Barbara Kink, "Ernährung (Spätmittelalter/Frühe Neuzeit)," in *Historisches Lexikon Bayerns*, last modified September 12, 2012, accessed June 20, 2014. http://www.historisches-lexikon-bayerns.de/artikel/artikel_45319.

The most striking image of food and class from the early modern period was captured in two sketches by Pieter Bruegel the Elder. The rich man's kitchen is replete with expensive cuts of meat, drink and overweight people. The poor man's kitchen is mostly empty plates of fish bones and turnips. The juxtaposition of the doorway in each image is quite striking. In the door of the poor kitchen, a fat man, embodying the "charitable" class, had just delivered one small plate of fish and roots. He struggles to leave as a skinny man begs for more, trying to pull him in the room. In the rich man's banquet, a skinny beggar is trying to come into the rich man's



kitchen, but he is being physically squeezed out by the door; he is also being abstractly squeezed out by contemptuous glares of the rich. Note that the focus of both images is the doorway. One focus is of hope and yearning that the door

will be opened, and the other is of stubborn entitlement demanding that it be shut (See Images: Poor Food, Rich Food).

This closed door between the early modern classes has been an unavoidable theme in food history. The majority of food historians, such as Ken Albala, focus primarily on the recipes of the rich.⁵⁸⁷ Other historians have focused on food as tangible expressions of class oppression.

⁵⁸⁷ Ken Albala, *Food in Early Modern Europe; Eating Right in the Renaissance* (Berkeley:

An extreme example is Piero Camporesi's study of Bologna in *Bread of Dreams*. Camporesi contends that hunger among the poor was so intense that they could not even reason enough to revolt; as such, they sufficed on bread of fantasy akin to fantasy of witches and magic so popular in the period.⁵⁸⁸

The vast lacuna between the diet of the rich and the poor makes any general food study extraordinarily difficult, but a systematic study of food in Nuremberg's hospitals offers certain advantages. Nuremberg's hospitals both replicated and undermined this class dietary boundary. The lazaret complex replicated class divisions with three different menus for patients, workers and administrators. The patients' menu was basic wheat porridges and soups with a few foods specifically intended to ameliorate health (i.e., meat or wine). The workers' food consisted mostly of hearty legumes, stewed vegetables, or wheat porridge, as well as sauerkraut, bread, and roasted meat. The administrators ate fancier dishes such as liver or lung cooked with onions, *bratwürst*, lentil purée, and baked goods.⁵⁸⁹ In the leprosy houses as well, there were occasions that religious personnel were served fancy foods at the house complexes, but the lepers did not participate (Chapter 6).

On the other hand, all patients in the contagious disease hospitals were theoretically fed the same regardless of class before entering the hospital.⁵⁹⁰ Furthermore, the diet for patients in

University of California Press, 2002); and Joan Fitzpatrick, *Renaissance Food from Rabelais to Shakespeare: Culinary Readings and Culinary Histories* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2010).

⁵⁸⁸ Piero Camporesi, *Bread of Dreams: Food and Fantasy in Early Modern Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989). See also Robert Jütte, *Poverty and Deviance in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Andreas Kühne, *Essen und Trinken in Süddeutschland: Das Regensburger St. Katharinenhospital in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 2006); Martin Dinges, *Stadtarmut in Bordeaux 1525-1675: Alltag, Politik, Mentalitäten* (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag, Edition Röhrscheid, 1988), 285-331.

⁵⁸⁹ StAN Rep. 52b Nr. 9 66r.-70r.

⁵⁹⁰ Carolin Porzelt, *Die Pest in Nürnberg: Leben und Herrschen in Pestzeiten in der Reichstadt Nürnberg, 1562-1713* (St. Ottilien: EOS, 2000), 91. This was not true of the city's central Holy

the hospitals was neither one of extreme wealth nor poverty. It was neither luxurious, as it was not the expensive meat pies of the *Küchenmeisterei*, nor too meager as it provided nourishing meat and wine which would have been rarities for the most poor among Nuremberg's inhabitants. As such, it highlights different food boundaries than Breugel's traditional doorway; for the purpose of this study, it focuses attention on the provision of healthful foods to the dependent bodies outside the wall.

Meals Times

In the early modern period, people ate two meals per day. Because lepers were generally ambulatory, meals were taken together in the courtyard. It was forbidden for them to bring food back to their rooms. In stark contrast to the small number of inhabitants of the leprosaria, the lazaret fed over 600 patients and, at times, with short notice. In contrast, meals in the lazaret were taken at the beds because patients were so often incapacitated. Medical authority Heinrich Steinhöwel even recommended force-feeding weak plague patients to ensure that they received helpful nutrients.⁵⁹¹ In the lazaret, as noted in Chapter 2, the cook (as well as assistants and possibly even baking journeymen) prepared the food in the large kitchen. Meals were then relayed to the patients by the caregivers.

Food items comprised the bulk of the hospitals' budgets. In the leprosy houses, food constituted the overwhelming majority of the money spent; other expenses included payments to the bath master, servants, providers of wood and oil for lamps. In the Sebastian lazaret, food

Ghost Hospital. In that hospital, inhabitants were either brought in as a part of the poor fund or they purchased a "rich fund" and were fed a different class of food. Ulrich Knefelkamp, *Das Heilig-Geist-Spital in Nürnberg vom 14.-17. Jahrhundert: Geschichte, Struktur, Alltag* (Nuremberg: Selbstverlag des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt, 1989).

⁵⁹¹ Heinrich Steinhöwel, *Büchlein der Ordnung der Pestilenz mit Widmungsvorrede des Autors an die Bürgerschaft von Ulm* (Ulm, 1473), n.p. "Nun wil ich sagen von essen vnd tranken."

comprised around fifty percent of the listed budget. The remainder was spent on medicine, wood, clothing, bed sheets, oil, a cooper, barber surgeons, barber surgeons' servants, multiple chaplains, hospital workers, gravediggers and miscellaneous costs.⁵⁹²

Against common perception, the remarkable thing about food in sixteenth-century Nuremberg is that, one, there were no potatoes and, two, hardly any sausages. In this period, most food was eaten out of wooden bowls; meals consisted of basic grain or legume porridges cooked in large cauldrons. These dishes could be flexibly diluted to feed as many people as necessary, and it could cook food into mush for early modern mouths often devoid of teeth.⁵⁹³ They also ate soups or *Muß*, stewed vegetable or purée. (See Image Beaneater). The cumbersome need for bowls and other utensils is what inspired itinerant soldiers to stuff meat and roots into the intestines of animals for easy cooking and transportation, prompting legendary the innovation of sausages.⁵⁹⁴

⁵⁹² StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 49 1573-1576.

⁵⁹³ Helmut Haller von Hallerstein and Ernst Eichhorn, *Das Pilgrimspital zum Heiligen Kreuz von Nürnberg: Geschichte und Kunstdenkmäler* (Nuremberg: Selbstverlag des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg, 1969), 48b. The accounting information that I use from the Holy Cross Hospital is from Helmut von Haller's painstaking calculations. I have used his sample information from his book on the hospital. He compiled accounts which reflect the daily functioning of the hospital and excluded the major poor festival that took up most of the budget.

⁵⁹⁴ As early as 1497, there are mentions of *Brat*, a form of ground meat, which was eventually used to make the typical *bratwürst*. Nuremberg, however, was famous for *Rostbratwürst* which are very tiny sausages. The legend is that the sausages were made so tiny because of Nuremberg's restrictions on selling them after a certain time of night. The producers would make them smaller than a key hole, so that they could sell them through the door. Another account says that their size got smaller as competition rose to sell them the cheapest. They sold the tiny sausages by the penny. By the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century the sausages were an export and tourist attraction for the city. Three sausages are typically eaten in a roll (*Weckla*), resulting in the famous *Drei im Weggla*. In 2004, the EU-Commission declared the sausages a protected regional specialty. Martin Schieber and Bernd Windsheimer, *Rotes Bier und blaue Zipfel: Zur Geschichte der Ernährung in Nürnberg* (Nuremberg: Sandberg-Verlag, 2004), 8-13.



The general meal plan in Nuremberg's leprosaria consisted of meat, wheat porridges, vegetable purée and eggs.⁵⁹⁵ The diet in the plague and syphilis hospitals consisted of a "meat soup" in the morning for the weak; the stronger could receive a piece of boiled pork and bread roll followed by an evening meal of hearty beer porridge, pea soup, milk-cream soup, carrots, turnips and bread rolls. The sickest individuals were offered a soup of plum, Bavarian beets, chard, cabbage, herb or poached eggs.⁵⁹⁶ There were also a variety of soups including vinegar (sour) soup, beer soup, soup of greens or turnips, or wine soup. The *Hofmeister* of the lazaret claimed that the main dishes were changed between day and night to maintain variety.⁵⁹⁷

Variety of Food in the Hospitals

⁵⁹⁵ "Ordnung der Sondersiechen Frauen von St. Johannis 1422: StadtA, J VII 2, 28ff," reproduced in Ingrid Busse, *Der Siechkobel St. Johannis vor Nürnberg (1234 bis 1807)* (Nuremberg: Nuremberg Stadtarchiv, 1974), 175. *Wenn man fleisch isset, so sol sy in gebe drey tag in der wochen fleisch zu essen nach gewonheit des hofs, also es herkomen ist. Aber die andern tag, als man milch essen sol, so sol man in des morgens und des nachts ye ein gericht kochen von gemüß, es sey k(r)aut, ruben, arbes, gersten, hirß, oder sust muß, wie das genant ist. Dar zu sol man yeder frawen des morgens geben zway eyr und des nachtes zway, die mugen si esse(n) wie sie wollen. Und die sol man nemen von den hünnern auf dem hofe und wa man in dy zu gült gibt.* This list does not include Sundays. In 1505, the women ate meat on Sundays as well. StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4. Reports from St. Jobst's male leprosarium are similar: the men ate meat on Sunday and a vegetable muß; On Monday meat again; Tuesday a vegetable Muß; Wednesday milk or milk soup; Thursday meat and a vegetable Muß and a piece of roasted meat at night; Friday fish and milk made after their choice; Saturday milk and two eggs. Walter Steinmaier, *St. Jobst: das Aussätzigenspital am Empfangsweg des Kaisers: Herrscherkult und Siechenhaus: Ein Beitrag zum Stadtausbau unter Karl IV. und zum Spitalwesen der freien Reichsstadt Nürnberg* (Nuremberg: Mabase, 2006), 174.

⁵⁹⁶ StAN Rep. 52b Nr. 234 49v.-50r., 57v.-58r.; StAN Rep. 52b. Nr. 9 66r.-70r.; and StadtAN A6 Nr. 298.

⁵⁹⁷ StAN Rep. 52b Nr. 234 57v., 58r.; Porzelt, *Die Pest in Nürnberg*, 92.

In the middle ages, religious houses and charitable endeavors were supported through donations and tithes of food. Individuals pledged a proportion of their agricultural production, or donations “in kind,” which were paid throughout the agricultural year.⁵⁹⁸ For example, Hans Scharer from the village of Schupff paid yearly 3 *Simmer* wheat, 1 1/2 spring hens, and 15 *pfennig* cash to the Lepraschau fund.⁵⁹⁹ Unfulfilled tithes or pledges were referred to the courts, such as a case from 1495 when Eck Weißacker confessed to owing the equivalent of 9 *Simmer* wheat, 11 *Simmer* oats, 5 cheeses, 5 autumn hens, and 6 spring hens also to the Lepraschau fund.⁶⁰⁰ The houses also had an increasing “cash” category from begging, centralized charitable donations from the city’s parish churches, and interest from land rents.⁶⁰¹ Only a portion of the

⁵⁹⁸ Ben Dodds, “Managing Tithes in the Late Middle Ages,” *The Agricultural History Review* 53, no. 2 (2005): 125-140. Philip Broadhead argues that there was an intricate connection between the city center and its hinterlands. Nuremberg had super complex, overlapping feudal rights over the surrounding territory which supplied the city with food. Broadhead argues that the Peasants’ Revolt (which used Luther’s Reformation to throw off feudal dues, particularly tithes to the church) never completely broke out in Nuremberg territory because the city leaders made religious concessions in 1525. After 1525 the city realigned its relationship with the hinterlands making more feudal concessions. Nuremberg acted in self-interest so as to protect the city’s food production. The surrounding villages got security from external threats, such as the Margrave who attempted to levy taxes from them, but also from internal instability. Philip Broadhead, “Self-Interest and Security: Relations between Nuremberg and Its Territory in the Early Sixteenth-century,” *German History* 11, no. 1 (January 1, 1993): 1–19.

⁵⁹⁹ StadtAN B 35 Nr. 1509 14r., 16r. All weights and measures are calculated from W. Bauernfeind, “Gewicht und Maße,” in *Stadtlexicon Nürnberg (on-line)*, edited by Michael Diefenbacher und Rudolf Endres (Nuremberg: W. Tümmels Verlag Nürnberg), accessed August 17, 2014. http://online-service2.nuernberg.de/stadtarchiv/dok_start.fau?prj=biblio&dm=Stadtlexikon.

⁶⁰⁰ StadtAN B 14/II H 164r. March 13, 1495. Ben Dodds, “Managing Tithes,” 125-140; David Warren Sabean, *Power in the Blood: Popular Culture and Village Discourse in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1987), 7.

⁶⁰¹ At St. Johannis “in kind” donations consisted of approximately 35% coarse wheat, 13.5% oats, and 2% soft wheat, or approximately 50.5% of donations received. St. Peters recorded grain income of 29.5% coarse wheat and 7.5% oats, at around 37%. This was in contrast to St. Jobst house. St. Jobst was funded by monetized interest-bearing land-rents more than individual grain donations. Only 26% was paid in coarse wheat and 4.5% in oats, leaving 69.5% to come from cash and interest. St. Leonhard, the most neglected house, had no lasting major endowments leaving it at 18 G and 8 G incidental which was approximately the price of purchase for entering

grains donated to the house would have been stored and used explicitly “for their dining.” Overages were sold, donated to other houses, or converted through sale or barter, into other necessary objects.⁶⁰²

The patients lived on a “fund” system that entailed a dole for food and amenities.⁶⁰³ If an inhabitant disobeyed the *Spitalmeister* or *Zuchtmeisterin* (i.e., if he left the leprosarium without permission, swore, or fought with fellow inhabitants), he lost stipends for meat, wine, milk, or special holiday foods. In extreme cases, inhabitants could be punished by being forced to live on bread and water alone.⁶⁰⁴ As their monastic life was not full of variety, the control of enjoyable food was a powerful form of reward or punishment.

Grains and Breads

The types of grains eaten in the hospitals were rye, barley, oats, and wheat. From these grains, cooks prepared thick grained porridges with lard and some form of liquid (water, milk, beer, vinegar or wine). One example of a porridge mentioned in the hospitals was *Bierbrei*, a wheat cooked into a beer base with buttermilk and possibly sugar.⁶⁰⁵ These flexible porridges could also contain any leftover meat, meat fats, eggs or vegetables.

Noticeably absent from this list was millet. Millet was the cheapest and crudest option of grain. The city reported offering millet only in extreme circumstances. In famine year 1574, the council called for vendors to mix a measure of millet into the nicer grains to make them stretch

the house. StadtAN D1 Nr. 913; StadtAN A 26 Rep 90 Nr. 109; StadtAN D4 Nr. 239 56v.

⁶⁰² StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 17v. Inhabitants of the hospitals were forbidden to sell grains or cereals from the residence without the overseer’s expressed permission. 64r.

⁶⁰³ The fund came from the inhabitants’ entrance fees, donations, and alms collecting.

⁶⁰⁴ StAN Rep 238 Nr.9 1v.

⁶⁰⁵ StadtAN A6 Nr. 298. See recipe at and <http://www.rezeptewiki.org/wiki/Bierbrei>.

further.⁶⁰⁶ The council also used millet on occasions when it begrudgingly needed to offer food. On All Saints' and All Souls' Day, they ordered cooks to make a *Hirschbrei* from “*hirsch*, salt and fat” to feed the poor beggars who were waiting for entrance into the city.⁶⁰⁷ These beggars were not supposed to gather early at the walls, but the council needed to feed them something. The scenario replayed itself when the council ordered a “cauldron of Hirsch, as on All Saints' day” when lepers gathered too early for the Lepraschau.⁶⁰⁸ In both of those occasions, millet was provided to foreigners for whom the council was not responsible. While it may have been served in the hospital in exceptional cases, such as 1574, it was not standard fare. The administrators choose not to use the cheapest food option in their hospitals.

The category of bread figures prominently in the latter portion of the sixteenth-century. It is estimated that in this time, the people of German-speaking lands ingested 75% of their food in “daily bread.”⁶⁰⁹ The lower classes ate dark bread or *Schwarzbrot* made with rye, barley and oats, and the elite classes ate *Weißbrot*, white bread, made primarily from the much more expensive soft wheat.⁶¹⁰ As “daily bread” composed so much of daily food consumption, the bakers in Nuremberg were extensively controlled by the guild and council.⁶¹¹ In 1443, the council revamped the bread ordinances with the introduction of the *Raitung*. The *Raitung* was

⁶⁰⁶ StAN Rep. 52a Nr. 32 2296r.

⁶⁰⁷ Sudhoff, “Sorge für die Syphliskranken und Luesprophylaxe zu Nürnberg in den Jahren 1498-1505,” *Archiv für Dermatologie und Syphilis* 118 (1913): 302. *Hirsch* is the word that Nurembergers used for the High German world *Hirse* or millet. Millet is only known for being the cheapest and most difficult to digest of the coarse grains. It is only eaten in the modern world in developing countries among the poorest classes in Africa, China, and super health-conscious people.

⁶⁰⁸ StadtAN D1 Nr. 2 23v. *Mitt einem kessel mit hirsch, wie zw allerheiligen tag.*

⁶⁰⁹ Gunther Hirschfelder and Manuel Trummer, “Essen und Trinken” *Europäische Geschichte Online (EGO)* from Leibniz-Institut für Europäische Geschichte (IEG), last modified June 26, 2013, accessed September 1, 2014. <http://www.ieg-ego.eu/hirschfelderg-trummerm-2013-de>.

⁶¹⁰ Andrew B. Appelby, “Diet in Sixteenth-Century England,” in *Health, Medicine, and Mortality in the Sixteenth-Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 108-109.

⁶¹¹ August Jegel, “Ernährungsfürsorge des Altnürnberger Rates,” *MVGN* 37 (1940), 108-111.

the city-wide determination of how much bread would be sold by penny based on the market cost of grain. Every four weeks, city bakers conducted a *probemahlen und backen* which determined the amount of raw materials necessary to bake into specific shapes and weights.⁶¹² Rye bread, for example, was only sold at four, six, or eight *pfennig* a loaf.⁶¹³ When the price of grain was low, the bread was bigger, and it was smaller in times when grain was more expensive.⁶¹⁴ Although seemingly counterintuitive, the system was designed to ensure that even the poorest in the city could always afford to buy bread even if the amount varied. The city also established a *Schauamt* designed to inspect the quality of the bread as well as its shape. Bakers who transgressed these regulations were met with extraordinarily harsh financial or even physical punishments.⁶¹⁵

It is difficult to determine the exact course which the grain and bread took to eventually arrive at the hospitals. The sizes or “cuts” of bread in the hospitals and charitable events mirrored the restrictions of the bakers’ guild. Every two weeks, for example, after a visit from a bath master, leprous inhabitants were given “a loaf of bread as one approximately bakes or buys” along with meat and a mug of beer.⁶¹⁶ For the Lepraschau too, the Mother was to give 11 Simmer of the donated grain (3,608 liters) to the mill to be ground approximately a month before the Schau. The flour was then mixed with cumin and salt, and ultimately baked into *zwererlei* (2 penny) bread rolls to be sold to raise funds for the event or stored in a cupboard in the

⁶¹² W. Bauernfeind, “Raitung,” in *Stadtlexicon Nürnberg (on-line)*. In 1520, the trial baking changed from four weeks to two to be more precise. This system was stopped only in 1869 (the same year the walls stopped functioning as medieval walls). Hans Baum, *Chronik des Nürnberg Bäckerhandwerks* (Munich: Plaum, 1982), 78-79.

⁶¹³ Baader, *Nürnberg Polizeiordnungen aus dem XIII bis XV Jahrhundert*. Bibliothek des Literarischen Vereins Stuttgart 63 91861), 222; Jegel, “Ernährungsfürsorge,” 115. There were some instances when rejected bread loaves were permitted to go to the Holy Ghost Hospital.

⁶¹⁴ Jegel, “Ernährungsfürsorge,” 113. Sample: In 1482, the *Pfennigsemmel* was 9 *Lot* or approximately 145 grams.

⁶¹⁵ Hans Baum, *Chronik des Nürnberg Bäckerhandwerks*, 80-82.

⁶¹⁶ StadtAN D15 J VI Nr. 4 84r. *alle vierzehnen tag so gibt man dem pader ein laib prots als man ungeverlich pecht/ oder kauft* 86v.

Siechhaus.⁶¹⁷ The large hospitals seem to have baked their own bread, reporting amounts to the city center. A sample account from the lazaret stated that from 1 *Simmer* of wheat (ca. 328 liters) they baked 700 small loaves or 100 large loaves. Overall, in one seven month period, they consumed 61 1/2 *Simmer* or approximately 20,172 liters of cereal. They made 1,028 large loafs and 35,858 small loaves for the patients.⁶¹⁸ Theoretically, each person would have received approximately 135 pieces of bread, combined big and small.⁶¹⁹

In one leper house, each inhabitant received 17.5 *pfennig* worth of bread a week.⁶²⁰ In 1564, St. Johannis spent over 27% of the houses listed expenditures on rye bread.⁶²¹ Rye bread composed 19-32% of the budget of the Holy Cross Hospital.⁶²² One report in 1573 states that the lazaret borrowed 500 G (16,400 liters) worth of grain from the Holy Ghost Hospital, equaling approximately 30% of the listed budget. At the end of the year an additional debt is listed of 20 *Simmer* grain (6,560 liters).⁶²³

Other than these loaves made from rye and oats, bakers also sold *Semmel* and *Weckla*, two important local words for bread rolls.⁶²⁴ Hans Sachs states “the cupboard she is completely full, she desires baked *Weck* and *Semmel*.”⁶²⁵ These finer breads were often listed in specific

⁶¹⁷ StadtAN A21 4 degree Nr. 031 5r.-5v.

⁶¹⁸ D15 S14 Nr. 49 1573-1574 6v.-7v.

⁶¹⁹ Jegel, “Ernährungsfürsorge,” 115.

⁶²⁰ Including hospital workers.

⁶²¹ StadtAN A26 Rep. 90 Nr. 109.

⁶²² Haller, *Das Pilgrimspital zum Heiligen Kreuz*, 48b.

⁶²³ D15 S14 Nr. 49 1573-1574 14v.-15r. Unfortunately, in subsequent years the category of bread vanishes from the accounts, suggesting a change in financial relationship between the lazaret and its mother institution, the Holy Ghost Hospital.

⁶²⁴ Although a difference between these two forms of bread was made in the time, it is difficult to find a substantial difference. *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob und Wilhelm Grimm*. Online-Version s.v. “*Weck*” and “*Semmel*.”

⁶²⁵ *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob und Wilhelm Grimm*. Online-Version, “*Weck*” *die speisekammer die ist ganz vol, weck und semmel gebacken wol*.

shapes for holidays.⁶²⁶ Semmel was recommended in both health books and hospital ordinances to be soaked in a broth, cooked in soup or dipped in another dish. For example, wine soup generally contains soaked stale bread. There were also *Kücheln* or dumplings. These dumplings could be made of stale bread, vegetables, or meat, which were molded into balls held together by fat and flour. They were then be boiled in water (or broth) or baked.⁶²⁷ Often bread-like dumplings or strips of pancakes were also cooked in soups. Medical authorities believed dissolving bread or bread products in water or milk was an effective way to get nutrients into sick bodies.⁶²⁸ One book on care-giving recommended “dissolving a *Semmel*, and young chicken in a meat broth,” to aid the recovery.⁶²⁹

Meat

While meat was a luxury to the poorest of early modern urban society, medical authorities thought it was essential to the recovery of the sick. When the city held its first syphilis patients at the Holy Cross Hospital, the council ordered the overseer to “give the poor sick with the evil sickness [syphilis] their own [food] allotment with meat for their improvement.”⁶³⁰ In 1494 and again in 1496, there was an increase in the proportion of meat in the hospital budget as

⁶²⁶ StadtAN A26 Rep. 90 Nr. 109 88r.; StadtAN D15 J VI Nr. 4 84. For *Kirchweih* the sick were to receive a one-penny Semmel; for Easter a *Spitzweck*, a particularly pointed triangle-shaped roll; on All Saints’ Day *Weckspitzlein*, a small pointed roll; and on Christmas Eve the lepers were given 14 *pfennig* for Weck and fish.

⁶²⁷ Later these compose the very typical potato dumpling or *Klöse* in Franconia.

⁶²⁸ Barbara Kink, “Ernährung (Spätmittelalter/Frühe Neuzeit.”

⁶²⁹ *Versehen Leib seel eer und gutt* (Nuremberg, 1505), Aii.

⁶³⁰ RV 27. Oct 1496 quoted in Karl Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen der Stadt Nürnberg gegen die Syphilis in den Jahren 1496 und 1497. Aktenstudien,” *Archiv für Dermatologie und Syphilis* 116 (1911): 8. *pfleger zum heyligen Crewts sol den armen krancken an der bosen krankhayt doselbst ir pfrundtlein zupessern mit fleisch der anderin.*

it transitioned from a pilgrim stopover to a hospital of concerted medical care.⁶³¹ In 1501/2 the city itself marked the increase of meat consumption in the hospital at 5,057 N pound or just over 2500 kilograms.⁶³² Later, the council reimbursed the hospital for its increased expenses and continually upheld that “the sick with the French disease who lie in the Holy Cross, be given each day early a soup and a piece of meat, a fourth of a N Pound [127.25 grams].”⁶³³

Although the hospitals provided the expensive meat to ameliorate the health of the patients, hospital food programs did not always coincide with the medical advice of the day. One handbook suggested roasting or frying one’s meat rather than boiling it in order to avoid ingesting extra moisture that can disturb the humors causing plague.⁶³⁴ However, roasting is only mentioned for patients on special occasions, and boiling meat would have aided in making the meat soups or porridges which were so prevalent. Medical authorities did not recommend swine products for the sick in general. During times of plague, people were advised to avoid eating *Schweinefleisch* as it was too heavy and burdened the stomach.⁶³⁵ It was thought that young animals were particularly good for the sick: veal, young lamb, and especially spring chickens.⁶³⁶ Despite the disparagement of pig products by some medical authorities, swine products still seem to have been the default meat served in the hospitals. In the lazaret ordinances, lunch was to be “two *semmel* together with a half N Pound [254.5 grams] meat, *Fleisch*.” The ordinance

⁶³¹ Helmut Haller, *Das Pilgrimspital zum Heiligen Kreuz*, 43.

⁶³² Helmut Haller, *Das Pilgrimspital zum Heiligen Kreuz*, 44. N= Nuremberg pound.

⁶³³ RB Nr. 7 Bl. 229 23. August 1502 quoted in Sudhoff, “Sorge für die Syphliskranken,” 303. *Es ist ertailt, das man hinfuro ainem yeden menschen, das so zum heiligen Crewtz an der kranckhait der frantzosen ligt, alle tag zum frwmal ain suppen vnd ain stücklin flaisch der viere an ain pfundt geen vnd zu nacht ain süppen oder gemüß vnd zu yeder malzeit prot genug, auch holtz vnd salben zu irer notdurfft.* See also Helmut Haller, *Das Pilgrimspital zum Heiligen Kreuz*, 44.

⁶³⁴ *Versehen Leib*, Eiiii.

⁶³⁵ StAN Rep. 63II Verz. III Nr. 133.

⁶³⁶ Heinrich Steinhöwel, *Büchlein der Ordnung der Pestilenz*, n.p. “Nun wil ich sagen gemein regeln von dem fleisch”

continued to say, “It would be the same with veal, beef, or mutton based on the opportunity of the season.”⁶³⁷ This passage suggests that the general designation *Fleisch* is for swine alone, and other meats were useful when available.⁶³⁸ The consumption of swine products is even more curious when one considers that the pigs were marched out of the city at the first sign of plague because their stench caused miasma.⁶³⁹

The leper houses could have had several sources of meat. It was possible to raise some livestock on the houses’ land, and livestock could be donated to the houses. For example, women at St. Johannis were instructed to buy two pigs in the Fall so that would be ready by *Lichtmas* (Feb. 2).⁶⁴⁰ Men from St. Peters were commanded to report any collected meat so that the *Kelnerin* could put it “to good and common use.” If the meat was not useful in the kitchen or in the livestock of the house, the *Siechmeister* could then sell it for its current worth. Inhabitants were given strict punishments if they kept or sold the meat for themselves.⁶⁴¹ While the older leprosy houses could have produced some of their own meat, there is no mention of the lazaret cultivating its own livestock, and therefore it was likely supplied through the city center.

By the turn of the sixteenth-century, the inhabitants of Nuremberg’s leprosy houses typically consumed meat four days a week: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.⁶⁴² If not slaughtered from their own, this was to be purchased from the patients’ food allotment, although on special occasions also from centralized funds. On holidays, ordinances specified roasted meats, *Bratten*, such as a piece of pork, veal, lamb or chicken.⁶⁴³ In a record from St. Johannis,

⁶³⁷ StAN Rep. 52b. Nr. 234 57v.

⁶³⁸ StAN Rep. 52b Nr. 234 57v.-58r.; StadtAN A6 Nr. 298; StAN Rep 52b 234 49v.-50r.

⁶³⁹ StAN Rep. 53II Verz. III Nr. 66

⁶⁴⁰ StadtAN D15 J VI Nr. 4 88r.

⁶⁴¹ StadtAN D07 Nr. A2a 20v.

⁶⁴² Walter Steinmaier, *St. Jobst*, 174; StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 87r.

⁶⁴³ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 65r. - 65v., 85v.- 86v.

the house spent a reported 35% of expenses a week on unspecified meat resulting in approximately 280 grams of meat per person on each of the four days a week.⁶⁴⁴ According to accounts from the Holy Cross, it spent approximately 8 G per N pound of meat for its 261 people, which would have resulted in 130 grams daily.⁶⁴⁵ In lazaret accounts, meat was listed between 13% to 15% of total house expenses.⁶⁴⁶ As of 1574, the council required that the lazaret provide weekly reports on meat consumption. In that year, the lazaret consumed 4,134 kilograms of meat, theoretically yielding 300 grams to 500 grams per patient per week, considerably less than patients in the leprosaria and the Holy Cross.⁶⁴⁷

Patients in both the leprosy houses and in the lazaret complex were always given the choice of meat alternatives. Patients could choose a wine soup, an egg, or simply something else that would be easier to eat - no doubt choices preferred by a cost-conscious hospital administration.⁶⁴⁸ Eggs were another common source of protein. They were a staple of leprosy houses' nutrition as they had the yard in which to raise chickens.⁶⁴⁹ In the lazaret, if patients were very sick, they were offered an egg soup, which could have been as simple as an egg cooked in a broth.⁶⁵⁰ In the *Küchenmeisterei*, there are recipes for cooking a scrambled egg in hot milk to make a purée. One recipe calls for egg, flour and milk to make a dough, which was then

⁶⁴⁴ StadtAN A 26 Rep. 90 Nr. 109 1564. 50 N pounds at 8 *pfennig*.

⁶⁴⁵ Helmut Haller, *Das Pilgrimspital zum Heiligen Kreuz*, 43 - 48b.

⁶⁴⁶ D 15 S 14 Nr. 49 1573-1576. In August 1574 to September 1575 - 14.13%, September 1575 to Feb. 1576 15.16%, and Feb. 16- Aug.3 1576 13%. Each year it was just over 30% of food expenditure.

⁶⁴⁷ D 15 S 14 Nr. 49 1573-1574 6r.

⁶⁴⁸ StAN Rep 52b Nr. 234 54v; I find this category of choice difficult. An innocent interpretation is that if the patients were really sick, they would not have wanted to eat their meat, but it seems to leave the door open for administrators and caregivers to scam the patients out of their allotment. But it is interesting that the "if they want" only comes up concerning meat or eggs.

⁶⁴⁹ "Ordnung der Sondersiechen Frauen von St. Johannis 1422: StadtA, J VII 2, 28ff," 175.

⁶⁵⁰ StAN Rep. 52b. Nr. 234 57v.

baked, dried, and crumbled into a cheese soup.⁶⁵¹ Lazaret ordinances also recommended a soft boiled or poached egg to be occasionally served over a porridge or stewed vegetables.⁶⁵²

The supply of meat and eggs to sick inhabitants demonstrates the perceived importance of a healthy diet. It composed a large portion of hospital finances, which could have been viewed as non-essential to sustaining life. Furthermore, for some of the poorer patients it could have even been an improvement on their typical diet.

Legumes, Vegetables & Flavoring

Peas were the most commonly listed legumes in the hospital dishes. Peas, beans, lentils, and chickpeas were often classified, traded and stored with grains.⁶⁵³ The German word *Erbsen* comes from the older word *Arbeis* which is closely related to *Arbeit*, to work, as it was the most natural work to produce from the ground.⁶⁵⁴ In addition to legumes and wheat porridges (or purée), the lazaret's menu included any combination of cabbage, chard or root vegetables (beets, turnips, radishes, root parsley, or carrots).⁶⁵⁵ In Holy Cross Hospital accounts, roots and peas made up 15%-20% of the listed budget. There was an inverse relationship between bread and peas, indicating that the peas probably substituted for grain products during periods of grain shortages.⁶⁵⁶

Garlic, leeks, and onions had long been used for medicinal purposes and were widely

⁶⁵¹ *Küchenmeisterei*, n.p. "Vom backen."

⁶⁵² StAN Rep. 52b Nr. 234 50r.

⁶⁵³ *Küchenmeisterei*, n.p. "Vom backen". Lentils were recommended for women lying-in after childbirth.

⁶⁵⁴ Helmut Haller, *Das Pilgrimspital zum Heiligen Kreuz*, 42.

⁶⁵⁵ StadtAN A6 Nr.298; StAN Rep 52b Nr. 234; StAN Rep. 52b. 234.; StadtAN D 15 J VI 65r.

⁶⁵⁶ Helmut Haller, *Das Pilgrimspital zum Heiligen Kreuz*, 48b. Cabbage, parsley, radishes, lettuces and onions were all referred to under the general category of *Küchenspeise*. Jegel, "Ernährungsfürsorge," 130; StadtAN D 07 Nr. A2a 25v.

available in Nuremberg. The geographical area just to the northwest of Nuremberg is called *Knoblauchland*, garlic land, because of its extensive production there. Steinhöwel's plague regimen often recommended cooking onions and garlic with porridges of grains.⁶⁵⁷ According to the season, pumpkins, melons, cucumbers, and fennel were sold on Nuremberg's market.⁶⁵⁸

Sauerkraut was a staple of the early modern German diet, made by fermenting cabbage with lactic acid.⁶⁵⁹ It was easy to produce in the period, highly nutritious and remained good for a long period of time. In the lazaret, sauerkraut was listed multiple times a week for the employees but never for the patients. They ate cabbage in other forms, including soups or sweet krauts (possibly like a modern *Krautsalat*). It is possible that the tangy, pungent nature of sauerkraut was thought to be too intense for patients, or perhaps the bad smell could have been thought to damage their health.⁶⁶⁰

Fat and salt were the most basic ingredients that were added to grain to make porridge palatable, i.e. the All Saints' Day meal of meat, salt, and fat.⁶⁶¹ Salt was also added as a relatively low-cost seasoning or for preserving meat. In the Holy Cross, .5% to 1% of the budget accounted for salt.⁶⁶² In the Lazaret, salt did not register as a full category but appeared only under miscellaneous costs, for example, 1 *metz* Salt (16.64 Liters) for approximately 72 *pfennig*. *Schmalz*, lard, constituted between 20 and 40 liters a year in the Holy Cross equally

⁶⁵⁷ Heinrich Steinhöwel, *Büchlein der Ordnung der pestilenz*, n.p. "Wie man den krancken helffen sol"

⁶⁵⁸ Jegel, "Ernährungsfürsorge," 133-134. "Foreign fruits" came from more than a mile outside of the city. The fruit market, located to the northeast of the central market, was the most uncontrolled area of vending where local farmers could come and sell fruits, vegetables and nuts.

⁶⁵⁹ Barbara Kink, "Ernährung (Spätmittelalter/Frühe Neuzeit)."

⁶⁶⁰ StAN Rep. 52b Nr. 9 66r.-70r.

⁶⁶¹ Sudhoff, "Sorge für die Syphliskranken," 302.

⁶⁶² Helmut Haller, *Das Pilgrimspital zum Heiligen Kreuz*, 48b.

approximately 2-4% of the hospital's food budget.⁶⁶³ The lepers in St. Peter's were given a N pound of *Schmalz* a week [509 grams]. They were not permitted to buy more than 1 N pound except on special holidays.⁶⁶⁴ In the lazaret, *Schmalz* was 1- 2% of the overall budget and 4% of the food budget. In 1573/4, the lazaret paid 18 G for fat/butter, but the next year they paid 32 G when the number of inhabitants quadrupled. These years were the city's harshest years of the famine which were compounded by an epidemic of dysentery. While the other foodstuffs seem to have been adjusted proportionally, *Schmalz* was not, indicating that cooks used less than usual in a crisis situation.⁶⁶⁵

Milk was cooked into soups, porridges and breads. Unfortunately, in hospital accounts, milk was mixed with other categories. In the Holy Cross, the amount was negligible, between .5 and .8% even when coupled with the category of fine flour.⁶⁶⁶ In St. Johannis the milk/flour category was at about 2%.⁶⁶⁷ Furthermore, if the houses had their own cow or goat, milk would not necessarily have registered in the leprosy houses. The ordinances do, however, call for the use of milk. In 1422, the women of St. Johannis were instructed to drink milk or milk soups on days with no meat.⁶⁶⁸ Milk was supposedly particularly good for lepers as it was thought to comfort the mouth and throat that had been corroded by the disease. Lanfrank of Milan thought that early cases of leprosy could be treated by the whey of milk of goat or cow.⁶⁶⁹

⁶⁶³ Helmut Haller, *Das Pilgrimspital zum Heiligen Kreuz*, 48b.

⁶⁶⁴ StadtAN D07 Nr. A2a 24r.

⁶⁶⁵ D15 S14 Nr 49 1573-1574 24v.

⁶⁶⁶ Helmut Haller, *Das Pilgrimspital zum Heiligen Kreuz*, 48b.

⁶⁶⁷ StadtAN A26 Rep.90 Nr. 109 1562.

⁶⁶⁸ "Ordnung der Sondersiechen Frauen von St. Johannis 1422: StadtA, J VII 2, 28ff," 175. The use of milk is interesting because in 1422, it would definitely have been against fasting prohibitions.

⁶⁶⁹ Carole Rawcliffe, *Leprosy in Medieval England* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2006), 213-214.

Beverages

In the early modern period, wine and beer were the main sources of hydration in city-life as well as in Nuremberg's hospitals. Water was not often consumed as early modern people knew that there was a correlation between sickness and un-boiled water.⁶⁷⁰ As such, the provision of these drinks composed approximately 40% of the hospitals' budgets.⁶⁷¹

Standard fare throughout the hospitals for each patient was a *seidlein* of wine each day. Wine was thought to be essential for sick patients' healing processes. It was recommended to warm the stomach bottom and help the digestive system. Red wine was recommended for those who had a colder nature and white wine for those with a warmer nature to increase "water through the urine."⁶⁷² Wine was also highly recommended for plague victims. Medicines were often dissolved and drunk in wine.⁶⁷³ Like bread, it had set prices at 24, 32, 36 and 42 *pfennig*.⁶⁷⁴ Reports from the lazaret show that, not surprisingly, the hospital chose the cheapest option.⁶⁷⁵ Despite the cheap quality of the wine served, it made up 16.5 to 17% of listed expenses.⁶⁷⁶

In the leprosy houses, extra wine is mentioned on holidays; on these special days, they also sometimes drank flavored, hot or mulled wine.⁶⁷⁷ Wine was cooked with honey and blackberries and then put through a sieve.⁶⁷⁸ Finally, old wine could be made into vinegar, an

⁶⁷⁰ Ken Albala, *Food in Early Modern Europe*, 79-80.

⁶⁷¹ Nuremberg had both imported and local wine. The city had two vineyards located on the west side of its walls at the *Neutor* and *Tiergärtner*. It most commonly imported wine from Italy and from the Rhineland Alsace, famous for its sweet white wine. Scheiber and Windsheimer, *Rotes Bier*, 46.

⁶⁷² Steinhöwel, *Büchlein der Ordnung der Pestilenz*, "Von dem tranck" *gallen durch den harn*.

⁶⁷³ Hans Folz, *Die Reimpaarsprüche*, trans. Hanns Fischer (Munich: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1961), 432.

⁶⁷⁴ Siebenkees, *Kleine Chronik der Reichsstadt Nürnberg* (Altdorf: Meyer, 1790), 77.

⁶⁷⁵ StadtAN B35 A123 3r.-4v.

⁶⁷⁶ D15 S14 Nr. 49 1573-1574 26v.

⁶⁷⁷ StadtAN D 07 Nr. A2a 24v., 25v.; StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 84v.- 95r.

⁶⁷⁸ Trude Ehlert, *Küchenmeisterei: Edition, Übersetzung und Kommentar zweier Kochbuch-*

important early modern food staple. This was a good way to use old or corrupted wine which could then be cooked into a variety of dishes served in the hospitals.⁶⁷⁹

In the middle ages, religious houses and hospitals had special rights over vineyards.⁶⁸⁰ After the Reformation, however, these special rights were taken away, making wine more expensive to provide.⁶⁸¹ This loss of special privilege was in addition to a general increase in the cost of local wine production. A drop in average temperature, known as the little ice age, inhibited the amount of heat the grapes needed to sweeten. The rising cost of wine prompted the use of beer across the country. This transition from wine to beer is observable in the hospitals. For example, the sick women in St. Johannis were endowed with 12 pfennig a day for their measure of wine, but in 1564 the overseer complained that the measure of beer had been ordered and sent to them instead.⁶⁸²

By the second half of the sixteenth-century, administrators attempted to restrict the amount of the expensive drink given to each patient. In the French House, ordinances outlined the exact four circumstances which could merit additional wine: “One should give no one any wine outside of the following circumstances...” one, when that person takes the holy sacrament of the altar; two, when they have been smeared, medicated, or treated in a way in which they have to suffer pain through it; three, when a person is so weak and without strength; or four, when they have been bled or purged. The ordinances mandated to give extra wine “...in the four exceptional cases, [otherwise] do not give any patients over a *seidlein* wine a day,” and then only

Handschriften des 15. Jahrhunderts ; Solothurn S 490 und Köln, Historisches Archiv GB 4° 27; mit einem reprographischen Nachdruck der Kölner Handschrift (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2010), 34. *Küchenmeisterei*, n.p. “Das kunst von essig vnd wein.”

⁶⁷⁹ Trude Ehlert, *Küchenmeisterei*, 333.

⁶⁸⁰ Jegel, “Ernährungsfürsorge,” 142-143. The vineyard from the *Tiergärtnertor*, for example, was donated to the Holy Ghost Hospital to aid in the health of the sick.

⁶⁸¹ Jegel, “Ernährungsfürsorge,” 147.

⁶⁸² StadtAN A 26 Rep 90 Nr. 109 2r.

with the knowledge and the advice of the physicians, who instructed which wine the patients were to be given, and the Hofmeister, who charged the patient for the extra wine.⁶⁸³ The continued use of wine, particularly in the treatment of plague and syphilis, demonstrates how the administrators' need to provide the most cost-effective provision for the hospitals conflicted with their desire to attend to the perceived genuine medical need for the expensive drink.

Progressively throughout the sixteenth-century, beer replaced wine as the most common drink in Germany. Children drank beer as soon as weaned; it was especially weak in alcohol content at about two percent.⁶⁸⁴ Nuremberg produced two main varieties of beer: Summer, a stronger more expensive beer brewed in the summer, and Winter, a weaker beer cooked in the winter.⁶⁸⁵ The lazaret spent 15%-18% of its overall budget and around 30% of the listed food budget on beer.⁶⁸⁶ Beer in Holy Cross Hospital comprised approximately 24% to 27% of its expenditures.⁶⁸⁷ For St. Johannis in 1564, around 25% of weekly grocery budget went to beer.⁶⁸⁸

The variety of foods enumerated above displays varying aspects of the city's provision. It

⁶⁸³ StadtAN A6 Nr. 298; StAN Rep. 52b Nr. 234. Multiple ordinances give these instructions but some specify that patients have to pay for the extra wine.

*Item/ man sol keinen krancken keinen Wein geben/ dann folgenden personen.
Und nemblich den jenigen/ Die das hochwirdige Sacrament des Altars entpfangen haben.
Zum andern den angedupften/ angestrichenen/ geschmirten/ und geetzten/ welche vor andern
grossen schmerzen und angst leyden unnd erstehen müssen.*

Zum dritten/ den jenigen/ welche so gar matt/ schwach und abkrefftig seind.

Und zum vierdten den Aderlassern/ und die Purgiert haben.

*Doch sol in den vier obgesetzten fellen/ keinem krancken/ uber ein seidlein Wein/ einen tag
geraicht werden/ es geschehe dann mit wissen/ und gutbeduncken der Artzt/ welchen Wein auch
die krancken dem hofmeister zalen sollen.*

⁶⁸⁴ NKG GmbH Nürnberger Kellerverwaltungsgesellschaft, "Historische Felsengänge Nürnberg," accessed November 19, 2013, <http://www.historischefelsengaenge.de/fuehrungen/historische-felsengaenge.html>.

⁶⁸⁵ Schieber and Windsheimer, *Rotes Bier*, 50. Laws regulating beer can be seen in Nuremberg as early as 1302. Nuremberg's brewers boasted of brewing beer in line with a purity law of only water, malt, and hops.

⁶⁸⁶ D15 S14 Nr. 49 1573-74 14v.

⁶⁸⁷ Helmut Haller, *Das Pilgrimspital zum Heiligen Kreuz*, 308.

⁶⁸⁸ StadtAN A 26 Rep. 90 Nr. 109.

is not my intent to paint an overly rosy picture of life in the hospitals nor imply that food eaten in the hospitals was always good quality. During times of scarcity, food supplies were appropriately adjusted. The amount of fat used in cooking was cut, and nice grains were replaced by peas or millet. There were complaints about stale bread and watery wine.⁶⁸⁹ Hospital workers themselves stole food items from the houses' stores. Nevertheless, patients were often provided wine and meat even though these items were quite expensive and would have been rare luxuries for Nuremberg's poorer inhabitants. However, the provision of these goods would have been impossible without forms of protection that ensured their arrival to the patients.

II. Protection

In Nuremberg, the food market was one of the most regulated aspects of city life. The council was keenly aware that the city's integrity depended on a steady supply of basic nutrients to the populace. Leaders attempted to maintain a stable food supply by enacting layers of controls designed to protect food by setting prices, hindering thieves, preventing adulteration and upholding general quality.

Nuremberg sought to impose standardization by controlling the geography of food sale. The city was divided into markets where particular products could be sold.⁶⁹⁰ Regulations required vendors to enter by certain gates and sell only in specific places and on specific days. Regulating access into the city was vital to the council's control of the market. The presence of the leper houses, as communal hubs outside the walls, threatened to become illicit hubs of trade allowing unfit products into circulation. One such incident occurred in the early 1520s with

⁶⁸⁹ Carolin Porzelt, *Die Pest in Nürnberg*, 91-92.

⁶⁹⁰ Michael Diefenbacher, "Märkte in der Reichsstadt," and "Der Rat wirtschaftet," in *Der Nürnberg-Atlas: Vielfalt und Wandel der Stadt im Kartenbild*, eds. Wolfgang Baumann and Hajo Dietz (Cologne: Emons, 2007), 32-33.

merchants from Altdorf, from the duchy of Bavaria. While on their way to Nuremberg, they stopped and sold at St. Peter's leper house, avoiding the city market and inconvenient city oversight.⁶⁹¹ The council ordered that the lepers were only allowed to receive extramural donations, and, in no uncertain terms, they prohibited them from buying or even accepting donations of products meant for sale in the city.



When price fluctuations threatened food scarcity, the council subsidized food vendors rather than allow inflation to ripple through the city. In the famine years of the 1570s, the council mitigated the cost out of public coffers by importing grain from Bohemia. Under the umbrella of the city, grain prices did not show extreme variation.⁶⁹² Indeed, it is difficult to find any of the expected inflation within civic hospital records.

Elements of the Raitung, Nuremberg's medieval prescriptions regarding the size and shape of bread, can also be seen throughout all food stuffs. An image of specified food prices and sizes, found in an early seventeenth-century chronicle, shows how food items were sold in rigid forms and quantities (See Image: Food measures). Grains and milled flours, for example, were sold in specified sacks marked with the Nuremberg seal.⁶⁹³ Any innovation or deviation from this price capping was seen as a threat to the livelihood of food producers and vendors, and

⁶⁹¹ StAN Rep. 51 Nr. 7 92r.

⁶⁹² StAN Rep. 52a Nr. 32 2284r.-2316r.

⁶⁹³ Jegel, "Ernährungsfürsorge," 111.

thus a threat to the whole system.

Meat regulations were similar to that of grain. Responding to an increasing population and meat scarcity, the city established an *Ochsenamt* in 1532 in order to import animals in large quantities from Poland, Hungary and Bohemia.⁶⁹⁴ The city repeatedly increased inspections over its meat production and monitoring of approved cuts.⁶⁹⁵ Sauerkraut too had strict restrictions on size and quality.⁶⁹⁶ Since early modern authorities were ignorant of the vitamins and minerals to be gained from fruits and vegetables, these foods were not placed under as many controls. With the exception of Sauerkraut, they were not seen as essential to the maintenance of public nutrition.

The city also established a number of city-run mills to ensure that there was enough milled grain for the city's inhabitants.⁶⁹⁷ The council passed many regulations attempting to ensure that the poor in the city had the most basic nutritional provision of beer. Brewers often complained that they were unable to make a profit from the prices the council set.⁶⁹⁸

The council stockpiled food items that were viewed as essential and easily stored. Within the walls, the city established an intricate system of civic *Kornhäuser*, or wheat houses.⁶⁹⁹ Other items such as *Schmalz* and salt were purchased wholesale when they were particularly cheap, and

⁶⁹⁴ Scheiber and Windsheimer, *Rotes Bier*, 40-41.

⁶⁹⁵ Jegel, "Ernährungsfürsorge," 89-90.

⁶⁹⁶ Jegel, "Ernährungsfürsorge," 85-86, 131. Scheiber and Windsheimer, *Rotes Bier*, 34-37.

⁶⁹⁷ Johann Christian Siebenkees, *Kleine Chronik der Reichsstadt Nürnberg*, 55; Schieber, *Rotes Bier und blaue Zipfel*, 38-39.

⁶⁹⁸ Jegel, "Ernährungsfürsorge," 148, 153.

⁶⁹⁹ The city had three weighing stations: the *Hornstadel* (south of the river on the west side), at the *Siechhaus* and at the *Insel Schutt*. They were requested on behalf of the bakers after being scammed by vendors selling flour mixed with sand. August Jegel, "Ernährungsfürsorge," 111; and Joseph Baader, ed. *Nürnberger Polizeiordnungen*, Bibliothek des literarischen Vereins Stuttgart 63 (1861), 216.

then doled communally.⁷⁰⁰ Citizens were not permitted to stockpile these food products inside the city walls. This measure was taken in order to ensure that no one could circumvent civic specifications on quality or in some way undercut the market.

As food became more scarce and dependent on the council's importation of grain in the 1570s, there was a corresponding effort inside the city to secure the channels of the food supply. Regulations were established that required bakers to emboss each loaf with a unique symbol, so that the inspectors could know from whom the loaf came. In 1573, the city implemented a formal inspection process by which consumers could receive a refund for bread that did not comply with regulations, and in 1574, a new centralized weighing house with a hanging bread scale was built.⁷⁰¹ The city leaders also erected a number of centralized scales throughout the city for salt, fat, spices, flour and wine.⁷⁰² In these stations, authorities could not only monitor the size and shape of the food items, but also ensure the quality of the items. Once they were inspected, the various containers were marked with the city's seal of approval.

Material Purity

The sale of adulterated food products was viewed as a threat to the city's very survival. Adulterated food either robbed inhabitants of vital nutrition when non-food material was added, or it caused sickness from spoiled or inedible ingredients. Vendors often cut their food with filler to extend their products; examples include mixing chalk with salt, or sand with grain.⁷⁰³ This is

⁷⁰⁰ Schmaltz for example lasted for three or four years. Siebenkees, *Kleine Chronik der Reichsstadt Nürnberg*, 55; Jegel, "Ernährungsfürsorge," 137-139, and Diefenbacher, "Märkte in der Reichsstadt," 32-33.

⁷⁰¹ Jegel, "Ernährungsfürsorge," 114. Siebenkees, *Kleine Chronik der Reichsstadt Nürnberg*, 71. Baader, *Nürnberg Polizeiordnungen*, 169.

⁷⁰² Siebenkees, *Kleine Chronik der Reichsstadt Nürnberg*, 70.

⁷⁰³ Jegel, "Ernährungsfürsorge," 137-138; Diefenbacher, "Märkte in der Reichsstadt," 32-33.

one of the reasons that grains could only be sold wholesale in the city since unscrupulous vendors were common.⁷⁰⁴ Wine vendors often attempted to sell sour or corrupted wine by masking the foul taste with chemicals and herbs. Brewers would boil molded malt and add other ingredients to chemically extend the life of old or soured beer.⁷⁰⁵ Theft was also common, with barrels of wine and beer often being tapped during transport.⁷⁰⁶

Such adulterations could be dangerous. In 1473, the city employed a physician to test the wine, asserting that falsified wine “not only causes grave sickness and un-healable illnesses, but also the shortening of life, inducing miscarriages and preventing pregnancies.”⁷⁰⁷ Later, in 1490, a physician was called to inspect the quality of the beer after people had supposedly fallen sick due to its consumption.⁷⁰⁸ To ensure the quality of wine on the market, the council employed a *Weinkeiser* to purchase the wine and inspect its quality. In 1574, the council threatened falsifiers with prison, torture and flogging, publicly displaying this punishment, starting from the *Rathaus*, through the *Fleischbrücke* (presumably the path through the *Weinmarkt* served as a deterrent to other falsifiers) and then banishment from the city.⁷⁰⁹

Protection from Food Waste

Food materials could also threaten the city by putrefaction. While meat, grain, and bread

⁷⁰⁴ Baader, *Nürnberger Polizeiordnungen*, 215- 216, and Jegel, “Ernährungsfürsorge,” 101. Farmers, flour handlers, and millers entered through the specified gates on Fridays mornings to sell their products from designated stands. There were some Saturday exceptions. Grain was sold at stands on the *Heumarkt*, *Kornmarkt*, *Milchmarkt*, and at St. Lorenz.

⁷⁰⁵ Jegel, “Ernährungsfürsorge,” 151-152.

⁷⁰⁶ Jegel, “Ernährungsfürsorge,” 145-146.

⁷⁰⁷ Jegel, “Ernährungsfürsorge,” 144. *nicht allein viele schwere Seuchen und unheilbare Krankheiten, sondern auch Kürzung des Lebens, auch Abgang und Verhinderung der Leibesfrucht verursacht werden.* See also Baader, *Nürnberger Polizeiordnungen*, 258.

⁷⁰⁸ Jegel, “Ernährungsfürsorge,” 153-154.

⁷⁰⁹ Jegel, “Ernährungsfürsorge,” 145.

shared similar regulations regarding quality and price, the nature of flesh prompted more oversight on purity of production and refuse removal. The ideology applied to meat is most akin to that of the removal of the contagious sick and dead from the city, as discussed in Chapter 1. The foul smell or miasma from livestock, waste from slaughter, and spoiled meat threatened the health of the city. Meat production took place on the west of the city, between the *Fleischbrücke* and the *Neu Bau*, where the filth could flow down the river. This area also housed the *Siechhaus* used for lepers and the temporary syphilis hospitals.⁷¹⁰

Slaughtering was restricted to the *Fleischhaus* on the *Fleischbrücke*.⁷¹¹ By the 1580s, the bridge and house became increasingly ornate structures bearing witness to their role in city life.⁷¹² The final step in Nuremberg's meat production was the transfer of inedible fats and waste to the *Unschlitthaus*. Originally built adjacent to the *Siechhaus* to store grain for the poor, the *Unschlittamt* served as a rendering plant in which fats and waste were cooked with alum and saltpeter to make tallow, candles, and lubricants to sell to the poor, at cost.⁷¹³

⁷¹⁰ In the middle ages, medical authorities believed that eating the meat of caged animals was less healthy; therefore, pigs ran free in the city. However, the pigs and refuse that filled the streets were too filthy for the "well-ordered city" to tolerate. The council explained that when illustrious princes came to the city "they were decidedly malcontent and annoyed" by the filth of the pigs. As a result, the council limited the number of pigs each citizen could have, ordered them penned up inside stalls off the common streets, and ordered the owners to shovel up the excrement. When pigs were to be "watered," they had to be brought outside the city walls for washing in the outflow of the Pegnitz. For those who owned many pigs, such as vendors or bakers, the pigs had to be penned outside of the city walls." The smell of the *Seumarkt* was simply unbearable in the summertime. During the warm months from March to November (*Fastnacht* to St. Martin's day) the market was moved to an area outside the *Frauentor* called the *Fleischbänke*, the meat benches. Jegel, "Ernährungsfürsorge," 89-90; Baader, *Nürnberger Polizeiordnungen*, 282. Robert Jütte, *Daily Life in Late Medieval and Early Modern Germany: A New Social and Economic history, 1450-1630*, vol.1 (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 339.

⁷¹¹ Siebenkees, *Kleine Chronik der Reichsstadt Nürnberg*, 59-61.

⁷¹² The ox, too, has taken its place in Nuremberg culture with an idiom, "yeah, the ox on the *Fleischbrücke* also told me that," which means that someone is being redundant.

⁷¹³ Scheiber and Windsheimer, *Rotes Bier*, 40-41; Siebenkees, *Kleine Chronik der Reichsstadt*

Food spoilage was a constant problem. The civic grain houses had extensive specifications on storage and ventilation to prevent rot.⁷¹⁴ Any moldy grain, burned bread, burned or spoiled meat, or rancid kraut was thrown into the Pegnitz River or Fischbach.⁷¹⁵

In sum, the council sought to ensure that food commerce was free from deceit, fraud, or adulteration. They wanted to create a canopy over the city within which the food supply could be constant and predictable, even if it meant importation or subsidy. The walls of the city signaled comprehensive marketplace regulation. Food could only be sold in the specified size, shape, weight and purity, and inspectors monitored every one of these aspects. Monitoring increased as food became scarcer and as the council took on the burden of supply. Food corruption threatened the bodies of inhabitants by ingestion or inhalation, that is, by spoilage, adulteration, or miasma. Just as they were vital for military defense, so too did the city walls protect the internal food supply; for without a steady supply of food, Nuremberg would crumble from the inside-out. As the hospitals were generally supplied from the city center, the city's philosophy and methods of food delivery and protection were replicated in their food service.

Protection of food in the hospitals

Hospital food usually came from the city center. In the early days of the leper houses, the *Glockler(s)*, or gatherers, collected food donated by city inhabitants, thus it was subject to the city's food regulatory system. Over time, donations progressively shifted to monetary gifts collected in centralized community chests.⁷¹⁶ Food purchases for the lazaret were always centrally managed. All monetary donations went toward the central civic endowments, whose

Nürnberg, 72.

⁷¹⁴ Schieber, *Rotes Bier und blaue Zipfel*, 38-41.

⁷¹⁵ Jegel, "Ernährungsfürsorge," 131.

⁷¹⁶ StadtAN A 26 Rep 90 Nr. 109 1563.

representatives purchased foodstuff from city markets.⁷¹⁷ The *Possler*, discussed in Chapter 3, made food purchases and transported them from the city center to the hospitals along with corresponding lists for accountability. He was required to transport “bread, meat and other items” to the lazaret in a large basket equipped with a padlocked lid. The padlock had two keys, one held by the *Possler* and the other by the *Hofmeister*. Theoretically, once the basket was locked, it could not be reopened until it reached the lazaret.⁷¹⁸ Unfortunately, no details are available concerning the *Possler*’s control over food quality or how he interacted with the market vendors.

All of the hospitals micromanaged their food stores. From its arrival at the hospital to the leftovers after meals, food was the responsibility of the *Hofmeister*, the highest authority on-site. He meticulously inspected barrels of wine and beer upon delivery.⁷¹⁹ He also oversaw the beer in the cellar, to make sure that no one took more than his “mug” allotment.⁷²⁰ He was required to, “diligently with his hands,” survey the meat, vegetables, legumes, salt and fat stores after each meal-time.⁷²¹ Each hospital had a *Kelner/in*, or food storage manager who reported food-related needs to the *Hofmeister*, *Siechmeister* or overseer.⁷²² The overseer, the highest money manager, then secured the food supply from the city center.

During periods of heavy patient load, the *Cüstorin* tracked all food usage for the administration. Even after meals, food was carefully managed. Patients were forbidden from

⁷¹⁷ Evidently special prices were not given to charitable institutions. StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 49, and StadtAN B35 A 123.

⁷¹⁸ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 6r.

⁷¹⁹ StadtAN Rep. 52b Nr. 9 63r.

⁷²⁰ StadtAN Rep. 52b Nr. 9 61v.

⁷²¹ StadtAN Rep.52b Nr. 9 63r.

⁷²² StadtAN Rep.52b Nr. 9 63r. The roles of a housekeeper, cook, and head caregiver (*Kelner/in*, *Cook*, or *Cüstorin*) were carried out in a variety of ways in the hospitals. The hospital could employ one or three separate people for these purposes. In the lazaret complex, the *Hofmeisterin* is increasingly listed with cooking and food storage duties.

sharing among themselves. All uneaten food, especially meat, was reported to the Cüstorin, who had the discretion to use leftovers for “brother’s aid” or return them to the Hofmeister for safe keeping. This management tactic was not only designed to protect the food store, but also to prevent workers from sneaking tainted food items out of the building and selling them to a third party.⁷²³

Hospital employees watched for spoilage. Hospitals were given similar instructions to maintain wheat storage as inside the city. The leader of the Holy Cross Hospital, for example, was instructed to rotate the grain monthly and to make sure that no pigs, chickens, birds, geese or ducks interfered with the stores.⁷²⁴

By the 1580s, the council had increased the number of administrative positions to monitor food stores as hospital workers were known to steal from the supplies.⁷²⁵ Five maids in 1585 were banished for stealing thirty-two loaves of bread and a flask of wine out of the lazaret.⁷²⁶ The mishandling of beer and wine was the most commonly reported misdeed among the hospital personnel. In 1583, a report of corrupted wine in the French House reached the council. The wines had been watered down (likely to conceal theft) and mixed together so much so that they could no longer serve the health of the patients. The council ordered the wine to be taken to the orphanage. It then increased the Hofmeister’s salary by 12 G specifically to bribe him to do his duty and “sav[e] the wine.”⁷²⁷

In 1585, the council embarked on a new method to protect the lazaret’s wine by

⁷²³ StadtAN A6 Nr 298; StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 64v., 65r.

⁷²⁴ D 15 S14 Nr. 49 1573-157 1r.; Haller, *Das Pilgrimspital zum Heiligen Kreuz*, 40. The lazaret was supplied with grain directly from the Kornhaus of the Holy Ghost Hospital within the city center; however, the other extramural hospitals had smaller stores outside of the city.

⁷²⁵ StadtAN B19/1 484.

⁷²⁶ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 540 1v.

⁷²⁷ Apparently, watered-down wine was not a problem for children. StadtAN D1 Nr. 2 92r.

monitoring the Hofmeister himself. He, along with his predecessors, was reported to have held luxurious dinners with copious amounts of wine. The council resorted to employing a city servant to conduct an audit of the beer and wine consumed on these occasions. With the first known infraction, it chided the Hofmeister but left him in his position. The council then imposed precise guidelines as to how much wine he, his wife, and guests (pastor, Cüstorin, or other administrators) were allowed at each meal. A city servant was then required to give updated reports to the council.⁷²⁸

Even patients made every attempt to get more drinks.⁷²⁹ In the early 1590s, Endres Zwirschweg, a known complainer about wine and food in the Holy Ghost Hospital, was caught sneaking down to the hospital cellars to find more wine.⁷³⁰ Stealing wine and beer was a further liability as drunkenness was a consistent problem with the workers. They not only stole beer and wine, but also purchased Schnapps, a relatively new innovation with a much higher alcohol content.⁷³¹

In the lazaret, food stores, kitchens and washrooms were located next to the river. There was always a danger of the organic matter of food corrupting. After meals were consumed, leftover food and dirty dishes threatened dangerous smells. The cook in the Lazaret was instructed to clean the dishes immediately after each meal, then stack the dishes away in a prescribed, organized way.⁷³² All unwanted food products were then disposed of in the river, at

⁷²⁸ StadtAN B19/1 484 6v.

⁷²⁹ StadtAN B19/1 484.

⁷³⁰ StadtAN D2/II Nr. 265 26r., 91v.

⁷³¹ The *gebranntwein* or Schnapps was much loved by the public. The city's physicians issued a warning that it was particularly detrimental to pregnant women and children. In 1552, it was banned because of possible fire, since breweries burned down quite often due to the fire used in the distillation process. This might have only been an excuse to ban the hard liquor. Siebenkees, *Kleine Chronik der Reichsstadt Nürnberg*, 66. Jegel, "Ernährungsfürsorge," 159.

⁷³² StAN Rep 52b Nr. 234 48v.-49r.

the last point where the hospital met the river.

The city leaders of Nuremberg took on the responsibility of protecting the city's food supply. They protected it from inadequacy, fraud, theft and material corruption. They viewed the managing of the price of grain, size of bread, filth of meat, and purity of salt and fat as crucial to the safety and stability of the vulnerable people within its walls. This protection radiated outward from the city to the separated hospitals. The council placed the same administrative systems on the food stores of the hospitals through intensive monitoring. City central resources were used not only to provide for the vulnerable bodies in their separated spaces, but also to continually protect those provisions.

III. Religious Symbol

Up to this point, I have discussed the food eaten in Nuremberg's hospitals as a provided and protected resource, describing its path from the city center to its final consumption in the hospitals. This section explores the symbolic meaning of the foods provided within Nuremberg's religious context. Just as Christ's body was the bread and his blood the wine, food in the early modern period was an integral part of religious analogy and instruction. In medieval Christianity, the church calendar was designed to imitate the life of Christ, providing a "rhythm of plenty and scarcity."⁷³³ This rhythm allowed the individual to commune with Christ toward sanctification by both denying gluttony through fasting and, at other times, enjoying in the bounty of Christ by enjoying rich foods.

Fasting

⁷³³ Melitta Weiss Adamson, *Food in Medieval Times* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2004), 185.

Fasting was intended to morally purify the body and absolve past sins through a sacrifice of sustenance.⁷³⁴ In the middle ages, the pursuit of communion with Christ through the denial of the flesh sparked an entire phenomenon approaching anorexia. Saints such as Catherine of Siena claimed to survive on merely sucking bites of food for a few seconds before spitting them out. Other religious ascetics claimed to live on the nutrition of the Eucharist alone.⁷³⁵

On a communal level, fasting was a performative act of penance; it provided a source of unity and solidarity for the community in a standard and predictable pattern across the calendar year. To return to Pieter Bruegel once more, in his painting *Carnival verses Lent*, one can see the luxurious foods of Carnival giving way to the ascetic foods of Lent such as fish. Food historian Ken Albala claims, “food in this respect was at the core of the average person’s conception of religiosity, and devotion was defined in terms of the things one does, not necessarily the things one believes, as in a creed.”⁷³⁶ In everyday life, food was a tangible venue for the outward physical display of an abstract Christianity. Food not only maintained physical bodies; but the metaphorical body of Christ.

Fish

During seasons of fast, such as Lent, Advent, and Fridays, cookbooks included specialized recipes as a way to continue to have delicious food even when one could not eat

⁷³⁴ Ronald K. Rittgers, *The Reformation of Suffering: Pastoral Theology and Lay Piety in Late Medieval and Early Modern Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 26-27.

⁷³⁵ Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 94. See also Raymond of Capua, *The Life of Catherine of Siena*, ed Conleth Kearns (Wilmington, Del: Glazier, 1980); Rudolph M. Bell, *Holy Anorexia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

⁷³⁶ Ken Albala, “The Ideology of Fasting,” in *Food & Faith in Christian Culture* eds. Ken Albala and Trudy Eden (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 41-45, accessed 13 September 13, 2014, Google E-book.

meat, eggs or butter.⁷³⁷ The Nuremberg *Küchenmeisterei* began with a section on fast dishes. It boasted of its variety of fish dishes, including beaver tail, a popular end-run around the fasting meat-prohibition. The rationale was that beavers lived in the water and, therefore, could be classified as fish.⁷³⁸ The cookbook included a variety of fish, crab, and crayfish cooked in sauces, stuffed into sausages, or fried in dumplings. The expensive, sweet almond milk replaced normal milk in many recipes. There is also a variety of fruit compotes and fancy vegetable dishes including expensive imports such as figs. One recipe listed was a pea and hazelnut dumpling cooked with water flavored with pears, pepper, butter (?) and ginger. This dish could be served with a roasted apple or baked into a pastry dough.⁷³⁹ Church critic, Desiderius Erasmus, derided these luxurious recipes, claiming that they lacked any of the intended spiritual sacrifice of fasting.⁷⁴⁰

The most common hallmark of fasting was fish. Nuremberg's fish market was known to sell smoked or salted pike, salmon, haddock, cod, carp, lamprey, bloater, or the cheaper herring and *Stockfish*.⁷⁴¹ Most of these fish were imported from the North, thus, providing the impetus for close ties between Nuremberg merchants and the Lübeck *Stockfish* market. The cheap and transportable *Stockfish* (quartered and dried cod) proved to be a key resource for land-locked cities such as Nuremberg that had high demand for fish during Lent. Locally, fishermen harvested both fish and crabs from the Pegnitz, but fishing rights were severely restricted due to

⁷³⁷ Ken Albala, "The Ideology of Fasting," 41-45, accessed 13 September 13, 2014, Google E-book. In 1491, Pope Alexander VI loosened the restrictions on animal products like eggs, milk and butter. People could also earn special dispensations stating they could use these products.

⁷³⁸ *Küchenmeisterei*, n.p "Das erst teyl ist von Fastn speiss".

⁷³⁹ *Küchenmeisterei*, n.p "Das erst teyl ist von Fastn speiss".

⁷⁴⁰ Ken Albala, *Food in Early Modern Europe*, 46-47.

⁷⁴¹ Michael Diefenbacher, "Märkte in der Reichsstadt," and "Der Rat wirtschaftet," 32-33; Kink, "Ernährung (Spätmittelalter/Frühe Neuzeit"; Jegel, "Ernährungsfürsorge," 98-99; Michael P. Foley, *Why Do Catholics Eat Fish on Friday?: The Catholic Origin to Just About Everything* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

the relatively small size of the river.⁷⁴²

Although fish were not a local food resource in Nuremberg, their frequent metaphorical use in biblical culture and papal instruction made fish a staple during days of fasting. The fish was an early symbol of Christianity, second only to the image of the cross, and a commonly used analogy in the Bible. For example, Christ told the disciples that instead of fishermen, he would make them “fishers of men.” In the leper houses, every quarter year, lepers were required to visit the bath master for their bodily needs, and for their spiritual needs they would confess, receive the sacrament, and then be given a “pound of salted fish,” or a “carp or some other fish”.⁷⁴³

Fridays were a fasting day as people reflected on Christ’s Crucifixion; therefore, fish were eaten especially on Fridays. This practice was not neglected in Nuremberg’s hospitals. In St. Peter’s ordinances, fish appears as regular Friday fare for both the workers and the sick. An ordinance for the lazaret from the second half of the sixteenth-century specifies that on Fridays patients should receive a milk-cream soup and a *Stockfish*. On the same day, hospital workers ate a pear or onion soup with *Stockfish* or herring along with beer and wine. The administration was given two fancier fish meals. For an early meal, a pea soup, some form of cabbage and the more expensive baked carp (or other fish), or they could have boiled and stuffed carp with nuts and white bread. If they preferred, they could also replace their fish with the cheaper salted *Stockfish*. Their evening meal included a water and onion soup, lentils and more fish.⁷⁴⁴

The continued use of fish on Fridays is interesting for a number of reasons. First, the

⁷⁴² Baader, *Nürenderger Polizeiordnungen*, 168, 190. Brian Fagan argues that it was the fish trade that caused European expansionism across the Atlantic. Salted cod that could be transported and sold in mass quantities, allowed for the large modern armies and navies of the late early modern period. Brian Fagan, *Fish on Friday: Feasting, Fasting, and the Discovery of the New World: Easyread Super Large 24pt Edition* (New York: Perseus Books, 2009).

⁷⁴³ StadtAN D7 Nr. A2a 26v.

⁷⁴⁴ StAN Rep 52b Nr. 9 66r.-70r.

medieval church officially exempted the sick from obligatory fasting, meaning that the hospitals' sick could have theoretically done away with fasting entirely. The presence of fasting foods in the hospitals denotes that there were levels of sick in the hospitals who were treated differently based upon their illness. For example, since lepers were not necessarily acutely ill at any given point, those houses maintained a normal church calendar of fasting. Curiously, fish were also present on Fridays in the lazaret where patients often experienced complete incapacitation, certainly qualifying them as the exempted sick.⁷⁴⁵ However, the answer for that lies in how the ordinances distinguished between food regimens for the very weak and those already healing. Ordinances specified that a "meat soup" always be given to the very weak in the hospitals without distinction of fasting days. Based on the regular appearance of fish on Fridays in the hospital, I contend that the general diet set for the patients replicated that of the city proper. If it was determined that an individual was too sick and weak, they were exempt from fasting regulations.

Second, in the period, fish was not believed to be salubrious because of its foul odor. Steinhöwel advocated to only eat fish from fresh flowing water carefully making sure to throw out any damaged pieces. He recommended that it should be salted before fried or baked and not boiled. If someone wished to boil it, she should cook it with strong herbs such as parsley, sage and marjoram or vinegar to mask the smell.⁷⁴⁶

The third and most interesting aspect about fish on Fridays was the curious status of fasting in post-Reformation Nuremberg. Officially, fasting was no longer compulsory in Nuremberg. Osiander's 1533 Church Ordinances instructed that, "has God not said, that the pure are completely pure and no food is forbidden to anyone? Thereby it [fasting] is certainly also a

⁷⁴⁵ Adamson, *Food in Medieval Times*, 188.

⁷⁴⁶ Heinrich Steinhöwel, *Büchlein der Ordnung der pestilenz*, n.p. "von vischen."

human doctrine, which no Christian should follow.”⁷⁴⁷ Despite this declared doctrine, Nuremberg was ambivalent toward the practice of fasting. This ambivalence was typical for Nuremberg, as it retained many Catholic rituals and images that would have been abolished in more extreme forms of the Reformation.⁷⁴⁸ During the 1548 Augsburg interim, the council considered abandoning the Reformation for political expediency. It tried to convince the defiant Reformation preachers that the additional feasting and fasting of the Catholic calendar would not harm the souls of the people; they argued that fasting offered an additional benefit of stretching the city’s food supply, asserting that keeping the peace was worth giving up a few sausages a year.⁷⁴⁹ The people of Nuremberg apparently held to their fasting tradition; even after 1555, when Reformation theology was securely intact, fish on Fridays showed no sign of flowing downriver.

Another event with an abundance of fish was the *Lepraschau*, taking place during Holy Week, the greatest period of fasting and penance in the church calendar. While the event was an expression of fasting for most of the city, for the lepers it was a time of feasting. The Nützel family provided 300 G worth, or 400 bowls of *Stockfish*, at least one serving for each leper.⁷⁵⁰ The fish took on ritual significance on Holy Thursday. A large, “nice bread” was sent with the fish to the parish priest so that when he sat at the table with the lords, it could be “spread to the

⁷⁴⁷ Andreas Osiander, “1533 Kirchenordnung,” in *Andreas Osiander Gesamtausgabe (AOGA)* eds. Gerhard Müller and Gottfried Seebass (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Mohn, 1975) 5: 120. *Oder wann man spricht: Es soll kein christ am freytag flysch essen, thut ers aber, so thut er sünde und ist ein ketzer, und hat doch Gott gesagt, den raynen sey es alles rayn, und uns kein speyß zu keiner zeyt verpoten; darumb est es gewißlich auch ein menschenlere, der kein christ soll folgen.*

⁷⁴⁸ Bridget Heal, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Early Modern Germany: Protestant and Catholic Piety, 1500-1648* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Ronald K. Rittgers, *The Reformation of the Keys*; Gerald Strauss, *Nuremberg in the Sixteenth-Century: City Politics and Life* (New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 197), 6.

⁷⁴⁹ Rittgers, *The Reformation of the Keys Confession*, 183.

⁷⁵⁰ StadtAN A21 4 degree Nr. 031 10r.

many.”⁷⁵¹ This ritual seems to have combined two biblical accounts, i.e. Jesus feeding the five-thousand with the small boy’s lunch of bread and fish, and the Last Supper, traditionally celebrated on Holy Thursday. Although a variety of foods were donated for the event, it seems that these salted fish were the highlight of the meal. The Reformation neither ended the *Lepraschau*, nor did it change the menu. In 1557, Stockfish, herring and *Brein fish*, a fish served with porridge, are listed. In 1564, overseer Gabriel Nützel listed bread, beer and fish as the major expenditures of the *Schau*.⁷⁵² Records all the way into the seventeenth-century show no other animal protein item other than fish and eggs.

Nuremberg merchants had trade connections with the herring and *Stockfish* market, allowing these fish to be provided for both hospitals and charitable events at low cost; however, the fact that these fish only appear on Fridays and holidays reflect their continued religious importance even after the Reformation in Nuremberg. While eating fish instead of meat was no longer regarded as salvific in official theology, it remained a valued religious symbol and culture habitus in which the hospital patients took part.⁷⁵³

⁷⁵¹ StadtAN A21 4 degree Nr. 0317v.

⁷⁵² A 26 Rep 90 Nr. 109 1557.

⁷⁵³ Workers in the leprosaria were specifically given extra money during Lent to pay for their fish or beer.

The appearance of fish certainly did not mean that eating was wholly undesirable. In fact, the whole meat replacement culture was intended to lessen the dietary impact of fasting. Fish was also present at holiday events as well. At the city’s Carnival feast in 1496, receipts show 74 pieces Trout, 625 pound of Pike, 1392 pound Carp, 60 pound Ide, and a large amount of salted fish including 200 pieces salted Lamprey, 2471 pieces Herring, 135 pieces *Stockfish*, 107 pound salted Pike, 57 pounds salted Salmon, 27 pound salted Sturgeon, and 7 3/4 pound of salted Eel. Emil Reicke, *Geschichte der Reichsstadt Nürnberg: Von dem ersten urkundlichen Nachweis ihres Bestehens bis zu ihrem Uebergang an das Königreich Bayern 1806* (Nuremberg: J. P. Raw, 1896), 471. Fish are also mentioned on the evenings before or after holidays such as St. Johannis, St. Martin’s or *Kirchweih*. In St. Peter’s for example, the Overseer was to give the lepers a pair of salted fish over their allotted fund, and in St. Jobst lists a nice dish of fish to celebrate Pentecost. StadtAN D15 J VI Nr. 4 84r.,87v.; StadtAN D07 Nr. A2a 87v.; StadtAN D15 J VI Nr. 4 85v.; StadtAN D07 Nr. A2a 29r-29v.; StadtAN D07 Nr. A1a 21v.; StadtAN D07 Nr. A2b.;

Feasting

In the early modern period, feasts were just as symbolic as fasts. In the same way that they fasted on Fridays to memorialize Jesus' Crucifixion, they ate their best foods on Sunday to celebrate his Resurrection. On Sunday mornings in St. Jobst, the lepers were asked to gather any of their collected meat so that in the evening it could be served with a purée [probably vegetable or legume] of their choice.⁷⁵⁴ The patients in the lazaret were fed a *Fleischbrot* or a choice of meat soups, sweet kraut or vegetables and wine. There are many possibilities for what this *Fleischbrot*, or “meat bread,” could have been. In modern recipes, this term describes a dish consisting of meat and bread sautéed in fat and spices, then spread in a dish and baked. These Sunday meals were one of the few times that the lazaret patients were served meat that had not been cooked into soups or porridges. The hospital workers were fed the same, but with the addition of beer and rice. Administrators were served elegant Sunday meals consisting of roasted pork, veal or lamb with bread, rice, a meat soup, and “enough” wine and beer for both meals.⁷⁵⁵

Holiday foods occupied a large proportion of the leprosaria ordinances. For Pentecost, leprosaria residents received roasted chicken or veal and extra wine.⁷⁵⁶ On Corpus Christi, they

Steinmaier, *St. Jobst*, 174.

⁷⁵⁴ Steinmaier, *St. Jobst*, 174.

⁷⁵⁵ StAN Rep 52b Nr. 9 66r.-70r. While we know plague and syphilis patients had their best menu on Sunday, it is impossible to say whether patients there had any special holiday food. Individual donations or charitable giving to the patients was possible, but we have no record of specific holidays foods being donated. As patients were only in the hospital for a short period of time and in dire circumstances, their food did not take on the symbolic ritualistic meaning of the leper houses. Further, the smaller leper houses were also established as an integral part of a religious life in medieval Nuremberg while the other hospitals came in at the time of the desacralizing Reformation and their respective diseases presented themselves on a much more unwieldy scale.

⁷⁵⁶ StadtAN D07 Nr. A2a 30r.; StadtAN D07 Nr. A2b 11v. In 1525, the city's central fund paid for St. Leonard to have 30 penny worth of eggs to ensure the poor sick women in the hospital could celebrate Pentecost as well. StadtAN D1 Nr. 913.

ate boiled hen or a form of roasted meat.⁷⁵⁷ Expensive chicken, an upper class delicacy, and roasted meats were generally only holiday luxuries. These items would have also been impossible luxuries for peasants.

St. John's day, which commemorated the beheading of John the Baptist, took place on Midsummer's day. On the night before (St. John's Eve), a ritual bonfire was burned. Herbs that were held over the fire were believed to contain strong healing properties. One could make herbal teas out of the wreaths used to decorate for the event. In addition, foods eaten on St. John's day were thought to possess extra healthful powers; for example, to ward off headache for the year, one could eat a Semmel in milk.⁷⁵⁸ In the leprosaria residents celebrated the holiday with ground pork, chicken, a Semmel, wine, and cherries or other "timely fruit."⁷⁵⁹

On All Souls' Day both hospital inhabitants and workers were given a Weckspitzlein and a 10 penny *Seidel* of wine.⁷⁶⁰ On St. Martin's day, they were provided two geese, a pound of cheese, pears, and wine.⁷⁶¹ The tradition of eating geese, or *Martinigans*, on St. Martin's day derived from legends surrounding his life. The most popular came from the time when the city of Tours elected him Bishop in 371. Wanting instead to live a hermit's life of asceticism, he hid in a barn hoping to avoid discovery by the city residents. Unfortunately for St. Martin, a gaggle of geese betrayed him and ruined his monastic ambitions. According to another legend, a flock of geese broke into a church and interrupted his homily.⁷⁶² Thus every year on his day, geese were eaten in retribution.

⁷⁵⁷ StadtAN D15 J VI Nr. 4 92r.-94r.

⁷⁵⁸ Hanns Baechtold-Staeubli, "St. Johannistag" in *Handwörterbuch des Deutschen Aberglaubens* (Berlin and Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter & Co, 1935) 4: 712.

⁷⁵⁹ StadtAN D07 Nr. A2a 30r.; StadtAN D07 Nr. A1a 22r.; StadtAN D15 J VI Nr. 4 86v.

⁷⁶⁰ StadtAN D15 J VI Nr. 4 88r.; StadtAN D07 Nr. A2a 28r.; StadtAN D07 Nr. A1a 20r.

⁷⁶¹ StadtAN D15 J VI Nr. 4 12v.

⁷⁶² <http://www.nrw-genuss.de/produkte/was-hat-wann-saison/>.

On St. Nicolas day, celebrated on December 6, the leper houses were promised either a ram or sheep's stomach.⁷⁶³ It is difficult to find the symbolic meaning of this dish for St. Nicolas day because it has been eclipsed by Santa Claus and other later adaptations of the Christmas holidays. In the early modern period, St. Nicolas was particularly known as a protecting saint. He was most famous for bringing three school boys back to life, explaining the holiday's connection to children and health. He was also believed to be a protector of livestock and herds. This attribute could be the origin of the sheep's stomach tradition.⁷⁶⁴ Although St. Nicolas was technically demoted by the Reformation in Nuremberg, a 1563 account of St. Johannis shows the continued consumption of sheep's stomach on that day.⁷⁶⁵ In later centuries, the gift-bearing saint was turned into the *Christkind*.

Christmas celebrations not only included the basic Weck and wine but also roasted hen, veal or fish, as well as fat and flour to make dumplings.⁷⁶⁶ In order to make a dumpling with meat, one cookbook recommended combining ground meat with small pieces of bacon, parsley, salt and other herbs. Raw eggs were used to form the mixture into balls, which were then cooked with chicken broth or allowed to marinate in salt for a time before cleaning and cooking.⁷⁶⁷

Carnival was the most indulgent part of the year, as the city feasted before the Lenten fast. A receipt from Nuremberg's Carnival celebration from 1496 lists the foods purchased for the feast in great detail. It includes: beer, a variety of wines, beef, veal, lamb, pork, suckling pig, capon, expensive chickens, large birds, duck, rabbit, squirrel, a variety of fish, white cabbage, green cabbage, peas, cheese, milk, butter, saffron, ginger, pepper, cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg,

⁷⁶³ StadtAN D07 Nr. A1a 21r.; StadtAN D15 J VI Nr. 4 92r.

⁷⁶⁴ Hanns Baechtold-Staebli, "St Nikolaustag" in *Handwörterbuch des Deutschen Aberglaubens* (Berlin and Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter & Co, 1935) 6: 1087-1090.

⁷⁶⁵ A 26 Rep 90 Nr. 109 1563 2r.

⁷⁶⁶ StadtAN D15 J VI Nr. 4 85v., 89v.

⁷⁶⁷ *Küchenmeisterei*, n.p. "Das ander teyl ist fleysch speiss".

cumin, capers, mustard, onions, pureed pork, and vinegar. Pastries and gingerbread were flavored with sugar, almonds, Venetian grapes, raisins, figs, trisenett (a sweet powder form of fruit or vegetable extract), pomegranates, and honey.⁷⁶⁸ In St. Johannis, both the sick and healthy were given salted, roasted pork, a piece of veal, wine and again enough fat to make dumplings. St. Peter's too was supplied with extra fat or butter and 30 penny worth of eggs to provide comparatively luxurious, fatty meals for patients and staff.⁷⁶⁹ The celebration of carnival in Nuremberg was abolished in 1539 after Andreas Osiander witnessed a play mocking him and other city leaders.⁷⁷⁰

Easter was the most important religious holiday of the year, so each Easter food was highly symbolic. The centerpiece of the entire feast was a half lamb which was an emblem of Jesus, the innocent Lamb of God, who was sacrificed to cover humanity's sins.⁷⁷¹ This symbolic cut of lamb remained unchanged throughout the pre- and post-Reformation period. If lamb could not be obtained, a nice roasted veal could be substituted. Another symbolic food was fried eggs. Eggs, even in pre-Christian cultures, symbolized new life and rebirth. The reintroduction of eggs on Easter after strict Lenten fast was a powerful symbol of fertility and hope in Christ's bounty.

The final food eaten in the Easter feast was the *Osterfladen*, a form of sweet bread or pastry sweetened with raisins, almonds, butter, milk and sugar.⁷⁷² In the pre-Reformation time, priests consecrated the eggs, bread and lamb for the festivities. The blessing of Easter bread was specifically prohibited in the 1533 Church Ordinances as a "useless and childish" practice which

⁷⁶⁸ Emil Reicke, *Geschichte der Reichsstadt Nürnberg* (Nuremberg: J. P. Raw, 1896), 471-472.

⁷⁶⁹ StadtAN D15 J VI Nr. 4 85v. StadtAN D07 Nr. A2a 29r.; StadtAN D07 Nr. A1a 21r.

⁷⁷⁰ Konrad Eisenbichler and Wim N. M. Hüsken, *Carnival and the Carnavalesque: The Fool, the Reformer, the Wildman, and Others in Early Modern Theatre* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999), 9.

⁷⁷¹ StadtAN D07 Nr. A2a 29v.; StadtAN D07 Nr. A1a 21v.; StadtAN D07 Nr. A2b 11r.

⁷⁷² *Mittelalter Lexicon* s.v. "Osterfladen, Osterbrot."

was to be ended.⁷⁷³ During the vacillations of the council in 1548, Nuremberg's preachers warned the capricious council in a letter beginning with "Caution! Honorable, Wise, Frugal, Dear Lords;" they admonished the council that to return to this practice would be tantamount to returning to idolatry.⁷⁷⁴ Despite the elimination of the consecration ritual, Easter bread continued to be fundamental part of the celebration.⁷⁷⁵ This Fladen or *Osterbrot* symbolized Christ as the living bread.

The Easter bread was both the literal and metaphorical apotheosis of the relationship between food, religion, and the hospital patients' belonging; the foods of the feasts and fasts reflected the patients' participation in the religious life of the city, while the provision of the metaphorical body of Christ demonstrates their perceived inclusion. Ordinances clearly demanded that the houses receive either one large Fladen to share or small loaves enough so that each inhabitant could have his or her own.⁷⁷⁶ The provision of the Osterfladen for each individual was a powerful testament to the lepers' performative participation in the most important religious holiday of the year. As Christ's body was the bread, the inhabitants of the hospitals, despite living beyond the walls, belonged within the *Corpus Christianum* of Nuremberg.

Feasts at the Leprosaria

Some community-wide feasts and religious ceremonies took place at the hospitals (complex with chapel). For example, on All Saints' Day, donations and accounts reveal that

⁷⁷³ AOGA 5: 174. He also mentioned the blessing of wine on St. Johannis day, Easter candles, palms, fire (lights for Easter vigil), salt, water, herbs, for Mary's ascension and the procession of sacramentals around the city.

⁷⁷⁴ AOGA, 8: 516.

⁷⁷⁵ StadtAN D07 Nr. A2b 11r.; A 26 Rep 90 Nr. 109 1563 2r.

⁷⁷⁶ StadtAN D07 Nr. A2a 29v.; StadtAN D07 Nr. A1a 21v.; StadtAN D15 J VI Nr. 4 85v.

lepers were given a special *Spitzweck* and wine, plus an extra one-penny *Semmel* and wine for the surrounding farmers' feasts. Starting in the 1570s, the Holy Cross also opened a large kitchen for the poor to celebrate the occasion. On those holidays when religious personnel sang the Mass in the hospital chapels, the leprosaria served roasted pieces of meat, pastries filled with cheese, and wine. For the choir boys, they served a variety of meat soup, young hen, wheat purée, cabbage, bread rolls and wine.⁷⁷⁷

Annual *Kirchweih* were festivals that celebrated chapels' patron saints. As lepers were the foundational reason for the leprosaria chapels' existence, the lepers fully participated in the festivities along with the rest of the community. One chapel could have multiple *Kirchweihen* each year.⁷⁷⁸ St. Peters, for example, celebrated four days: *Petri Pauli, vincula Petri, Cathedra Petri, Annunciation Martini*. The houses provided soup and drink for the choir boys, cantor and priest who performed the mass. The lepers and workers were then served young hen, un-boiled fish and wine.⁷⁷⁹ Each house received extra provisions listed for their *Kirchweih*, and even the poor St. Leonard was given 2 1/4 G from the city's central financial office for its celebration.⁷⁸⁰ The Reformation limited the number of holiday festivals in the city, but the *Kirchweih* survived. In the 1570s, new ordinances stressed that the inhabitants of the leprosaria could only go to their own *Kirchweih* and not sneak into the celebrations of the other leprosaria. The implication of this command is that in previous years lepers attended the festivities at other leprosaria chapels.⁷⁸¹

⁷⁷⁷ StadtAN D15 J VI Nr. 4 88r.-93r. Afterward, the priests and choirboys were served a cold format of roasted meat, milk, cheese bread and wine.

⁷⁷⁸ In 2009, the city of Münster sought to reinstate their traditional *Kirchweih* complete with inviting lepers. The church wanted to stand against the fear and stigma still associated with lepers now in India, Pakistan and other countries around the world.

<http://www.lepramuseum.de/08mit-siechen-feiern.html>

⁷⁷⁹ StadtAN D07 Nr. A2a 20r.

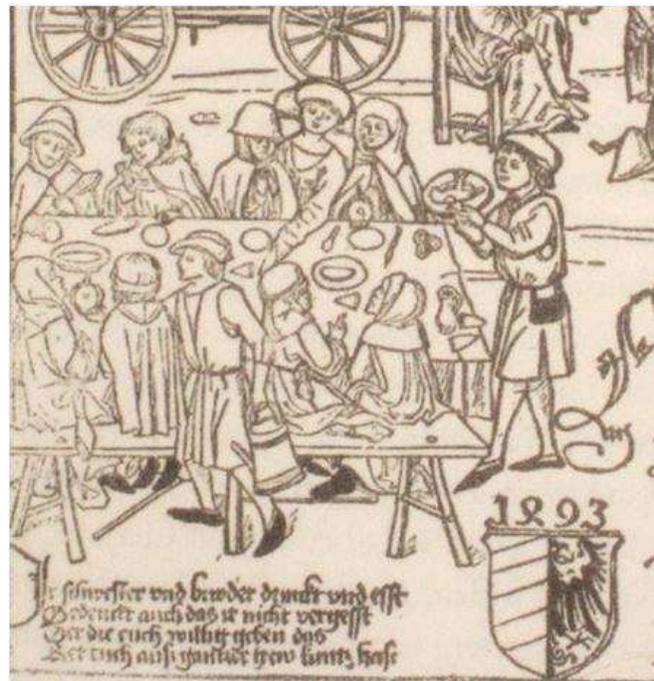
⁷⁸⁰ StadtAN D1 Nr. 913 12v.

⁷⁸¹ StAN Rep 52b. Nr.9 1571.

Although Nuremberg's contagious disease hospitals were physically separated from the city, they still participated in the religious life of the city, and on special occasions, their facilities became integral parts of the religious celebrations for the general public. Although one could argue that the lazaret could not have held celebrations like the *Kirchweih* during outbreaks, the inclusion of the lepers in city holidays demonstrates that the separation of all the contagious disease hospitals was not meant as ostracism from the religious community but merely that their limb of the *Corpus Christianum* was located outside the walls.

Lepraschau

I would like to close this chapter with the Lepraschau event. Virtually every aspect of this charitable event was connected to food, both with its provision and its symbolic meaning. This Holy Week festival began every year with a string of formal requests to the council and leading families by the Mother for the wine, food, supplies and priests to perform spiritual services. As the preparations continued, the Mother brought designated beggars (the ones who raised money for the event) into her home for meals on Palm Sunday and Annunciation (See Chapter 1): a metonymy for letting the poor lepers into the city (as the metaphorical home) to feast. During the actual festival, all of the lepers took Communion on Thursday morning, ate their symbolic meal of fish and bread on Thursday



evening, and lastly indulged in the great feast on Friday (See Image: Lepraschau Feast).⁷⁸²

Both everyday foods, as well as food with heavy religious symbolism, had to be provided. Stations were set up on the churchyard for cooking throughout the three days. Cooks prepared cabbage, cereal, wheat, herring, *Stockfish*, flatfish, garlic, cinnamon, butter/fat, rice, plums, almonds, figs, raisins and beer.⁷⁸³ The major funding for the event came from the *Sondersiechen Stiftung*, one of the city's wealthiest charitable endowments. In a sample year of 1557, the festival used 100 G for wine, 40 G for rye bread, 65 G for a variety of fish, 30 G for *küchenspeise* (general items for cooking) and almonds and figs, 20 G for beer, 2 barrels of fat (no price listed), and 24 G extra for the food for participating servants. Food was clearly the greatest expense of the event, standing in stark contrast to the 12 G total paid to the six physicians employed to actually diagnose leprosy.⁷⁸⁴ Progressively throughout the second half of the sixteenth-century as food prices inflated, the *Sondersiechen Stiftung* could not cover the food necessary for the growing event. The council employed *Esszeichen*, eating badges, to filter out non-leprous beggars and freeloaders.⁷⁸⁵

The event also ended with food. Nuremberg's leper houses and orphanages received extra bread and wine in appreciation for not begging during the three days of Lepraschau.⁷⁸⁶ Left-over food from the feast was donated to the Holy Cross Hospital. The servants, butchers' servants,⁷⁸⁷

⁷⁸² StadtAN A21 4^o Nr. 031 17v.-19v.

⁷⁸³ Georg Wolfgang Karl Lochner, "Die Sondersiechen in Nürnberg, ihr Almosen und ihre Schau," in *Deutsche Zeitschrift für die Staatsartzneikunde* 17 (1861): 23. StadtAN A21 4^o Nr. 031 6v.; A 26 Rep 90 Nr. 109 1557 2v.

⁷⁸⁴ A 26 Rep 90 Nr. 109 1557 2v.

⁷⁸⁵ A 26 Rep 90 Nr. 109 1557 2v.; A 26 Rep. 90 Nr. 109 1558.

⁷⁸⁶ StadtAN A21 4 degree Nr. 031.

⁷⁸⁷ This one reference to butchers' servants is interesting. It would be interesting to see if the butchers' apprentices participated in the event because they would not have been working much during Lent.

and the Daughters were paid with bread and drink.⁷⁸⁸ The event formally ended on Good Friday when the Mother met the servants and official beggars for a final time in the Siechhaus. There, she collected the money from the beggars and rewarded the helpers with roasted almonds and *Lebkuchen* in gratitude. Lebkuchen or Gingerbread (originally *leckuchen* meaning delicious cake) was a bread baked with spices with pungent aromas, such as ginger, cardamom, cloves, nutmeg, cinnamon, plus honey or almonds to make it sweet. A fitting food to end on, today Lebkuchen is still the hallmark of Nuremberg's Christmas market and is one of the most edible reminders of medieval feasts still in existence.⁷⁸⁹

The food component of the religious life of early modern hospitals and the Lepraschau clearly shows that provision for Nuremberg's sick reached beyond the practical consideration of basic sustenance or thrift. The symbolic foods, regardless of their changing theological meaning throughout the sixteenth-century, demonstrate the spiritual importance of the inhabitants' participation in the religious customs of Nuremberg, a topic which will be expanded on in the next chapter. Moreover, it displays the council's willingness to provide these expensive specialty foods for the hospitals' needy patients. These buildings were not merely holding cells for the unwanted, but rather hospitals intended to care for both "body and soul."

Conclusion

Throughout the early modern period, there was a steady increase in Nuremberg's perceived need to monitor its food commerce. It is unsurprising that the apex of this need correlated with the famine of the 1570s. Not only was food more likely to be falsified in the time of shortage, but the council itself had taken on the responsibility of supply at public debt, a

⁷⁸⁸ StadtAN A21 4^o Nr. 031 21r.-22v.

⁷⁸⁹ Jegel, "Ernährungsfürsorge," 120; Schieber and Windsheimer, *Rotes Bier*, 22-25.

strategy they knew could not last long. It was the period in which participants in the Lepraschau were accused of pretending they had leprosy to get into the festivity or to be accepted into leper houses, where inhabitants ate relatively well.⁷⁹⁰ It was also in these early years of the 1570s that Nuremberg moved the Lepraschau and other charitable feeding programs outside of their walls. The council was willing to supply millet or occasional charity to foreigners or surrounding farmers, but it progressively contracted in defining to whom they were obliged to supply a continual source of food. The council also took a more direct role in the functioning of the hospitals to ensure that the Hofmeister and other hospital employees were not pilfering the food meant for its inhabitants.

While one may make the assertion that the separated patients were marginalized by their placement outside the walls, I argue that this external placement increased their connection to the city center, as their bodies were wholly dependent on its provision and protection for sustenance. The patients outside of the walls relied on the council's delegated management to ensure the food's provision and pathway to their separated places. Each action of food supply was a loud and tangible statement about the importance of the separated patients to the city. The food was to be beneficial both to the health of their bodies and their souls. By accepting the responsibility of supplying the patients' basic need of sustenance, by protecting that supply, and by providing foods that aided spiritual devotion, the city acknowledged the patient's material and symbolic belonging.

⁷⁹⁰ See my discussion of the end of the Schau in my conclusion.

Chapter 6:

On Spiritual and Bodily Care

“Death gives meaning to our lives. It gives importance and value to time. Time would become meaningless if there were too much of it.”⁷⁹¹

The majority of this work has been organized by an analysis of space. My central quest has been to determine to what extent inhabitants in Nuremberg’s external contagious disease hospitals participated in the internal goods, services, and general life of the city. Nuremberg’s religious life, too, was spatially experienced in the churches, streets, homes, and hospitals. In this setting, daily religious life was facilitated by prayers, candles, incense, liturgy, vestments, songs, processions, acts of penance, and devotion.⁷⁹² In this chapter, I will continue my exploration of spatial orchestration, but I will complement this analysis with a consideration of time.

Time is the second building block of cognition. Without the bounds of time, space would have no meaning. It is only in the congruence of space and time that communal festivities, holidays, working of bodies, seasonal availability of food, etc., have life and form. We are born into the world with a finite lifespan. As we navigate through life, we mark time until death. It is this limitation that provides us meaning and a sense of urgency.

The Church calendar marked late medieval and early modern time. The Church told congregants when to feast, fast, celebrate and repent. It told them when to plant, sow, and

⁷⁹¹ Ray Kurzweil, *The Age of Spiritual Machines: When Computers Exceed Human Intelligence* (New York: Viking, 1999), 2.

⁷⁹² For additional studies on religion and space in the early modern period see: Andrew Spicer and Sarah Hamilton Burlington, ed. in *Defining the Holy: Sacred Space in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Burlington, VT : Ashgate, 2005); Alexandra Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity, and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); and Gerd Schwerhoff and Susanne Rau, eds. *Topographien des Sakralen: Religion und Raumordnung in der Vormoderne* (Munich: Dölling und Galitz, 2008).

slaughter. Weekly, they attended Sunday services to hear preaching or see the Mass. The day of the week dictated their diet, and their daily lives were even marked by hours of prayer: Matins, Laud, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, and Compline. Eamon Duffy has argued, “In liturgy and in the sacramental celebrations which were its central moments, medieval people found the key to the meaning and purpose of their lives.”⁷⁹³ In this context, one’s lifespan was never to be experienced alone. The ritual of baptism welcomed the individual into the Church and community; eventually, life culminated with the gathering at the home of the dying for Communion and last rites. Edward Muir describes these as “ritual moments” when an individual’s life-cycle was marked out by religious practice.⁷⁹⁴ From birth to burial, all the main rites of passages were designed to orient the faithful through the Church toward God.⁷⁹⁵

There was no more important time than death. In medieval Europe, a “cult of death” developed surrounding spiritual preparation for the death and the afterlife. Mary Lindemann has argued that they were not obsessed with death as much as they recognized that health presented the most obvious vulnerability in their lives.⁷⁹⁶ Illness evoked the theological intensity of impending death, and, therefore, the necessity of the soul’s search for salvation: to deny death and reconcile to Christ in the afterlife.

⁷⁹³ Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, C.1400-C.1580* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 11; David Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells: National Memory and the Protestant Calendar in Elizabethan and Stuart England* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989).

⁷⁹⁴ Edward Muir, *Civic Ritual in Renaissance Venice* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986), 16; Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 10-13; David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage, and Death Ritual, Religion, and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 2.

⁷⁹⁵ David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage, and Death Ritual, Religion, and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 2.

⁷⁹⁶ Mary Lindemann, *Medicine and Society in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 157.

This chapter explores how patients in Nuremberg's external hospitals were part of the body of Christ in Nuremberg, as the city provided for their "spiritual and bodily care."⁷⁹⁷ The Church employed a continuous stream of priests, chaplains and prayer leaders to provide spiritual support to the patients. As the deterioration of the body moved at different speeds with each of the three diseases, they needed different accommodating spiritual services. As leprosy was slow-moving, lepers' religious services closely resembled that of non-hospital religious houses or laity. In contrast, plague moved rapidly so plague victims received a more urgent form of preaching and soul preparation. As the health of the whole *Corpus Christianum* was necessarily interdependent, the spiritual needs of patients in these hospitals were of paramount importance to the city. While the patients may have been physically separated from the city center, they were never removed from the body of Christ.

As Nuremberg converted to the Reformation in 1525, this chapter must balance pre- and post-Reformation spiritual care in the hospitals. While this transition was an important factor in Nuremberg history, I have intentionally avoided using this topic as a central organizing principle. There are several reasons for this choice. First, as seen in the example of food, Nuremberg had a conservative Reformation that kept many of the Catholic forms and practices that other evangelical cities rejected; therefore much of the art, dietary guidelines, vestments, and liturgical celebrations remained unchanged to the untrained eyes and the inadequately informed minds of the laity. The council made only necessary changes and left the rest. I do not want to overemphasize the departures because most aspects of daily life remained unchanged after the Reformation. Second, as this study has focused on boundaries, I want to identify how the general (yet permeable) structures impacted the movement of resources, influenced the conduct of

⁷⁹⁷ StadtAN A21-2 Nr. 116 2r.

individuals in the hospitals, and affected the hospitals' interaction with the city center. The theological changes of the Reformation did not immediately transfigure the form of the late medieval religiosity. One could argue the post-Reformation secularization of institutions (including charitable hospitals) prompted undercurrents of secularization that would contribute to the breaking of the communal structure.⁷⁹⁸ However, I believe that within the sixteenth-century, the communal belief of salvation and intensity of religious devotion at the moment of death rode the wave of the late medieval religiosity. Even throughout the demographic changes of the seventeenth-century, the city would impose increasing strict rules in a desperate effort to reestablish the city as a conceptual community.⁷⁹⁹ It is for these reasons that I prioritize my broader organization of religious intensity in proximity to the deathbed.

This chapter does, however, display a general chronological progression in discussing the theological changes of the Reformation because correct theology and ritual became more indispensable as one neared death. The later discussion of the Reformation is also a practical consideration in that the lazaret complex only fully functioned in the post-Reformation period. While the means to achieve salvation changed in evangelical theology, the basic structure remained the same: repent of sin and be reconciled to Christ. This theological arch was fleshed out through religious performance in space and reiteration in time, shaping the body of Christ in Nuremberg.

⁷⁹⁸ Joel Harrington, "Escape from the Great Confinement: The Genealogy of a German Workhouse," *The Journal of Modern History* 71, no. 2 (1999): 308-345.

⁷⁹⁹ Joel Harrington, "Child Circulation within the Early Modern Urban Community: Rejection and Support of Unwanted Children in Nuremberg," in *Defining Community in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Michael Halvorson and Karen E. Spierling (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2008), 103-20.

Chapter Structure

This chapter is divided into six major sections. The *first* section lays the theological foundation of death and disease as a product of man's sin and the possibility of reconciliation with Christ through the Church: both Catholic and Protestant. It focuses on the deathbed as the most important site of reconciliation. It also examines the horizontal relationship between the sick and the healthy in Nuremberg and how that relationship reinforced the communal nature of the deathbed.

The *second* section examines the chapels established for separated patients' spiritual services. It explores how their standard religious practices echoed practices of the city. The chapels also provided spatial points of contact between the sick and the healthy throughout the liturgical year. The *third* section moves to daily and weekly spiritual care. It looks at the importance of mealtime prayers and the regular hearing of scripture.

The *fourth* section explores spiritual life under the threat of plague. In stark contrast to the distant reminder of death personified by the decomposing body of the leper, plague put everyone on the hypothetical deathbed. This section accents the theological division sparked by the Reformation, as both confessions sought to bring consolation through the proper preparation for death.

The *fifth* section proceeds all the way to the deathbed with last rites or the last Communion. It was the most intimate and final contact point of spiritual life. It was contact, horizontally, as the priest touched the sick person and, vertically, as the sick took the divine into his body by means of the host and chalice. The *sixth* section briefly follows the dead to their final burial in a consecrated cemetery. Ironically, the majority of the inhabitants of sixteenth-century Nuremberg were laid to rest in the cemeteries originally consecrated for their leper brethren,

outside the city walls.

The city of Nuremberg provided religious personnel, celebrations, art, religious foods, scripture, preaching, and sacraments to its sick in the *extramural* hospitals. Not only did the city give patients food for their physical bodies during life, but they also provided spiritual food for their souls as they neared death; nevertheless, the patients' physical contamination was never ignored. While they were "limbs" in the body of Christ, these religious ministrations were done through layers of doors, clothing, smoke, or physical positioning that protected the healthy pastors and population. This physical movement embodied their position as separate, yet together.

I. Theology of Separation

According to late medieval theology, death and destruction entered the world because of man's sin, otherwise known as the Fall. God sacrificed his Son to atone for these sins, and gave the Church to the world in order to communicate means of grace to his people. Through baptism, Christians were washed of original sin and entered the life of the Church, but humanity still lived in the fallen world, grieving God and provoking his wrath through sinful lives. Through a contrite heart, confession and penance, one could be returned to right relation with God.

In this view, God was the author of both salvation and adversity. Images of disease in this period show God as wielding a sword or showering down smiting arrows upon his people.⁸⁰⁰ The most foundational example of this philosophy is seen in the medieval understanding of leprosy. In the Old Testament, God smote individuals, such as King Uzziah, with leprosy as a punishment

⁸⁰⁰ Holzschnitt, Augsburg c. 1470-1480 reproduced in Thilo Esser, *Pest, Heilsangst, und Frömmigkeit: Studien zur religiösen Bewältigung der Pest am Ausgang des Mittelalters* (Altenberge: Oros, 1999), 421.

for sin. “When Azariah the chief priest and all the other priests looked at him, they saw that he had leprosy on his forehead...because the Lord had afflicted him.”⁸⁰¹ The physical defect and deformity reflected the moral deformity of the heart. This philosophy of the link between the spirit and the body provoked discrimination against people with chronic sickness or disability.⁸⁰² Prostitutes were blamed for bringing down God’s smiting syphilis, not for their physical transmission of the disease but because of their fornicating sin.⁸⁰³

In the case of plague, it was believed that God was punishing the broad population for corporate sin. The presiding analogy of arrows refers to the seemingly random way in which plague struck communities.⁸⁰⁴ Upon the outbreak of plague citywide mandates inculcated repentance: “Meanwhile we recognize out of the word of God this gruesome plague is on account of the proper cause, namely, that it is our sin of unbelief, disobedience and ingratitude that is to blame.”⁸⁰⁵ This vocabulary did not change in post-Reformation Nuremberg. In 1543, the city is blamed for the people’s “blasphemy of the name of God, frivolity, fornication, improper burdening against the love of their neighbor, among other things, practiced highly

⁸⁰¹ 2 Chr. 26: 20-21 NIV.

⁸⁰² Saul Nathaniel Brody, *The Disease of the Soul; Leprosy in Medieval Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974),1; Christine M. Boeckl, *Images of Leprosy: Disease, Religion, and Politics in European Art* (Truman State Univ. Press, 2011), 1; Ronald K. Rittgers, *The Reformation of Suffering: Pastoral Theology and Lay Piety in Late Medieval and Early Modern Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 172.

⁸⁰³ RV 31 Dec. 1496 quoted in Sudhoff, “Die ersten Maßnahmen der Stadt Nürnberg gegen die Syphilis in den Jahren 1496 und 1497. Aktenstudien” *Archiv für Dermatologie und Syphilis* 116 (1911), 13.

⁸⁰⁴ Sheila Barker, “The Making of a Plague Saint: Saint Sebastian’s Imagery and Cult before the Counter-Reformation,” in *Piety and Plague: From Byzantium to the Baroque*, ed. Franco Mormando and Thomas Worcester (Kirksville, Mo: Truman State University Press, 2007), 111.

⁸⁰⁵ Ronald Rittgers, “Protestants and Plague: The Case of the 1562/3 Pest in Nürnberg,” in *Piety and Plague: From Byzantium to the Baroque*. Edited by Franco Mormando and Thomas Worcester, 132 – 155, (Kirksville, Mo: Truman State University Press, 2007), 141. *Dieweil wir dann die rechten ursach diser grausamen plag aus dem wort Gottis erkennen, nemlich, das es unserer sunden als unglaub, ungehorsam und undanckbarkait schuld ist...*

punishable cursing, which he also cannot forbear. He has been highly caused and moved to pour out his proper affliction on us and to punish and wreck such sinful lives with the rod of pestilential sickness.”⁸⁰⁶

Separation was not the end goal of this punishment; it was meant to provoke reconciliation. Reformation preacher Veit Dietrich argues that God did not punish like an executioner, but as a father who disciplines his child early, in order that he may punish the child less in the future.⁸⁰⁷ As Christ was dead for three days and brought back to life, so was the heart to be regenerated and brought back by God. Illness, whether long and slow like leprosy or fast and cataclysmic like plague, reminded humanity of our essential separation from God as sinful creatures bound for damnation without his intercession, but it also provided an opportunity for God to work in the suffering person’s life. Andreas Osiander asked the afflicted: “Who would not wish to be blind for a time, if that allowed Christ to heal you with his own hands?”⁸⁰⁸

Late Medieval Theology of Reconciliation

Late medieval Nuremberg was known for its intense religious devotion. The medieval Church practiced seven sacraments: baptism, confirmation, the Eucharist, marriage, vows of religious orders, penance, and last rites. These sacraments were a means of prevenient grace. This grace allows the person, then, to accomplish meritorious works, ameliorating the soul

⁸⁰⁶ StAN Rep. 53II Verz. III Nr. 1543 Broadsheet.

fürnemlich aber mit leßterung seins heyligen Götlichen names/ füllerey/ unzucht/ unbillichen beschwerden/ Wider die liebe des nechsten/ vnd andern mer/ vor Got hoch strefflichen laßtern geübt/ davon auch noch nit abstanden wirdet/ zum höchsten verursacht/ und bewegt/ seinen billichen zorn/ vber vns außzugießen. und solch sundlich leben/ mit seiner Ruten/ der Pestilenzischen seucht zustraffen vnnnd heym zu suchen/

⁸⁰⁷ Veit Dietrich, *Agend Büchlein für die Pharrherrn auff dem Land* (Nuremberg: 1544), n.p. “Wie bey den krancken sol.”

⁸⁰⁸ Rittgers, *The Reformation of Suffering*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 173.



toward worthiness of
reconciliation.

Sin needed to be purged
through confession. One could go
to a priest for confession
recounting sins in great detail;
confession was followed by a
prescribed penance that would

usually entail prayers or acts of charity. When plague or adversity struck, confession and repentance were the first steps toward reconciliation. One fifteenth-century Italian book of medical recipes states:

Whenever anyone is struck down by the plague he should immediately provide himself with a medicine like this. Let him first gather as much as he can of bitter loathing towards the sins committed by him, and the same quantity of true contrition of heart, and mix the two into an ointment with the water of tears. Then let him make a vomit of frank and honest confession, by which he shall be purged of the pestilential poison of sin, and the boil of his vices shall be totally liquefied and melted away. Then the spirit, formerly weighed down by the plague of sin will be left all light and full of blessed joy.⁸⁰⁹

Religious devotion centered on relating to Christ's suffering, *imitatio Christi*. Some people practiced self-flagellation to mirror Christ's pain and expiate sins. After the Black Death, groups of extreme penitents, flagellants, traveled from city to city physically beating themselves in processions (Image: Flagellant).⁸¹⁰ Cities and religious orders hosted prayerful processions and lay individuals formed confraternities dedicated to charity and particular devotions. The ultimate form of devotion was to take the sacrament. It was the last step in the medical program listed above:

⁸⁰⁹ Horrox, *The Black Death*, 149.

⁸¹⁰ Horrox, *The Black Death*, 97.

Afterwards let him take the most delightful and precious medicine: the body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.⁸¹¹

Throughout the medieval period, the number and complexity of religious rituals grew to aid the believer toward repentance and reconciliation with God. The Church "...while accepting atonement as core belief, simultaneously presented to the laity an array of assistance in attaining salvation."⁸¹² A central component of this religious devotion was what scholars have identified as the medieval "cult of death." According to Church doctrine, if a person died without adequate expiation of sin, he needed to go to purgatory for a time of cleansing before entering heaven. Medieval theologians expounded on the geography, longevity, and torments that would be found in purgatory.⁸¹³ A system of decreasing one's time in purgatory developed around this core belief. The devout tried to ensure an easy journey through purgatory by endowing masses in their name after their deaths. Saints could help reduce the time. These holy people accumulated such an overflow of good works and devotion while on earth that they deposited them into a "treasury of merit" which could be applied to others. As saints died with an abundance of grace and merit, they were able to go directly to Christ and begin to intercede for the salvation of those on earth and in purgatory. Thus, saints' images and life stories were a central component of devotion, and their intercession was central to reconciliation. The "treasury of merit" acquired by saints was converted into papal indulgences that were doled out to the devout as rewards for their good works or payments to the church.

In the late middle ages, one of the most popular forms of religious devotionals was *Ars Moriendi* (the Art of Dying), which instructed the believer on how to die a righteous death particularly with the understanding that clergy was not always able to be present at the moment

⁸¹¹ Horrox, *The Black Death*, 149.

⁸¹² Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Feeling*, 192

⁸¹³ Jacques Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 12.

of death. *Ars Moriendi* appeared as texts as well as a series of images that depicted saints and demons fighting over the individual's soul. Demons attempted either to tempt the dying person to despair because of the depth of his sin or to tempt him to be so confident of receiving God's grace that he was not sufficiently humble. Mary and the saints pointed the sick to Christ. This soul's preparation was designed to keep the individual balancing fear of judgment with the hope of redemption, thus leading the individual to contrition, prayer for intercession, Confession, and Communion (Image: *Ars Moriendi*).⁸¹⁴



Ars Moriendi became then a model for spiritual care during illness; the deathbed imagery was echoed throughout other instructional aids. The deathbed, as the last possible moments of preparation of one's soul before crossing the threshold, was the most extreme site of religious intensity. Unless one died in mortal sin, all Christians died on the path toward reconciliation: the more reconciled to Christ one was at death, the farther down the path one was toward paradise and communion with God.

The Reformation of Reconciliation

The Reformation called into question many of the Church's practices surrounding death and the afterlife. For Martin Luther and his followers, the death and resurrection of Christ constituted the full propitiation for humanity's sins. Instead of a system that allowed individuals

⁸¹⁴ Austra Reinis, *Reforming the Art of Dying: The Ars Moriendi in the German Reformation (1519-1528)* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2007), 2-4, 17-22.

to achieve good standing with God through good works, Christ died for humanity, imputing his own righteousness on the faithful. Salvation was only possible through faith in Christ's work.⁸¹⁵

The Church was still God's means to communicate with humanity, but the sacraments only had power through the preaching of the Word and the faith of the believer.⁸¹⁶ The sacraments were decreased to just two: baptism and Communion, not surprisingly, these sacraments were beacons posted at the beginning and the end of life.⁸¹⁷

Although evangelical theology had a robust sense of salvation, God still rained down turmoil due to humanity's continued sin. During the plague outbreak of 1533, Lazarus Spengler wrote in a letter to his sister "in sum, God desires to be and to remain Lord and master and gives us reason through this punishment to cry to him and to recognize him as our only helper."⁸¹⁸ Once in good standing with God, the believer's gratitude increased his love of neighbor and would naturally result in a holier life.

While Luther denied the power of penance, the intercession of saints, soul Masses, imitatio Christi and many other practices as means to achieve a right relation with God, he maintained his own form *Ars Moriendi*. The faithful were to hear the Word preached, have contrite hearts, and put their faith in Christ's redeeming work on the cross.⁸¹⁹ Luther's view of

⁸¹⁵ Bernhard Lohse, *Martin Luther's Theology: Its Historical and Systematic Development* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999), 74-78; Heiko Augustinus Oberman, *The Dawn of the Reformation: Essays in Late Medieval and Early Reformation Thought* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1986), 121-24.

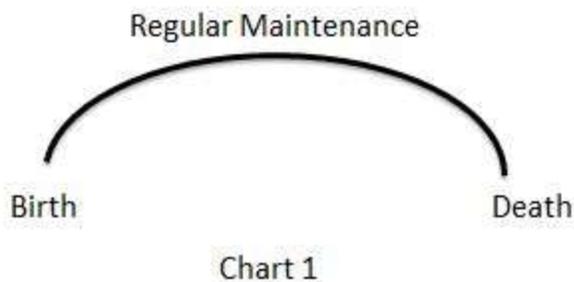
⁸¹⁶ Lohse, *Martin Luther's Theology*, 312-313.

⁸¹⁷ Lohse, *Martin Luther's Theology*, 298, 306.

⁸¹⁸ Lazarus Spengler "Brief Datum Sonntag 7 September 1533," quoted in J. K. Ohlau, "Neue Quellen zur Familiengeschichte der Spengler, Lazarus Spengler und seinen Söhne" *MVG N* 52 (1963/64), 243. *In Summa Gott will herr und maister sein und pleiben und uns durch dise straf ursach geben, zu ime zu schreien und ine fur unsern ainigen helfer zuerkennen.*

⁸¹⁹ Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Feeling: Shaping the Religious Emotions in Early*

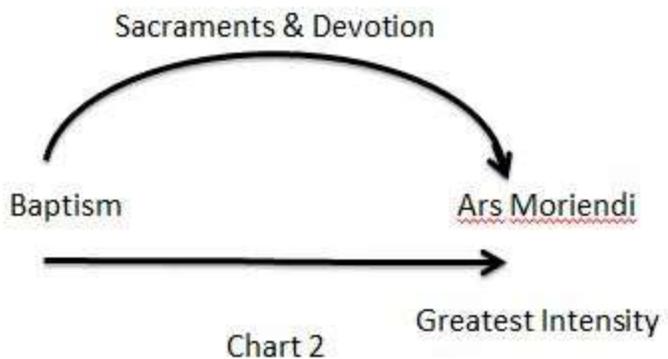
the afterlife was complex. In Catholic theology, the soul went immediately to hell, purgatory or heaven. Luther believed in a form of soul-sleep until the Last Judgment when it was decided whether each individual was among the



faithful; he occasionally also alluded to souls going directly to heaven.⁸²⁰ No matter how the timeline worked, death was not to be feared by people of faith and reconciliation was not to be doubted.

The Theological Arch

The distinct soteriology of the Catholic and Lutheran confessions should not be undervalued as their respective



understanding of salvation impacted the cult of death and death preparation in Nuremberg. I will, however, point to the essential theological arch apparent in both positions:

Life in the Church began through the cleansing of original sin in baptism, spiritual health was maintained through proper devotion at regular intervals, and right relationship with God at death was essential for reconciliation. (Chart 1).

Modern Germany (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 195-1; Rittgers, *Reformation of Suffering*, 8; Reinis, *Reforming the Art of Dying*, 257.

⁸²⁰ Craig Koslofsky, *The Reformation of the Dead: Death and Ritual in Early Modern Germany, 1450-1700* (London: MacMillan Press, 2000), 36-37. Catholics were inconsistent also their about the afterlife. Some scholars spoke of a repose in the bosom of Abraham until the last judgment.

I argue that this arch's general shape is what guided religious practice in both confessions although the means to achieve reconciliation varied. As disease placed the Christian closer to the threshold of the deathbed, the importance of his or her spiritual condition grew in intensity. (Chart 2). Religious practice in the leper and syphilis hospitals reflected regular maintenance. They were sick and vulnerable, and as such, their spiritual state was important, but they were not necessarily close to death. In contrast, religious practice during plague outbreak was far more intense. For both religious confessions, the proximity to the deathbed sparked the need for proper relation with heart, mind, and body, as the soul prepared for eternity.

Almsgiving & Charitable Donations

The fundamental relationship between the city center and the hospitals in the sixteenth-century had deep medieval roots. The sick and the healthy of Nuremberg had a symbiotic relationship. Endowments of hospitals, under the category of *Gotteshäuser*, were opportunities for wealthy patrons to help their own souls while also displaying their largess to the community. These endowments were replete with altruistic rhetoric; they were founded “out of brotherly love”⁸²¹ for the “poor limbs of Christ,”⁸²² as their “spiritual and bodily aid.”⁸²³ The worse the state of the physical bodies of these poor limbs, the more urgent was that state of their souls.⁸²⁴ As such, the care of the ailing bodies was a means to enhance the spiritual health of both patients and patrons.

A typical refrain used in endowments for the sick was that it was meant for “consolation

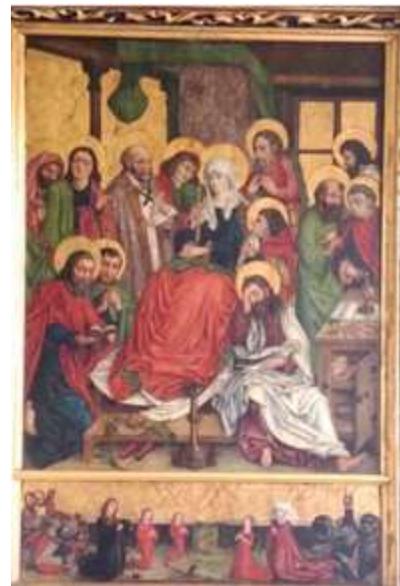
⁸²¹ StadtAN D1 Nr.2 46v.

⁸²² StadtAN A21 4 degree Nr. 031 1v.

⁸²³ StAN Rep 52II Verz. III Nr. 63.

⁸²⁴ Harrington, Joel. “Child Circulation,”103-120.

of their souls.”⁸²⁵ The hospitals provided patients with regular spiritual services: confession, preaching, the mass, and assurance of last rites before death. Patrons provided comforting images of saints that included both the model of saints’ suffering lives and a reminder of their spiritual advocacy on humanity’s behalf. One such image is on the epitaph for the wife of William Haller, depicting the “Dormition of Mary,” which hung in the Holy Cross Hospital complex since the late fifteenth-century. In this image, the pious Haller family, who endowed the hospital, look on as Mary lies on her death bed. The apostles look at Mary in grief. John is taking a candle as she releases it, representing her last moment. Her hands are clasped in prayer while Peter gives her last rites (Image: Haller).⁸²⁶ The scene displays a variety of spiritual benefits to be learned from Mary’s piety in face of death: it points patients to *Ars Moriendi*; highlights the cleansing power of the suffering body; draws focus to the spiritual potential of the deathbed; and reminds the expiring patients of the hope of heaven.⁸²⁷



Religious authorities issued indulgences to pay for the building of the hospitals and chapels. They promised to lessen years in purgatory for benefactors who aided these projects.⁸²⁸ With the foundation of the Holy

⁸²⁵ “Ordnung der Sondersiechen Frauen von St. Johannis 1422: StadtA, J VII 2, 28ff,” reproduced quoted in Ingrid Busse, *Der Siechkobel St. Johannis vor Nürnberg (1234 bis 1807)* (Nürnberg: Stadtarchiv, 1974), 172. *Irn selen zu nutze und zu trost.*

⁸²⁶ Picture with permission from Bertold von Haller located in Hallerarchiv und das Heilig-Kreuz-Archiv at Hallerschloss in Großgründlach.

⁸²⁷ Karant-Nunn, *Reformation of Feeling*, 192.

⁸²⁸ One example is St. Jakobus, “...something for the benefit to all necessities for the named chapel or alms giving to the poor sick, who are located next to the chapel, through the grace of the Almighty God and in the confidence of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, to each for each donating individual day 40 days grace in the Lord...” Walter Steinmaier, *St. Jobst: das Aussätzigenspital am Empfangsweg des Kaisers: Herrscherkult und Siechenhaus: Ein Beitrag*

Ghost Hospital, people could contribute to the “large indulgence” fund which was designed for those “to do good with Alms for the consolation of the sick” equaling 3060 days of indulgences. The payments enabled the patients “...to receive the Holy Sacrament, to pray for the souls of one who died in the hospital, [and] for the accompaniment to the burial with the speaking of the *Pater Noster* ...” proceeding both weekly and on every appointed feast day.⁸²⁹ A 1517 papal indulgence for the Lepraschau was granted to the city of Nuremberg and then subsequently translated and published for the city. The bull announced that in order to aid the Lepraschau special services would be held at St. Sebald’s and the Holy Ghost Chapel. During the service, “there was a box in which one could donate the recommended amount of one day’s food and drink, or if people could not contribute that much, they could still contribute their devotion and [upon] consideration or with the advice of their confessor [give] something to the box...” If members of the city participated, the same mercy that is shown to the lepers in Holy Week was to be shown to benefactors, namely, a “complete forgiveness of all of their sins.”⁸³⁰

In the middle ages, noble patrons bequeathed institutions to bring themselves spiritual merit, such as Queen Elizabeth of Tyrol for St. Johannis in the thirteenth-century.⁸³¹ However, there was a shift in post-Black Death experience of charitable bequests; wealthy patrons progressively invested their money *in memoria*.⁸³² Instead of giving many small sums to multiple

zum Stadtausbau unter Karl IV. und zum Spitalwesen der freien Reichsstadt Nürnberg (Nuremberg, Mabase, 2006), 23.

⁸²⁹ Ulrich Knefelkamp, *Das Heilig-Geist-Spital in Nürnberg vom 14.-17. Jahrhundert Geschichte, Struktur, Alltag* (Nuremberg: Selbstverlag des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt: Nürnberg, 1989), 272. *wer den Siechen Trost selbst und Gutes tut mit Almosen, Wer dabei ist, wenn jemandem die Hl. Sakramente im Spital gereicht werden, wer fuer die Seele eines im Spital Verstorben betet, wer mit zum Begraebnis geht und ein Paternoster spricht...*

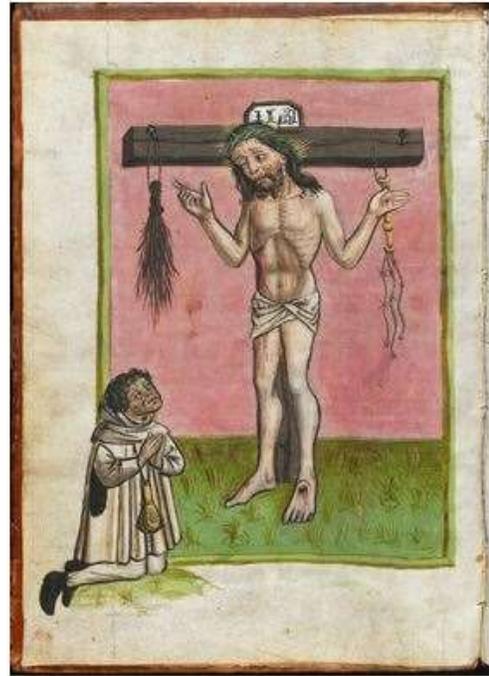
⁸³⁰ StadtAN A6 Nr. 69.

⁸³¹ Busse, *Der Siechköbel St. Johannis*, 37. St. Johannis set up as a kind of confraternity under the German Orders.

⁸³² Samuel Kline Cohn, *The Cult of Remembrance and the Black Death: Six Renaissance Cities*

institutions, they created large endowments in their families' names. The primary donors to Nuremberg's hospitals became Nuremberg's own city patricians, whose names were known by the patients.

These large donations transformed the institutions into *bürgerliche Spitäler* or citizen hospitals. Reciprocally, the hospitals began giving priority to their own inhabitants instead of outsiders.⁸³³ The most outstanding of Nuremberg's hospitals was Holy Ghost Hospital, endowed by



Conrad Gross in 1339. It was one of the largest centralized hospitals of its age. An image shows the patrician and his wife, Agnes Pfinzing, endowing the chapel with a dove, a symbolic depiction of the Holy Ghost. It reads, “the praiseworthy hospital of this city endowed by Conrad Gross- for the consolation of the poor and suffering sick and everyone in between together for mercy...”⁸³⁴ For the lazaret, a Nuremberg patrician Conrad Toppler left 160 G to be used for the spiritual benefit of the city. Sigmund Beßler, Conrad and Lienhard Marstaller, and Sebald Schreyer directed the funds by endowing a lazaret for plague victims.⁸³⁵ The Imhoff, Tetzl, Kress, Schreyer, Tücher, Nützel, Volkheimer, Graser, Pfinziz, Ebner and Haller family names

in *Central Italy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 2.

⁸³³ Ulrich Knefelkamp, “Stadt und Spital im späteren Mittelalter. Ein struktureller Überblick zu Bürgerspitälern süddeutscher Städte“ in *Städtliches Gesundheits- und Fürsorgewesen vor 1800*, ed. Peter Johanek (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2000), 38-39; Siegfried Reicke, *Das deutsche Spital und sein Recht im Mittelalter* (Stuttgart: Enke, 1932), 53-55.

⁸³⁴ Michael Diefenbacher, *650 Jahre Hospital zum Heiligen Geist in Nürnberg 1339-1989: eine Ausstellung des Stadtarchivs Nürnberg 9. November-1. Dezember 1989*. Nürnberg: Selbstverlag der Stadt Nürnberg, 1989.

⁸³⁵ StadtAN A21-2 Nr. 116 1r.-1v.

appear commonly in epitaphs and large endowments across Nuremberg's late medieval landscape. Images of these patrons filled devotional triptychs, altars and other media indicating their families' role in the charity at that location.⁸³⁶

Individuals purchased mortuary masses from charitable houses in the same manner as they would have from religious orders. For example, on New Year's Day the leprous women of St. Johannis participated in a vigil and a soul mass for Bertold Richenacker, a knight from Meckhawssen and his wife who donated 72 *lb. heller* for the prayers and candles at their graves. In addition, Richenacker donated 52 *lb. heller* for the highest church official available to pray the vigil and read the mass.⁸³⁷ The utility of the sick was not limited to being passive recipients of alms, but rather, the sick were expected to pray actively for the souls of their benefactors and for the health of the community. Plague victims in St. Sebastian's, even in their weak and vulnerable state, were still described as being "useful and pious."⁸³⁸ St. Leonard's leper house was founded for the women to "serve the Lord our Father, the more and the more diligently."⁸³⁹ In the French House, leaders were to "ask in the fear of God that the sick, broken-out individuals, who were accepted into the hospital, be diligent in continuous prayers, owed obedience, order, patience, and cleanliness."⁸⁴⁰

The prayers of the foreign lepers in the Lepraschau were also requested. Lepers were

⁸³⁶ Christine Seidel, "Die Siechköbel vor den Mauern Nürnbergs" (Master's Thesis, University of Erlangen-Nürnberg, 1984), 41. The council often tried to check the power of the individual families. Such was the case when Gabriel and Hans Teztel attempted to build a grand chapel as a memorial to the soul of their deceased father at St. Peter and Paul's leperous house; but they were only allowed to endow an altar to be attended by priests from St. Lorenz.

⁸³⁷ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 90r.-90v.

⁸³⁸ StAN D15 S14 Nr 15 1r.

⁸³⁹ Seidel, "Die Siechköbel," 24. "Die Frauen unserm Herrn dienen, desto mehr und desto fleissiger."

⁸⁴⁰ StadtAN A6 Nr. 298 *Die krancken gebrechlichen personen/ welche ins Laz auf und eingenomen werden/ sollen sich zu forderst aller Gottes furcht/ steten gebets/ schuldigs gehorsams/ zucht/ gedult und sauberkeit befleissen.*

believed to be particularly close to God. Their disease was regarded as experiencing the suffering of Christ unceasingly in their bodies; therefore, their prayers were thought to be particularly efficacious (See Image: Jesus and Leper 2). Caroline Rawcliff contends, “the real, suffering leper stood for the Everyman, his diseased body personifying both human sin and the potential for redemption.”⁸⁴¹ Lepers were seen as living out their cleansing purgatorial fires on earth. They were, in a sense, the walking reminder of death. Like the art motif, the *dance of death*, they pointed to death’s ever presence.⁸⁴² As the lepers were escorted out of the city at the end of the Lepraschau, they were admonished to pray for their fellow participants, the city council, the benefactors of the event and for the whole city.⁸⁴³

The change in the theology of the post-Reformation period reflected both a departure from, and continuity with this late medieval system of charity. Theologically, the reformers took away the salvific nature of endowments. The Reformation directly attacked the cult of death, abolishing good-works salvation, purgatory, indulgences, and mortuary masses. The new theology still required charity, but it was wrapped in a new package. Money was to be given with the understanding that it did not contribute to the donors’ salvation. Because of faith in Christ’s redeeming work, the devout were to give “out of brotherly love in Jesus Christ, which should come to the aid of his neighbor.”⁸⁴⁴ Reformers encouraged small donations in centralized penny boxes.⁸⁴⁵

In 1526, the council made a swift, pragmatic move to convert some contested

⁸⁴¹ Rawcliffe, *Leprosy in Medieval England*, 112.

⁸⁴² Elina Gertsman, “Visualizing Death,” 73.

⁸⁴³ StadtAN A21 4 degree Nr. 031 8r.

⁸⁴⁴ StadtAN D1 Nr. 2 1543 46v.

⁸⁴⁵ Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual: An Interpretation of Early Modern Germany* (London: Routledge, 1997), 161.

endowments to the general alms fund.⁸⁴⁶ It wanted to centralize management and dispersal of these accounts; however, the council did not wish abolish the old donation practice as long as donations were made in accordance with correct theology.⁸⁴⁷ Contributions by patrons continued; and the former system remained intact.

Pious bequests to particular institutions remained common in the post-Reformation period. In a 1536 will, one patroness left 25 G for the syphilis house at St. Sebastian's for needs such as bedding.⁸⁴⁸ In the post-Reformation period, patients were also still required to pray for their benefactors. In the French house, patients were to show gratitude to God, the Almighty, to "the Honorable Council, to the [appointed] overseer, also to all those ordered to serve them for their good."⁸⁴⁹

To aid a neighbor's body, was to aid one's own soul. For the donors, the sick and diseased provided an opportunity to give to the "poor limbs of Christ," thereby ameliorating their own souls toward reconciliation. The growth of the bürgerliche spitaler provided an added element of synergy. The services were provided by members of the city for members of the city, exemplifying what Berndt Moeller has identified as a sacred community.⁸⁵⁰ This religious need to protect the vulnerable was not lessened after the Reformation. Almsgiving, for example, was no longer salvific; however, charity was seen as an outgrowth of genuine faith in God and love

⁸⁴⁶ StadtAN B 35 Losungamt A123a. Although the Sebastian and French house were technically provided for through centralized alms offices, old mass endowment remained throughout the sixteenth-century. In 1596, the council finally dispersed funds meant for these masses; endowments included approximately 860 G for the French house and 4004 G for the plague hospital with additional pledged funds for years of plague.

⁸⁴⁷ Robert Jütte, *Poverty and Deviance in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 107.

⁸⁴⁸ StadtAN E 56/II Nr. 171.

⁸⁴⁹ StadtAN A6 Nr. 298 *gegen Gott dem Allmechtigen/ udo dann einem Erbarn Rathe/ derselben Pfleger/ auch allen den ihenen so ihnen zu gutem zudienen verordent/ danckbarlich erzeugen.*

⁸⁵⁰ Bernd Moeller, *Imperial Cities and the Reformation: Three Essays*, trans H. C. Erik Midelfort (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), 90.

of neighbor.⁸⁵¹ The interlocking relationship between the healthy and sick is what guided the religious culture of hospitals in the sixteenth-century.

In sum, the vertical relationship between man and God was experienced temporally. In both the Catholic and Lutheran confessions, religious ministrations were doled out in a predictable, time-structured manner. These beliefs and practices continually oriented man to God, through the Church, and prepared the soul for eternity. The horizontal relationship between the individual and neighbor was a crucial bond that held the space of Nuremberg together as a communal unit. The people of Nuremberg prepared for a good death by enabling and participating in the good death of their neighbors. We will see in the upcoming sections how these two overarching principles guided spiritual care in Nuremberg's contagious disease hospitals.

II. The Hospital Chapels

Each hospital mentioned above had its own chapel intended for the spiritual services of its patients. Within the chapel, inhabitants viewed religious images, worshiped, confessed their sins, and received the sacraments. The chapels followed the structure of the Church calendar, and like normal churches, had particular days of devotion. The space of the chapel and its courtyard was a place of interaction between the sick and the healthy.

Chapels for the Lepers

⁸⁵¹ Ole Peter Grell, "The Protestant Imperative to Christian Care and Neighborly Love," in *Health Care and Poor Relief in Protestant Europe, 1500-1700*, ed. Andrew Cunningham and Ole Peter Grell (London: Routledge, 1997), 46.

The chapels for leper houses were intended specifically for their religious service in their separated space. In 1179, the Third Lateran Council ordered that lepers were to be separated from the healthy community, not sharing the parish churches or the adjoining burial grounds. The council further required bishops to furnish these separated communities with their own chapels, priests, and cemeteries.⁸⁵² In the same regrettable logic of “separate but equal,” the chapels in the leper communities were designed to exclude the lepers from the healthy while not cutting them off from spiritual services.

As lepers were generally not incapacitated by their illness, their religious devotion mirrored that of the normal liturgical year. Lepers were required to say specific prayers and observe fasts and feasts throughout the year.⁸⁵³ The inhabitants were provided with confessors and priests and were called upon to be “obedient in all spiritual things.”⁸⁵⁴ Each of the houses had specified holidays when they were allowed to beg in the city and at their houses. This begging supplemented their income and gave the healthy opportunities for small meritorious almsgiving.⁸⁵⁵ In the late fifteenth-century, when the men at St. Peter’s conducted their weekly begging, they were instructed to think of all that had been endowed in their house, and when they used the goods donated to their house, they were to think on the Lord’s suffering. As the leper collected his livelihood, he was to praise God and speak of his honor.⁸⁵⁶

Although most of the early histories of the leper chapels are lost to time, they were generally built in the early fourteenth-century during the early growth of Nuremberg. The oldest,

⁸⁵² R. I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe, 950-1250* (Oxford, UK: B. Blackwell, 1987), 52-53.

⁸⁵³ See Chapter 5 on food. Christine Seidel, “Die Siechköbel vor den Mauern Nürnbergs” (Master’s Thesis, University of Erlangen-Nürnberg, 1984), 24.

⁸⁵⁴ StadtAN A 21-2 Nr. 150 172v.

⁸⁵⁵ Seidel, “Die Siechköbel,” 33; Steinmaier, *St. Jobst*, 173-182.

⁸⁵⁶ StadtAN D7 A 1a 1486 10v., StadtAN D7 A 2a 11v.-12r.

St. Johannis, outside of St. Jacob and St. Katherine, was the most popular patron saint for leper houses in Southern Germany.⁸⁵⁷ Its original chapel was built sometime in the mid-thirteenth-century under the auspices of the Teutonic Knights.⁸⁵⁸ Herman Schürstab endowed a chapel for the St. Leonard leper community in 1317 under the authority of St. Lorenz Parish.⁸⁵⁹ St. Peter grew in relation to St. Martha Pilgrim House, one of the city's oldest charity houses. The chapel was built as early as 1313, but the endowment was later taken over by the Haller family.⁸⁶⁰ In 1465, it was separated from St. Martha's and placed under the authority of the more central St. Lorenz. The early history of St. Jobst was intertwined with St. Jakob Pilgrim Chapel; St. Jobst's Chapel was erected in 1317, but it was subsequently moved when the city walls were expanded in 1356.⁸⁶¹

Once established, the most important function of the chapels was the administration of the sacrament of the Mass. According the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, all Christians needed to confess and attend mass at least once a year. The Mass was the most important contact point between the clergy, laity and the divine. In the central parish churches, Masses were held regularly throughout each day at the high altar and side altars. In St. Sebald, there were four sung and eighteen spoken Masses and in St. Lorenz there were three sung and nine spoken masses.⁸⁶² On specified days, the Mass was accompanied by incense, an array of liturgical colors, and

⁸⁵⁷ Ingrid Busse, *Der Siechköbel St. Johannis vor Nürnberg (1234 bis 1807)* (Nuremberg: Stadtarchiv, 1974), 36-37.

⁸⁵⁸ Busse, *Der Siechköbel St. Johannis*, 38.

⁸⁵⁹ Seidel, "Die Siechköbel," 24; StadtAN A21-2 Nr. 150 173r.

⁸⁶⁰ Seidel, "Die Siechköbel," 40.

⁸⁶¹ Seidel, "Die Siechköbel," 33; Walter Steinmaier, *St. Jobst: das Aussätzigenspital am Empfangsweg des Kaisers: Herrscherkult und Siechenhaus: Ein Beitrag zum Stadtausbau unter Karl IV. und zum Spitalwesen der freien Reichsstadt Nürnberg* (Nuremberg: Mabase, 2006), 71.

⁸⁶² Schlemmer, *Gottesdienst*, 240.

accompaniment by choir boys.⁸⁶³

The late medieval Church was suspicious of lay people receiving the Eucharist. The Church limited lay people to one element, the bread; priests drank the wine for all of their souls.⁸⁶⁴ While people did not always take Communion, even the sight of the Mass was thought beneficial for the soul. A bell rang the moment the bread became the Host of Christ's body; a priest held up the Host so that it could be publicly viewed. The doors of St. Sebald, St. Lorenz, and the Holy Ghost were left open during Mass so that the people could look in. Johannes Cochlaeus wrote in 1523 that in Nuremberg, the pious laity could be seen daily gathered at the doors of the churches watching the sacrament and the intercession of the priests.⁸⁶⁵

Inhabitants in Nuremberg's leper houses were required to confess and take the sacrament "at least" every quarter year.⁸⁶⁶ Melanchthon's audit of St. Leonard's leper house confirmed the payment to a pastor, Johannes Naß, of 35 G a year for these services; he was paid 8.5 G per Mass with an additional Gulden for wine.⁸⁶⁷ A chaplain came from St. Sebald's weekly and performed the Mass for the women in St. Johannis. Since 1329 and 1347, St. Sebald's records confirm that the chaplain was sent out to St. Johannis.⁸⁶⁸ In the early sixteenth-century, some benefactors bequeathed extra masses for the lepers. Johannes Werner specified a yearly mass that was to be

⁸⁶³ Schlemmer, *Gottesdienst*, 240-241.

⁸⁶⁴ Lee Palmer Wandel, *The Eucharist in the Reformation: Incarnation and Liturgy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 15. This suspicion toward the laity later became a rallying cry for the laity during the Reformation. Wandel also argues the term Mass is a Post-Tridentine notion. She stresses the gathering aspect of the Mass instead of the proper liturgy and receiving of the Eucharist.

⁸⁶⁵ Schlemmer, *Gottesdienst*, 242.

⁸⁶⁶ StadtAN D7 A 2a 27r.; StadtAN D7 A 1a 8v.

⁸⁶⁷ StadtAN D1 Nr. 913. From 1527, they specify one Gulden for wine each quarter. It is unclear whether this wine is for the mass or for his personal consumption.

⁸⁶⁸ Busse, *Der Siechkobel St. Johannis*, 38. By 1505, the priest from Sebald's could be a lead pastor, or an assistant. StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 89r.

celebrated not for anyone other than the inhabitants of the leper house.⁸⁶⁹

Ordinances specify the four times that the lepers of St. Johannis and St. Leonard's were to take the Sacrament as Christmas, Easter, the Tuesday of the celebration of Mary's Assumption, and All Saints' Day.⁸⁷⁰ The ordinances requested that the female inhabitants be particularly desirous of devotion on those days.⁸⁷¹

In preparation for the mass, the lepers were to be preached to and admonished. During the Schau, preachers spoke about the suffering of Jesus, and taught the lepers how to "carry the suffering of our Lord Jesus with him home."⁸⁷² The preacher's job was to lead the sick to "confession and contrition."⁸⁷³ The priest then heard their confession. Within the leper houses, the *Siechmeister* were entrusted with spiritual oversight of each house's inhabitants. In St. Peter's, for example, he was instructed to ensure "with great cautiousness" that the lepers confessed and took the sacrament at the proper time. At the Schau, lepers were given special confession and absolution by the power of the bishop.⁸⁷⁴ If some lepers did not wish to confess, they were given some form of a sign to indicate their refusal. Those declining confession were still provided charity, but they could not take the sacrament or be given the official signifying leper's cloth.⁸⁷⁵

Ordinances required lepers to approach the altar in an orderly and respectable manner. These ordinances echo the Church's general suspicion of the laity and the Sacrament. Eight days before taking the Sacrament, the *Siechmeister* at St. Peter's admonished and lectured the

⁸⁶⁹ Busse, *Der Siechköbel St. Johannis*, 75-76.

⁸⁷⁰ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 84v.; StadtAn A 21-2 Nr. 150 172r.

⁸⁷¹ StadtAn A 21-2 Nr. 150 172r.-173v.

⁸⁷² StadtAN A21 4 degree Nr. 031 18v. *das leyden unsers herren mit In heim süllen tragen.*

⁸⁷³ StadtAN A21 4 degree Nr. 031 8r.

⁸⁷⁴ StadtAN A21 4 degree Nr. 031 6v.

⁸⁷⁵ StadtAN A21 4 degree Nr. 031 7r.- 7v.

inhabitants that each man was to make himself presentable so that he could be sent on that specified day. He warns them that there would probably be lag time in addition to their religious services; he reminded them that they were to be diligent in this time because they were answerable to God.⁸⁷⁶ The ordinance reflected the need for decency when taking the sacrament; this orderliness was also upheld in the Schau. There, the lepers were provided water to wash their hands.⁸⁷⁷ The ordinances for the Schau also specified how the lepers were to file into the chapel in a respectable, orderly fashion.⁸⁷⁸

Although lepers took the Sacrament, which was a symbolic statement of their belonging in the body of Christ, even at the altar there were layers of separation between the lepers and the healthy. A papal letter to authorities of St. Johannis explained how the leper women were to take Communion. It specified that while leper women were at Mass, the doors of the chapel were to remain shut, and the Mass was not to be sung or announced with a bell.⁸⁷⁹ After taking the Sacrament, all of the leper houses ordinances specified that the lepers were to be given a meal of bread and fish. This was the symbolic meal that was also served by city patricians at the Lepraschau on Holy Thursday, and also after Communion.⁸⁸⁰ The highly symbolic food was perhaps an illustration, intended to remind them of Christ's bounty. As Jesus doled out enough bread and fish to feed the five thousand, so too did he have enough of his body for them.

While it is impossible to know if these spiritual services were always perfectly conducted, the spiritual services intended for the hospitals were arguably better than those for the other laity. Nuremberg took prodigious care that the lepers received Communion a minimum of

⁸⁷⁶ StadtAN D7 A 1a 8v.-9r.

⁸⁷⁷ StadtAN A21 4 degree Nr. 031 19r.

⁸⁷⁸ StadtAN A21 4 degree Nr. 031 17v.

⁸⁷⁹ Busse, *Der Siechköbel St. Johannis*, 65.

⁸⁸⁰ StadtAN A21 4 degree Nr. 031 7v.-8r.

four times a year. Their souls were not dead, as the possibly fictitious ritual of the “Leper’s funeral” would have us believe.⁸⁸¹ The afflicted were a walking reminder of humanity’s sin and the imminence of death; they were condemned to experience the decomposition of the body while still living, walking, and breathing; and yet, their souls were still capable of redemption. These souls were the responsibility of the city’s parishes and devout patricians, but the services in the chapels would not remain restricted to the lepers alone. These leper chapels also provided spiritual care for the swelling suburban areas and farmlands.

Chapels as Connection between Sick and Healthy

While the chapels were originally meant to provide separate spiritual care, they actually served as connection points between the sick and the healthy. The chapel was a place of indirect contact as lepers could passively benefit from the donations to their chapels, but also directly as religious celebrations such as the *Kirchweih* were explicitly designed to integrate the sick and the healthy. As the liturgical year unfolded, Church events were hosted in the chapels for the surrounding populations. While lepers could not go into the enclosed chapel at the same time as the healthy community, they could enjoy the open air courtyard that was a meeting place for all whom the chapel served.

By the mid-fifteenth-century, records indicate that these chapels had become sites of full religious practice. In 1505, there were four Masses held weekly in St. Johannis. There were altars to Dorothy, Cecilia, Walbergis, and St. Ursula and the 11,000s virgins.⁸⁸² An inventory lists a

⁸⁸¹ Moore, *The Formation* 58-60. See the discussion of the “Leper Mass” in Chapter 1.

⁸⁸² This section will mostly follow St. Johannis because Ulrich Starck uniquely documented the inventory and church practices of the chapel. Ingrid Busse, *Der Siechkobel St. Johannis vor Nürnberg (1234 bis 1807)* (Nuremberg: Stadtarchiv, 1974), 78. For St. Johannis in 1440, two altars were consecrated by the Bishop of Bamberg; in 1457 a vestry with the altars. In 1456, a

rich array of liturgical instruments including silver chalices, monstrances, gold crosses, jewelry, silver images of Jesus and John the Baptist, wood sculptures of saints, a triptych, candle holders, small and large candle lighters, mass books, Psalters and song books. The small chapel also had a variety of cloths for specified purposes from altar coverings to the priests' vestments. The pieces of cloth represented the many colors of the Church calendar; they were red, white, brown, and black with materials from wool to silk. Some cloths were embossed with patrician family insignia: Imhof, Tetzl, Volkheimer, Maissenhamer and Haller.⁸⁸³ St. Johannis probably took on particular importance because of its increasing connection to burial in the sixteenth-century. Each one of these chapels had its own history and patrons who helped establish them, but the history of the chapels all took the same course in serving their surrounding communities.⁸⁸⁴ Large endowments provided funds for permanent clerical positions in the chapels. The number of quasi-parishioners grew to the extent that religious leaders encouraged some of the chapels to split into new, fully formed parishes.⁸⁸⁵ However, the council feared competing interests so close to the walls. In 1338, the council requested and was granted a papal order that proscribed any new parishes within a three or four-mile ring of the city without special permission from the pope or bishop.⁸⁸⁶ By the end of the fifteenth-century, all four leper houses and chapels were

sexton was endowed to carry the chalice, bread and the liturgical vestments.

⁸⁸³ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 Lxxvi r.- Lxxviii r.

⁸⁸⁴ In the late medieval church, believers were instructed to go to their parish church for the Mass on Sundays, but the instruction was not strictly enforced. By 1517, Pope Leo X ordered that people were not required to attend services at their specified parish church. Parishioners could simply go to any church where Sunday's duties and mass was performed. This practice was extremely important in Nuremberg because it had a disproportionately small number of parishes for its population. Schlemmer, *Gottesdienst*, 242.

⁸⁸⁵ Christine Seidel, "Die Siechköbel vor den Mauern Nürnbergs" (Master's Thesis, University of Erlangen-Nürnberg, 1984), 25.

⁸⁸⁶ Busse, *Der Siechköbel*, 38-39. Seidel, "Die Siechköbel," 41. The Tetzl family had not been allowed to build a grand church at St. Peter's because it would have competed with the interests of St. Sebald and Lorenz. Nuremberg's patrician families kept balance so families such as the

even more firmly under Nuremberg's central administration with the chapels continuing to grow in a quasi-parish form.

The liturgical year in these chapels marked time for both the sick and surrounding congregants. Like the churches inside the cities, each chapel had particular veneration days. For example, St. Jobst's chapel held special Masses and celebrations for St. Jobst, St. Barnabus, St. Jacob, and Pentecost.⁸⁸⁷ These chapels, perhaps in a less grandiose way, partook in the liturgical rituals and celebrations of city churches. For example on January 3rd, St. John the Evangelist's day, the Johannes altar was lit, and a special Mass was sung with incense in St. Sebald's.⁸⁸⁸ However, the night before in St. Johannis chapel, a Mass was held with choirboys from the city. Throughout the couple day celebration, a priest said three ordered Masses, and a high Mass, and ordered six to ten measures of wine for the people.⁸⁸⁹ On April 29th, the celebration of the beheading of John the Baptist, choirboys sang the Vespers in St. Johannis Chapel. In the morning, a priest sang a Mass and whatever else the overseer ordered.⁸⁹⁰

The Corpus Christi procession, held in late May or early June, has drawn attention in early modern scholarship as being a visual and spatial representation of the "body of Christ" and the "body social."⁸⁹¹ This once-a-year procession marked the boundary of the parish and aligned the whole of the community in social rank.⁸⁹² The Corpus Christi procession was typified by

Fuggers could not take over too much of the city.

⁸⁸⁷ "St. Jobst Ordnung," in Johann Christian Siebenkees and Johann Carl Sigmund Kiefhaber, *Materialien zur Nürnbergischen Geschichte* (Nuremberg: Schneider, 1792), 1: 414.

⁸⁸⁸ Schlemmer, *Gottesdienst*, 174.

⁸⁸⁹ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 84v.85r.

⁸⁹⁰ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 87v.-88r.

⁸⁹¹ Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 243-250.

⁸⁹² Barbara B. Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross: Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth-Century Paris* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 33-48. Lee Palmer Wandel, *The Eucharist in the Reformation: Incarnation and Liturgy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 40;

heavy participation of the laity, choirboys (who represented angels), and the carrying of a monstrance containing the host under a decorative canopy. All of these facets can be seen in Nuremberg's festivity. The canopy was a depiction of the "heavens" that showed the events' celebratory connection to Pentecost.⁸⁹³ While not participating in the central festivities of the Corpus Christi, there were other processions throughout the city which mirrored the central event.

St. Johannis had its own Corpus Christi procession. It was celebrated with great fanfare for over a week. On the previous Wednesday, the sacrament was consecrated and set into the monstrance with the heavens above.⁸⁹⁴ This silver monstrance with heavenly depiction is mentioned in the house's inventory.⁸⁹⁵ For eight days, four choirboys sang the Mass with a high official from St. Sebald.⁸⁹⁶ In that same week, the overseer ordered more priests and school boys to sing liturgy throughout the canonical hours of the day. Another priest was also to be paid 12 d. to say a Vigilia over those at rest in the St. Johannis Cemetery.⁸⁹⁷ The ordinance stated that the monstrance was to be carried by many *volk* or laity around the church until the overseer was satisfied.⁸⁹⁸ A few young apprentices returned the heavens, and the event concluded with fancy

Andrea Löther, *Prozessionen in spätmittelalterlichen Städten: Politische Partizipation, obrigkeitliche Inszenierung, städtische Einheit* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1999), 123.

Andrea Löther conducted a comparative study of Corpus Christi processions in Nuremberg, Erfurt, and Cologne. She argues that Nuremberg processed an exceptionally small pathway between its central sites of authority (i.e., Sebald, Lorenz, Holy Ghost Hospital, and the City Hall) which attested to the centralized power of the city council. Andrea Löther, *Prozessionen*, 85-99.

⁸⁹³ Schlemmer, *Gottesdienst*, 225-226. Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 255.

⁸⁹⁴ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 92r.

⁸⁹⁵ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 Lxxxvi v.

⁸⁹⁶ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 92r.

⁸⁹⁷ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 93r.

⁸⁹⁸ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 92v.

food for the participants, including the lepers.⁸⁹⁹ The celebration at St. Johannis gives an example not only of the central role the chapel played for the lepers and surrounding inhabitants, but it also gives a sense of the grandiosity of the event, which would place it in the cross-hairs of the Reformers a few years later.⁹⁰⁰

On large feast days, such as Christmas and Easter, lepers and surrounding peasants celebrated on the courtyards of these houses feasting on specialty foods such as lamb, sweet bread, and wine.⁹⁰¹ On St. John's Eve, June 24th, each of the chapels, not just Johannes, celebrated the occasion with specialty foods and seasonal fruits.⁹⁰² On All Souls' Day, the traditional day beggars were let into the city to collect alms. The lepers and the surrounding farmers joined together on the courtyard of St. Johannis for wine and special bread rolls.⁹⁰³ At St. Johannis on Christmas, three Masses were sung by four choirboys and a vicar.⁹⁰⁴

Some special processions from the city center ended at the leper house chapels as well. St. Mark's Day was a three-day long celebration around April 25th. The event was a large supplication procession in which a cross was initially carried between the parish churches and the Holy Ghost Chapel. They processed with a reliquary, choirboys adorned in specific celebratory robes, a candelabrum, and banners.⁹⁰⁵ After processing between the parish and the Holy Ghost, they moved out of the city. In this supplication procession, they blessed the field to bring fruit. From St. Sebald, they went to St. Johannis and St. Jobst, and from St. Lorenz, they

⁸⁹⁹ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 93r.-94r.

⁹⁰⁰ Andrea Löther, *Prozessionen*, 302-307.

⁹⁰¹ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 85v.-86r.

⁹⁰² StadtAN D7 A 1a 22r.

⁹⁰³ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 88r.

⁹⁰⁴ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 89v.

⁹⁰⁵ Schlemmer, *Gottesdienst*, 180-181. *Wandelkerzen* were thick candles in the candelabra used to indicate the change of the elements before Sacrament. Carl Geiger, *Dienst der Akolythen und Laien-Ministranten bei der stillen Convent-Messe, bei dem feierlichen Amte der hl. Messe und bei der feierlichen Vesper* (Munich: Lentner, 1860), 9.

went to St. Leonard and St. Peter. Thus, from the two central parish churches, they went to the four leper houses, as the four consecrated corners at the farthest reaches of their city. The event closed at the leper chapels, where a celebratory office was sung.⁹⁰⁶

Many of these religious celebrations did not seem to directly refer to the inhabitants of the hospitals. The Holy Ghost Hospital, for example, which was so central to processions and celebration, rarely involved its patients. Provisions in its ordinances state that on those days the inhabitants were to be given a 1/2 semmel bread and 1/2 seidel wine for *Gotzleichnam*, God's corpse.⁹⁰⁷ Bread and wine were not merely food staples but were highly symbolic as the medieval church distributed blessed bread in place of the full Sacrament.⁹⁰⁸ This dole of bread and wine was a common practice in leprosy houses, especially when religious festivities occurred in which they were not participants.

While many of these religious celebrations did not directly include the inhabitants of the leper houses, others such as Kirchweih were designed to involve both the sick and the healthy. Each of Nuremberg's central parish churches had a high-Kirchweih, which was a major festival with jugglers, fires and fancy foods. The chapels, however, had a number of smaller Kirchweihen a year: St. Jobst had five, St. Johannis three, St. Peter's four, and the Holy Ghost six.⁹⁰⁹ These celebrations generally consisted of extra bread and wine served in the courtyard.

St. John's Eve, celebrated on June 24th, marked mid-summer with a sacred fire that was dedicated to Christ on the cross. In St. Lorenz, the fire occurred on the altar and included a silver

⁹⁰⁶ Schlemmer, *Gottesdienst*, 272-273. The participants were offered housing there because there was no official procession back into the city.

⁹⁰⁷ Knefelkamp, *Das Heilig-Geist-Spital*, 265-267.

⁹⁰⁸ Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 73.

⁹⁰⁹ Ulrich Knefelkamp, *Das Heilig-Geist-Spital*, 271. Steinmaier, *St. Jobst*, 24. In the post-Reformation period, Osiander reduced the number of celebrations to only one per chapel per year.

gilded image of St. John; presumably this image celebrated John's devotion to Jesus during the Crucifixion.⁹¹⁰ Another location where this event was celebrated was the St. Johannis chapel complex, where the celebration of St. John's Eve merged into its large Kirchweih on the following Sunday. Ulrich Starck, patrician overseer of St. Johannis, reported the fancy food and the presence of the city lords and choirboys. There were at least four Masses ordered, but the overseer could order up to six or seven. Peasants from the surrounding area and lepers ate bread rolls, ground meat, roasted meat, meat soup, young chickens, fish and wine.⁹¹¹ Stark reported that even "he, himself" drank wine there. Although the Kirchweih celebrated the founding of the chapel and its namesake, the lepers, the intended beneficiaries of the building, were never forgotten.

While the lepers may have eaten the same foods as the healthy population on the courtyards, it is important to note that the layers of separation were still carefully observed. The movements of bodies would have followed prescribed modes of interaction. Lepers were not allowed to speak to the healthy directly, as their breath and raspy voices were thought to be poisonous. They had to wear layers of protective clothing, and they were explicitly forbidden from eating directly with the healthy. Chapel courtyards were acceptable venues for lepers to beg; although the normal layers of separation were still required. The juxtaposition of the healthy with the diseased in these locations became symbolic of the unity of the sick and healthy in Christ.

The leper chapels mirrored the central churches in ritual and rhythm. The disease of leprosy moved slowly allowing their religious practices to have a similar pace to that of patients

⁹¹⁰ Schlemmer, *Gottesdienst*, 182. The schoolmaster and choir boys sang the afternoon and evening mass. Matins was followed by a sermon and the opening of altar pieces.

⁹¹¹ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 86v.-88r.

in non-contagious disease hospitals and normal parish churches. The leper house chapels served a vital role in central city events such as the St. Mark's Day supplication procession. Although, separation measures were never compromised, lepers shared the same spiritual encompassment of late medieval religious life.

St. Sebastian Plague Hospital Chapel

St. Sebastian Plague Hospital was established in the same late medieval religious context as leper houses. The institution's founders argued for its creation by pointing to the spiritual needs of the plague victims. They maintained that priests struggled to provide proper rites in times of distress, and that through proper administration, religious personnel could attend to the "the sick within it with all Christian rites, hearing confession, preaching, and holding Mass."⁹¹² When the hospital was erected, its accompanying chapel was quite grand. It was described by the neighboring margrave as being 70 *Shuhe* tall and made *fest* of stone.⁹¹³

A number of bishops and cardinals commissioned indulgences for the building of the hospital, chapel and altar. The indulgences were for the "...chapel and house also to cultivate or convey good work, goodness, or service to the poor and sick... at the time of pestilence..."⁹¹⁴ Funds were also redirected from Nuremberg's other religious houses including St. Lorenz, Our Lady Church, The Holy Cross, St. Martha's Pilgrim House, and Holy Ghost Hospital.⁹¹⁵

The endowment called for the provost and priests of both parish churches to be in charge

⁹¹² StadtAN A21-2 Nr. 116 8r.

⁹¹³ Kasimir Brandenburg-Ansbach Markgraf and Georg Brandenburg-Ansbach Markgraf, *Libellus summarius der Herrn Markgrafen zu Brandenburg contra Bürgermeister und Rat der Stadt Nürnberg, ihre Spitalpfleger, auch andere ihre Bürger daselbst. In Sachen das Lazarett und die neuen Gebäude belangend* (Speyer, 1534), ii v.

⁹¹⁴ StadtAN A21-2 Nr. 116 54r.-v. *Cappellen und haus/ auch den armen unnd krancken einich gutig wreck guteit oder dinstperkeit zuvoran zu zeitten der pestlantz ertzeuten oder mitteilen.*

⁹¹⁵ StAN Rep 52b. Nr. 292.

of the spiritual services in the chapel. Sebald Schreyer, the executive administrator of the institution, called on Laurentius Tücher and Marchus Hirßvogel, who were both doctors of law and priests, to provide religious personnel for the chapel. These men came from Nuremberg's highest patrician families. At that time of the endowment, they held positions of provost and priest in the parish churches.⁹¹⁶ Both religious clergy and secular personnel were hired to fill the positions in the hospital and chapel and to hold "in all of the measures as if in a usual house or hospice."⁹¹⁷

Special masses were required on St. Sebastian's Day and on Mary's feast days: Assumption, Conception, Purification, and the Annunciation, as Mary and St. Sebastian were the most prominent plague intercessors.⁹¹⁸ Masses were also endowed by members of the community.⁹¹⁹ One indulgence required someone "to read the mass-or to order a Mass read" so that the inhabitants might benefit from hearing it.⁹²⁰ In Schreyer's intended design, he seems to distinguish between the larger stone St. Sebastian's chapel and a small chapel within the hospital. He recommended this smaller chapel as a little chamber to be built in the middle of the passage so that patients could see it from their rooms. It was designed so that whoever wanted to see the Mass could see it, as grace could be conveyed by the mere sight of the Mass. Passages were to be

⁹¹⁶ StadtAN A21-2 Nr. 116 8r. Schreyer also mentions that they needed to work together as the two parishes were known for competing with each other.

⁹¹⁷ StadtAN A21-2 Nr. 116 8v. The hospital was required to recruit from the Benedictine house of St. Egidien, but that house was dissolved after the Reformation.

⁹¹⁸ StadtAN A21-2 Nr. 116 62r. The Venetian hospital, which served as the model for Sebastian, was required to have mass every Sunday, each holiday or each celebration day connected to Mary or St. Rochus Crawshaw 127.

⁹¹⁹ StadtAN B35 Losungamt Nr. A 122a that which funds were converted in the late sixteenth-century to merely helping the poor suffering from plague in the hospital.

⁹²⁰ StadtAN A21-2 Nr. 116 54r.-v. *auch den so meß darinne lessen ^oder meße darinnen zelesen bestellen oder horen lesen^ Auch den so den nutz und frumen des haus und Cappellen/ auch der krankne darinnen.*

left open and with “window work,” high visibility of the of the chapel would be maintained.⁹²¹

The history of the St. Sebastian’s Chapel is obscure because the original plan was enacted in a time of transition. The endowments were written before the Reformation, but the hospital was not fully functional until three years after the Reformation. Its history is further obscured by the chapel’s subsequent destruction. The large stone church was most likely supplanted by a small internal chapel or altar.⁹²² The references to the “St. Sebastian” chapel or hospital continue long after its destruction, and suggest a smaller chapel or perhaps refer to its lingering spiritual significance. It is also impossible to say whether the chapel would have served the surrounding inhabitants in the same way as the leper house chapels. During plague outbreak, the chapel would have obvious been avoided by outsiders, but as plague only broke out every 10 to 12 years, there would have been more non-plague years when the chapel could have functioned normally.⁹²³ At the very least, the spiritual administrations of St. Sebastian were planned to serve the French House in addition to the plague hospital, which meant that it would have functioned in non-plague years.⁹²⁴

⁹²¹ StadtAN A21-2 Nr. 116 70-71r.

⁹²² At first glance it would appear that the Council did not rebuild the St. Sebastian stone chapel because of the theological changes of the Reformation, but the council rebuilt all the other religious structures after the Second Margrave’s War including the neighboring Holy Cross Hospital and Chapel, as well as St. Johannis Chapel. There may have been some theological application of not needing the indulgences from the cardinals and bishops that originally built the structures, but it seems more likely that the city did not rebuild the chapel because it was a military liability due to its proximity to the wall and could provide protection for enemy soldiers during a siege. It is possible that the gigantic complex was built with wood, so it could be easily burned down as Nuremberg defenders retreated behind the walls.

⁹²³ Some evidence shows that a chapel for St. Sebastian was rebuilt during the seventeenth-century as a part of the French House. “Ausschnitt aus einem Stadtplan von Hans Bien” reproduced in Bernd Windsheimer et al., ed. *St. Johannis: Geschichte eines Stadtteils* (Nuremberg: Sandberg, 2000), 72.

⁹²⁴ In 1527, the Margrave complained about the two houses and church Kasimir Brandenburg-Ansbach Markgraf and Georg Brandenburg-Ansbach Markgraf, *Libellus summarius der Herrn Markgrafen zu Brandenburg contra Bürgermeister und Rat der Stadt Nürnberg, ihre*

The foundation of the St. Sebastian's chapel echoed the same medieval religious schema as the leper chapels: it provided an opportunity for the patricians to display their largess, to endow Masses for the benefit of patients or donors, and to acquire prayers from its patients. Even in a chapel designed for victims of a rapidly fatal disease, the provision of the Mass and other spiritual services were to reflect the liturgical calendar.

In all of these chapels, priests and choir boys from the central parish churches filled the sites with colors, incense, and songs throughout the year. The chapels for plague, syphilis and leprosy provided an important venue for sick and healthy bodies and souls to connect. The chapels were also a sacred space from which structured religious service could be provided to the separated inhabitants.

III. Daily and Weekly Devotion

Aside from annual celebrations of holidays, patients in the leper houses were reminded to look to God with weekly, daily, and hourly spiritual practices. Like other religious houses in the Middle Ages, prayers marked the hours in their days. The most robust description of the daily prayer routine is found in St. Leonard's 1317 foundational ordinance:

The Siechmeister should speak or pray all 12 daytimes before the sick [instructing] how they should live in all things God-fearingly, that God be praised and his service increased. Each of you, who are capable in the face of disease, should speak and pray:

Prime, 24 *Pater Noster* and 24 *Ave Maria*;

Lauds, 6 *Pater Nosters* and 6 *Ave Maria*;

Terce, 7 *Pater Noster* and 7 *Ave Maria*;

Sext, 7 *Pater Noster* and 7 *Ave Maria*;

Spitalpfleger, auch andere ihre Bürger daselbst. In Sachen das Lazarett und die neuen Gebäude belangend (Speyer, 1534), my page 7.

None, 12 Pater Noster and 12 Ave Maria;

Vespers, 12 Pater Noster and 12 Ave Maria;

Compline, 7 Pater Noster and 7 Ave Maria;

In Sum 77 Pater Noster and as many Ave Maria. If one of you is desirous of more devotion, she should pray, as much as she desires, [in addition] each sick woman should pray with obedience to all the above mentioned day hours.⁹²⁵

This rigorous routine may have been a bit optimistic at the founding of the house; the number of hourly prayers in these houses tended to wane throughout the late medieval period. In St. Jobst, the earlier regulations specify 12 Pater Noster and Ave Maria daily, but later it was changed to 6 Pater Noster and 3 Ave Marias prayed in the morning and evenings.⁹²⁶ One fourteenth-century ordinance for St. Jobst called for them to pray 7 Pater Noster and Ave Maria daily in addition to the Creed and the breve Ave Maria in the evening.⁹²⁷

Outside of the canonical hours, the two mealtimes were the fixed prayer times. The Siechmeister at St. Peter's, for example, was with great *frischtigkeit* or with timely intervals, "to admonish [them] and uphold at each and every meal time, in the morning and at night, before it and after it to pray, and to speak nothing indecorous [in] such time, rather to thank God alone

⁹²⁵ StadtAN A21-2 Nr. 150 172r.

item die meisterin scholl die stehen dazu halten daß sie alle tag 12 tagzeit sullen sprechen und peten und wie sie furbaß süllen leben an allen dingen gotfurch tiglich das got loblich sey und gottes dinst gemeret werd item ir idliche sol sprechen und peten die vor kranckheit mügen am erstenn xxiiii pater noster und xxiiii ve maria fur die metten und für laudes metten vi pater noster und vi ave maria item fur preym {presumably 7 pater nosters was rubbed out} und vii ave maria item fur sext vii pater noster und vii ave maria item fur none xii pater noster und xii ave maria item fur vesper xii paternoster und xii ave maria item fur complet Syben pater und vii ave maria Summa macht lxxvii pater noster und als vill ave maria will ir eyne vor andacht mer peten das mag sie thun und bey der gehorsam soll ein idliche siche die tagzeit alle tag sprechen als obgeschriben stett.

I only calculate 75 in this list.

⁹²⁶ Steinmaier, *St. Jobst*, 166. In St. Jobst, the Ave Marias were prayed with a lit oil lamp Steinmaier, *St. Jobst*, 172.

⁹²⁷ Johann Christian Siebenkees, *Materialien zur nürnbergischen geschichte* (Nurnberg: A.G. Schneider, 1792), 1: 414.

and to pray for all things that come from him.”⁹²⁸ These prayers provided daily doses of devotion which kept their inhabitants thinking on God and reconciliation between special liturgical celebrations and the receiving of the Sacrament every quarter year.

In the post-Reformation period, daily and weekly religious practices were still required. One of the distinguishing features of the spiritual life of lepers after the Reformation was the increased focus on Sunday worship services. In St. Johannis and St. Peter’s Ordinances, the sick themselves were responsible for ensuring that every Sunday and holiday they should secure the preaching of God’s Word.⁹²⁹ Therefore, they were to employ their own preacher who was to be diligent in both summer and winter to preach in the “vorkirche,” before the church; “in this way no one should be excluded.”⁹³⁰ The preaching, whether from the front of the church or from the inside of the church, was done in a way that people outside the doors could hear. This practice was both consistent with and a departure from late medieval practice. It was consistent with the practice of viewing of the Mass through open doors, and it was a departure in the sense that the spiritual services for the lepers were previously given behind closed doors. This example shows the evangelical emphasis on hearing rather than seeing.⁹³¹

In daily practice, prayer continued to be a feature of the table as inhabitants thanked God

⁹²⁸ StadtAN D7 A 1a 8v. *darzu vermanen unnd halten zu einer yedlichen dischzeit, zu morgens und zu nachtes, davor unnd dar-nach zubeten, unnd nichts unzimlich imm solcher zeit zureden Son-der allein got dem herren zu danck=enn, unnd zu biten fur alle die von dann in solichs herkommet.*

⁹²⁹ The houses show the presence of weekly preachers instead of merely quarterly priestly services. The pastor from Megeldorff on for his yearly wage for preaching at St. Jobst pay R10/-/- StAN D4 239.

⁹³⁰ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 1v.; *soll in diesen fall niemandt außgeschlossen sein.* If one went begging without hearing the Sunday sermon, the individual was punished with living on bread and water that week. StAN Rep 52a Nr. 183 1r.

⁹³¹ This practice was consistent with lepers losing their special spiritual status in the post-Reformation period. Their prayers were no longer particularly efficacious. The Reformation coincided with social pressures of increasing poverty that prompted evangelical reformers to open up the leper houses to non-leper residents.

for their daily bread. Before and after meals, prayers were to be “spoken in full form” with “hands devoutly laid together.”⁹³² Before eating: “Each individual waits on you, Lord, and you give to them your food when it is their time, you open your mild hand and manage everything that lives by [your] pleasure.”⁹³³ They then said the *Our Father* followed by, “Lord God, Heavenly Father, bless us and this, your gifts, which we receive from your goodness through Jesus Christ our Lord Amen.”⁹³⁴ After the meal, they were to thank the Lord particularly for meat that was eternally worthy. It refers to how God gave feed to the livestock. A lion, crow, or steed did not grow in strength if it did not please him. After saying another Our Father, they prayed, “We thank you Lord God Father through Our Lord Jesus Christ for all of your blessing. [May] you live and reign in eternity, Amen.”⁹³⁵ The table cloth was not to be picked up until after the prayer of gratitude.⁹³⁶

Post-Reformation ordinances gave the inhabitants a larger variety of prayers to be spoken throughout the day. These devotional practices were particularly vital in light of the fact that the Reformation ended some of the special celebrations in which the leper chapels participated, such as the Corpus Christi procession. Post-Reformation ordinances placed little significance on the sacraments; instead the crucial spiritual service centered on hearing scripture and sermons. Despite these departures in the ordinances, financial records still indicate that lepers took

⁹³² StadtAN D5 Nr. 9 1v.- 2r./ StAN Rep 52b Nr. 183 11v. *und zu nachts vor und nachdem essen mit zusammen gelegten henden andechtig diese folgende gebet zu sprechen.*

Our Father is written here in English to denote the vernacular in the post-Reformation period.

⁹³³ StadtAN D5 Nr. 9 2r./ StAN Rep 52b Nr. 183 11v. *Aller aigen warten auf dich her und du gibst Innen ihre speiß zu seiner zeit du thust dein mitle handt auf und fertigest alles was lebt mit wollgefallen.*

⁹³⁴ StadtAN D5 Nr. 9 2r./ StAN Rep 52b Nr. 183 11v. *herr gott himlischer vatter segne uns und diese deine gaben die mir von deiner mitlen gute zu uns nemen durch Jesum Christum unsern hern Amen.*

⁹³⁵ StadtAN D5 Nr. 9 2v../ StAN Rep 52b Nr. 183 12r. *Wir dancken dir herr Gott Vatter durch Jesum Christum Unsern herrn fur alle deine wolthat der du lebst und regierst In ewigkait Amen.*

⁹³⁶ StadtAN D5 Nr. 9 2v.-3r./ StAN Rep 52b Nr. 183 12r.

Communion every quarter year, and it was accompanied by their traditional meal of bread and fish. Holiday and Kirchweihen with specialty foods are lessened in number, but they remained consistent with pre-Reformation traditions.⁹³⁷ While the religious practices still held much of the same form, post-Reformation ordinances show the distinctive evangelical emphases on regular, active faith that called believers to hear it, understand it, and live it out. The focus on faith, as the crucial element for salvation, becomes increasingly important as the deathbed nears.

Daily Practice in the Plague Hospital

Standard religious practice in the plague hospital mirrored that of other hospitals in the post-Reformation period. It was designed to be a steady stream of spiritual services at proper intervals. For example, in the French House, the chaplain was required to preach to the men on Wednesday and the women on Friday. On Sunday, he was to preach and read the gospels.⁹³⁸ The intensity of the practices increased due to the dire nature of the disease; the plague hospital exercised even more preventative spiritual practices (i.e. *ad hoc* consolation of patients) in addition to daily and weekly services.

The head pastor of the lazaret was the *Lazarettpfarrer* or *Pestilarius*. His role was administrative, but he also performed the sacrament, heard confession, preached consolation and in rare cases presided over marriages and baptisms.⁹³⁹ Religious personnel were normally young men fresh out of university. These young men accepted the job to help the suffering people

⁹³⁷ StadtAN A 26 Rep 90 Nr. 109 1563. The quarter year Communion and the payment for the services of the priest remained intact. In 1563, the quarterly estimate for the St. Johannis services of the priest, wine, and fish that the lepers traditionally ate after mass, was 20 Gulden.

⁹³⁸ StAN Rep 52b Nr. 234 161r.

⁹³⁹ The pastor functioned as a high administrator and an informer of any embezzlement of higher officials. The Hofmeister also complained about the pastor drinking too much wine and of other dereliction. StadtAN B19/1 484. For an example of birth and marriage, see Crawshaw, *Plague Hospitals*, 127-128.

toward God, but they also knew that it was a good stepping stone for their careers.⁹⁴⁰ Little is known about how the selection process for religious personnel functioned. In one example from Geneva in 1564, the Company of Pastors selected one of their own, Jean Le Gagneux, for a preaching post in their pest-house, but he refused. It is possible that his appointment was either the foment or retaliation for his long-standing dispute with the Company of Pastors.⁹⁴¹

The council ordered that the lazaret-pastor “should in all of his offices be diligent and do what he should, and conduct them gladly...”⁹⁴² The spiritual services for patients were specified at three different times: on arrival, as usual, and upon death.⁹⁴³ The priest was ordered to oversee the process of new patient evaluation and acceptance into the lazaret. When plague patients entered the hospital, religious personnel were to admonish them to repent and instruct them on salvation. The individual was then to take the sacrament. This precaution was made presumably to prepare for a sudden death. In 1585, when the pastor was too weak to fulfill his job, a lowly unqualified prayer leader performed Communion in his place. The council bristled at this practice and immediately sent a qualified Martinus Beriar to perform the duties of the sacrament until the pastor’s recovery.⁹⁴⁴ The pastor was also to preach, read the Gospels and Epistles every Saturday or alternatively every Friday, particularly to the incoming patients.⁹⁴⁵

The lazaret plague hospital employed a *Vorbeter* or prayer leader. He maintained the consistent flow of prayers and scripture reading although not officially ordained. He was paid a

⁹⁴⁰ Daniel Christensen, *Politics and the Plague in Early Modern Germany* (Saarbruecken: Verlag Dr. Mueller, 2008), 185.

⁹⁴¹ Geneviève Gross, “Eine Fallstudie der Bildung von Geistlichkeiten – Die Genfer *Compagnie des Pasteurs* im XVI. Jahrhundert” paper presented at a colloquium at Leibniz Institute for European History, Mainz, Germany, December 17, 2013, 5.

⁹⁴² StadtAN B19/1 484 14v. *Ist der pfarrer in seinen Ambt Vleissig und thut was er thun soll sint und halt() man gern...*

⁹⁴³ Schreyer 8v.

⁹⁴⁴ StadtAN B19/1 484 32-33.

⁹⁴⁵ StAN Rep. 52b Nr. 61 63r.

paltry sum of 50d. a week which was the same as a lowly errand runner.⁹⁴⁶ As in the leper houses, the lazaret's routine followed a morning/evening meal time structure. The prayer leader was to say the morning and evening blessing, followed by Our Father and the Creed. Before and after meals, he read little table prayers (*tischgebetlein*) and a chapter from the Bible. Prayer leaders were to speak from the hallways, as the sick person's room was seen as too dangerous to enter.⁹⁴⁷ However, in the absence of the chaplain they could speak consolation to the patients.⁹⁴⁸

The reformers feared that sickness could lead to despair as it reminded the believer of the death and damnation that humanity deserved. Pastors in all of Nuremberg's hospitals were called to preach consolation, *Trost*. For Luther, just as sin brought death into the world, Christ's expiation of sin on the cross is what provided the sick with the utmost hope and consolation.⁹⁴⁹ Pastors, chaplains, and prayer leaders were directed to preach comfort to individuals who desired it. They were to minister "with God's *vortrösten*" and "in their [the patients'] names console and speak good over them."⁹⁵⁰ Ronald Rittgers argues that Lutheran pastors were "skilled physicians of suffering souls."⁹⁵¹ We will return to the theme of *Trost* later in the chapter, but its significance here is that this preaching of consolation in the hospital could not be separated from the standard daily prayers, scripture, and preaching. Implicit within the preaching *Trost* is the "proper" understanding of the Gospel. Man fundamentally deserved damnation, but Christ gave

⁹⁴⁶ StadtAN D15 S14 49 1575. For example Hans Erber was paid for 14 weeks 2/6/16. He lodged with the pastor (StadtAN B19/1 484).

⁹⁴⁷ Johann Heinrich Kirchberger, *Aphorismi, seu canones medicinales de peste d. Ist: kurtze Erinnerungspuncten von d. Pest; wie man es mit e.u. andern, im Pesthauß oder auff d. Land, zur Pestzeit halten soll* (Nuremberg, 1625), Aii.

⁹⁴⁸ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 14r.

⁹⁴⁹ Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Feeling: Shaping the Religious Emotions in Early Modern Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 195-196.

⁹⁵⁰ StAN 52b 234 161r. *Mit Gott vortrösten*; StAN 52b. Nr.9 63r. *inn Iren Nähm trösten und guts vorsag(en)*.

⁹⁵¹ Rittgers, *Suffering*, 17.

protection on the cross, allowing the believer to be both a creature of damnation and a recipient of imputed righteousness (*simul justus et peccator*).⁹⁵² It was only through this proper understanding that faith could be achieved; these religious services did not hold power *ex opere operato*.⁹⁵³

The religious services in these hospitals were conducted weekly, daily, and hourly. This repetitive devotion was seen in both pre- and post-Reformation Nuremberg. It is not surprising that the daily prayers were connected to food. Food was the material entity that sustained living bodies at regular intervals, manna from heaven. In the post-Reformation period, these devotional routines focused on scripture, preaching and devoutly spoken prayer. The continual dose of the Word was viewed as vital to the patient's spiritual regeneration and proper orientation to God, either in life or at the deathbed.

IV. In Times of Emergency

As explained earlier, *Ars Moriendi* was the general template for preparing the individual for death. During times of emergency, preparation of the soul was vital for achieving salvation.⁹⁵⁴ While throughout this chapter I have attempted to balance the changes in religious

⁹⁵² Heiko Augustinus Oberman, *The Dawn of the Reformation: Essays in Late Medieval and Early Reformation Thought* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1986), 153.

⁹⁵³ Lohse, *Martin Luther's Theology*, 57-58.

⁹⁵⁴ This chapter will focus on orthopraxy. Historians have debated the veracity of late medieval Christian piety. English historian Keith Thomas went so far as to assert that it was not until after the Reformation that Europe was even Christianized over more native magical cosmological explanations. These scholars point to the immense spectrum of late medieval rituals, devotional writing and religious objects, the market for these materials displays the desire of culture to accomplish health and reconciliation. Recent scholarship has demonstrated that the early modern world was full of "magical" potions, soothsayers, wise women and amulets. The various "supernatural" elements which were widely practiced in the early modern period did not belong to a separate world of magic, but belonged to a common "economy of the sacred." Robert W. Scribner, *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany* (London:

practice due to the Reformation, I will highlight some of those changes in this section. Dire circumstances necessitated correct theology whether one was Protestant or Catholic. This section will focus on religiosity during periods of the greatest emergency in the early modern world: plague. During the threat of plague, the general form of religious preparation grew in intensity and speed since plague could suddenly bring anyone to their deathbed.

Plague and Late Medieval Religiosity

Historians have observed plague outbreak as precipitating some of the most intense expressions of religious devotion.⁹⁵⁵ Parishioners were called to repent, confess and focus on Christ's salvific suffering on the cross. A "Mass for the Pestilence and for the Walking Dead," shows the sinner's relationship with God, "Oh Lord God, who does not desire death, but in the repentance of the sinner, we ask, turn your people graciously to you, so that they will be found devout; take away from them the punishment of your wrath."⁹⁵⁶ Late medieval religiosity was typified by ritualized actions believed to stimulate God's gift of grace to the world.

A book published in pre-Reformation Nuremberg, *Versehen leib und seil: eer und gutt*, (On the care of the body and soul [to] Honor and good) explains how best to prepare for death when one is sick, particularly with pestilence. Its preparations include spiritual admonitions,

Hambleton Press, 1987), 1. This chapter will focus on official religion and not on the range of folk methods for dealing with disease. Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971); Jean Delumeau, *Catholicism between Luther and Voltaire: A New View of the Counter-Reformation* (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox Press, 1977).

⁹⁵⁵ Horrox, *The Black Death*, 95-100; Justin Stearns, "New Directions in the Study of Religious Responses to the Black Death" *Historical Compass* 7 (2009): 1-13. See also Samuel Kline Cohn, *The Cult of Remembrance and the Black Death: Six Renaissance Cities in Central Italy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

⁹⁵⁶ "Missa 'Recordare'" reproduced in Thilo Esser, *Pest*, 390. *her gott, der du nicht begerest den todt, sunder die buß der sinder, wir bytten, ker gnadlich zu dir dinem volck, so sie gegen dir andechtig erfunden werden; nym hynweg von inen die straft deins zorns.*

dietary and medical aid, and how to write a testament for “a praiseworthy and holy farewell to the world.”⁹⁵⁷ It informs the reader that they can hope in God and in the remedies set forth in the book to save the body--but prepare the soul in any case. The soul must be prepared lest one is met with “unspeakably great heavy pain and the multifaceted agonies of purgatory or perhaps can be damned for the rest of eternity.”⁹⁵⁸ It then focuses on confession of every little instance of sin. Traditionally the confession would focus on the Ten Commandments and avoidance of dying in mortal sin.⁹⁵⁹

In the face of pestilence throughout the city, processions were used to consecrate a particular space by means of spiritual chanting and prayers. The early theology of procession came from Bernard of Clairvaux, Johannes Belet, and Wilhelm Durandus. Processions were conducted by monastic orders on special feast days, such as *Candelmas*, in gratitude to God, or for funerals and or supplication.⁹⁶⁰ As we have seen in Nuremberg, on St. Mark’s Day, people of the city processed to the leper houses for supplication.

In Jacobus de Voragine’s *Golden Legend*, the story is told that Pope Gregory the Great led a chanting procession during the plague of 590. Archangel Michael appeared sheathing his sword as a symbol that God’s anger was appeased.⁹⁶¹ In Nuremberg in 1488, the council “had

⁹⁵⁷ *Versehen Leib seil eer und gutt* (Nuremberg, 1505), Aiii r.

⁹⁵⁸ *Versehen Leib*, Aii v. *unaußsprechlichen grossen schweren peyn/ und manichveltige beschwerdt des fegfewers/ odor villeicht der ewige() verdamnus uberig sein müg.*

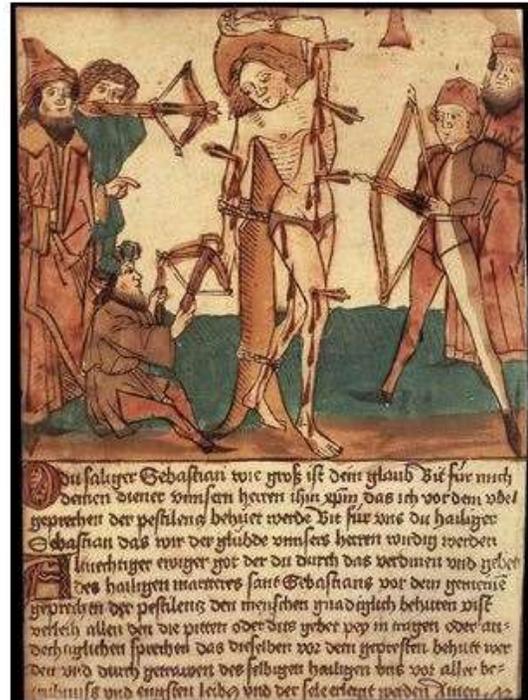
⁹⁵⁹ Reinis, *Reforming the Art of Dying*, 26-29. Reinis has an extended version of *Versehung* that seems to give a more in-depth evaluation of the spiritual aspect of preparation.

⁹⁶⁰ Andrea Löther, *Prozessionen in spätmittelalterlichen Städten: Politische Partizipation, obrigkeitliche Inszenierung, städtische Einheit* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1999), 41-49.

⁹⁶¹ Horrox, *The Black Death*, 95. 1507 three holidays for the Crowning of Maximilian; 1509 Sept 21 War in the Empire; 1509 Aug. 29 War in the Empire; 1511 Aug. 1 Weather; 1511 Every Saturday from 6 Aug. To 30. Sept. Weather; 1518 May 31 Weather; 1518 Juni 15 No reason stated; 1519 Feb. 4 Death of Maximilian; 1519 All Fridays Better Airs; 1522 Jun. 9 Weather; 1522 June 24 Journey of Charles V, Peace; 1522 July 25 Weather; 1523 All Fridays from the end of June through 30 Sept. Weather; 1524 Jan. 25 Weather, Earthquake, inauspicious

commanded that the priests should to line-up a procession and in the church set up special godly office and Mass all this week, on account of dangerous and worrisome airs.”⁹⁶²

The intercession of the saints was key to directing the Christian soul to Christ. As seen in the Ars Moriendi images, saints were the strongest advocates on the threatened individuals’ behalf. Logically, plague saints became a central fixation of devotion during an outbreak. In



Nuremberg, there were over 60 discernible plague saints.⁹⁶³ Mary was usually depicted as interceding to Christ on behalf of humanity; in Plague devotional broadsheets she is depicted as hiding the faithful underneath her mantel as God rains down his arrows or spears.⁹⁶⁴

The most famous plague saint in the post-Black Death period was St. Sebastian. Sebastian was martyred during the Diocletian persecution in Rome in 288. He was tied to a tree

developments Andrea L  thar, *Prozessionen*, 361-362

⁹⁶² Johannes M  llner, *Die Annalen der Reichsstadt N  rnberg von 1623*, edited by Michael Diefenbacher, and Walter Gebhardt (Nuremberg: Im Selbstverlag des Stadtrats, 2003) 3: 93. *hat auch den Gaistlichen befohlen, das sie wegen der geferlichen und sorglichen Leufften alle Wochen eine Procession anstellen und in den Kirchen ein sonderbares g  ttliches Ambt und Me   anstellen solten.*

This was repeated four years later when they were requested in response to the dangerous airs and for the inflation that was overtaking the city. Johannes M  llner, *Die Annalen der Reichsstadt N  rnberg von 1623*, edited by Gerhad Hirschmann and Walter Gebhardt (Nuremberg: Im Selbstverlag des Stadtrats, 1984) 2: 93, 129.

⁹⁶³ Charlotte B  hl, “Die Pestepidemien des ausgehenden Mittelalters und der Fr  hen Neuzeit in N  rnberg (1483/4 bis 1533/34)” in *N  rnberg und Bern: Zwei Reichsst  dte und ihre Landgebiete; neun Beitr  ge*, eds. Urs Martin Zahnd and Rudolf Endres (Erlangen: Universit  tsbund Erlangen-Nuremberg, 1990), 160.

⁹⁶⁴ Esser, *Pest*, 244.

and shot with arrows, but he did not die immediately; later, he was clubbed to death by Diocletion's men.⁹⁶⁵ His cult grew early as he was considered to be the third saint of Rome (after Peter and Paul) by Gregory the Great. By the twelfth-century, the later part of his story was eclipsed, and his image is solely depicted by the piercing arrows. Sebastian was adopted as a plague saint as his body took the arrows that symbolized God's wrath.⁹⁶⁶ His image appeared on altar pieces, sculptures, illustrated manuscripts, and on broadsheets that were mass-produced as a new aid in the late fifteenth-century to lay devotion and prayer. "Oh Blessed Sebastian how great is your faith. Pray for me, servant of our Lord Christ, that I am protected before the evil break out of pestilence. Pray for us Holy Sebastian that we will be worthy of the vow of our Lord."⁹⁶⁷ (Image: Sebastian). Thilo Esser has argued that the cult of Sebastian shows the deep belief in the effectiveness of his protection from God's punishing arrows in late medieval culture.⁹⁶⁸ As we have seen throughout the chapter, St. Sebastian lazaret was named for this saint. The endowment book shows an image of Sebastian (now ruined) next to the coat of arms of the donors.⁹⁶⁹

⁹⁶⁵ Barker, "The Making of a Plague Saint," 90-91.

⁹⁶⁶ Baker argues that Sebastian spanned both the secular medical and religious views of plague. I am not convinced. Barker, "The Making of a Plague Saint," 98-104.

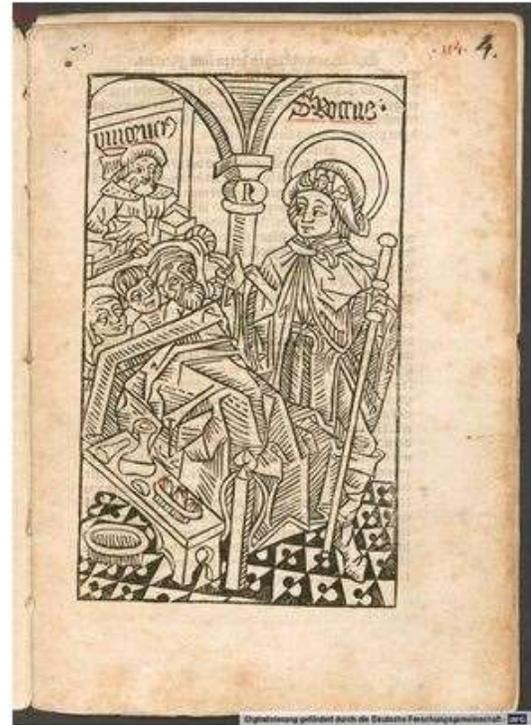
⁹⁶⁷ Hans Paur, "The martyrdom of St. Sebastian," Web Gallery of Art, accessed March 16, 2015, http://www.wga.hu/html_m/p/paur/martyrdo.html.

Du saliger Sebastian wie groß ist dein glaub Bit fur mich denen diener unsern herren ihn xpm, das ich vor den ubel geprechen der pestilena behuet werde bit fur uns due hailiger Sebastian das wir der glubde unnsers herren wirdig werden.

⁹⁶⁸ Esser, *Pest*, 259.

⁹⁶⁹ StadtAN A 21-2 Nr. 116 1r.

In the 1490s, the Imhoff family brought the cult of St. Rochus to Nuremberg. Rochus was popular in Venice, with which the Imhoff family had trade connections. Legend says that Rochus was born into a noble family in Montpellier, France at the beginning of the fourteenth-century. He bore a birthmark of a red cross across his chest. After the death of his father, he relinquished the riches of his devout parents and became a pilgrim. He made a pilgrimage to Rome, tending the sick in plague hospitals along the way. His prayers healed as he passed through cities, risking the



health of his youth to tend the sick in the hospitals. Eventually, he did fall sick. When it was discovered that he was ill in the hospital, he was ungratefully expelled from the hospital and subsequently banished from the city. He wandered into the woods where the dog of a local noble recognized his holiness. The dog brought him bread and licked his wounds, healing them. Rochus returned to Montpellier unrecognizable, where he was arrested as a spy. He sat in jail refusing to reveal his name for five years until his death. The community recognized the cross birthmark on the body. They venerated him as a martyr and saint.⁹⁷⁰

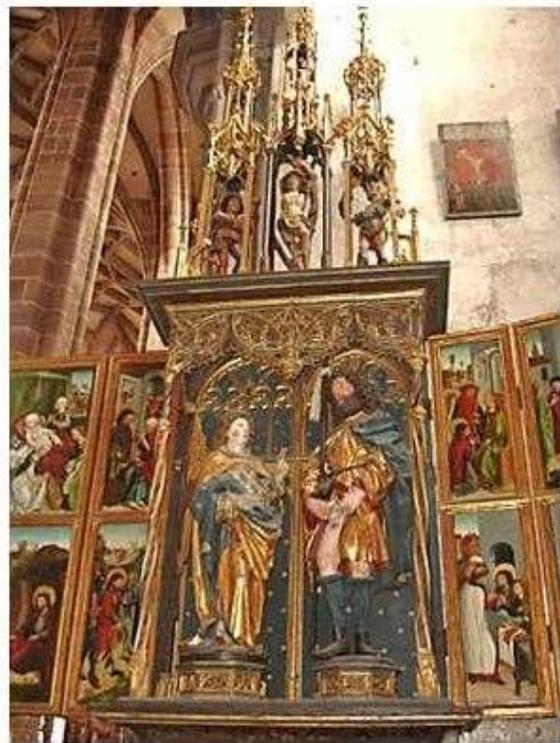
His cult gained momentum in the 1470s during an outbreak of bubonic plague in Venice. A plague broadsheet circulated around 1500 as a prayer to St. Rochus “A prayer to St. Rochus the helper in need. Blessed highborn confessed of God Holy Saint Rochus...and a special friend of God from strength on account of his chaste and virtuous life...earn health, grace and mercy

⁹⁷⁰ *Das Leben des heiligen herrn sant Rochus* (Nuremberg, 1484), 1r.

from God the Almighty.”⁹⁷¹ During this time, Francesco Diedo published his life story in *Vita Sancti Rochi*. A German version of the story first appeared in Vienna in 1482 and was published in Nuremberg two years later (Image: Rochus).

The most illustrious image of Rochus was on the St. Rochus altar in St. Lorenz Church.⁹⁷² The Imhoffs commissioned the altar. It was one of the main altars in the church, standing strategically across from the family’s pew.⁹⁷³ The centerpiece of the altar was a sculpture of St. Rochus with his messenger angel. He stands in his pilgrim clothes pointing to the iconic wound on his thigh. (Image: Rochus Altar).

A wealth of devotional literature, in similar manner to the *Ars Moriendi*, circulated in the late fifteenth-century. The single sheet broadsheets provided short prayers for those who could read and images of the suffering saints for those who could not.⁹⁷⁴ In the front image of Rochus’s life story, he blesses the souls of men who are lying in bed, afflicted by plague; the bed again was the threshold of death.



As the Mass in late medieval religiosity was the primary means of attaining God’s grace,

⁹⁷¹ Hans Baldung Grien, “Pestblatt, Nuremberg um 1500“ reproduced in Heinrich Dormeier, “St. Rochus, die Pest und die Imhoffs in Nürnberg vor und während der Reformation,” *Anzeiger des germanischen Nationalmuseums* (1985), 34.

⁹⁷² Dormeier, “St. Rochus,” 15.

⁹⁷³ Dormeier, “St. Rochus,” 51. Esser, *Pest*, 259-260.

⁹⁷⁴ Esser, *Pest*, 231.

individuals sought to acquire special grace in dangerous times by taking or viewing extra Masses. As with processions, since the fourteenth-century, votive Masses, Masses occurring outside the normal calendar in honor of a certain mystery or saint, were conducted during outbreaks of plague. One *Missa Recordare* reads, “Lord, we ask that you do not desire us to be lost with our sins, rather that we receive your Holy Sacrament protect us before the destruction of the walking death.”⁹⁷⁵ Special masses were given requesting the protection of Mary, Sebastian, and Rochus. Heinrich Dormeier’s work on the cult of St. Rochus shows that from its inception he was relatively popular. His feast days accrued donations that ranked fourteenth place out of 102 possible feast days; however, a few years later when plague outbreak threatened, donations on his feast days in St. Lorenz parish church outstripped donations given at Christmas, Easter, and even those associated with St. Lorenz.⁹⁷⁶

Historians, such as Paul Slack, have argued that plague brought complete societal collapse and cessation of normal religious practice, but during times of outbreak, people were more likely to seek religious guidance in the churches.⁹⁷⁷ This devotion was seen as a problem to early modern leaders who were trying to stop the spread of miasma. In his aphorisms, Johann Heinrich Kirchberger warned priests that sick people often came to church for confession, to hear the sermon, or to go to the altar; “because this sickness seizes and overcomes

⁹⁷⁵ “Missa ‘Recordare’” quoted in Esser, *Pest*, 390. *Herr, wir bitten, nicht wollest uns laßen verlorn werden mit unßeren sunden, sunder die do empfahen deyn heylige sacrament beschirm vor den verderbungen des gehen todt.*

⁹⁷⁶ Heinrich Dormeier explored the popularity of the Rochus cult in Nuremberg by examining the *Almosengefällbuch* from the parish church in the city, St. Lorenz. In 1484 and 1485, Rochus took fourteenth place out of 102 holidays. From 1484, the year that the *Rochusleben* was published, to 1494, the next year of major plague, between 12 lbs and 38 lbs were given for votive masses for St. Rochus in St. Lorenz. In 1492, the giving spiked to 27 lbs due to the completion of a new altar to St. Rochus. In that year, on the feast day of St. Rochus, more donations were collected than Christmas, Easter or the church’s patron saint St. Lorenz. Dormeier, “St. Rochus,” 14, 15.

⁹⁷⁷ Paul Slack, “Responses to Plague in Early Modern Europe: The Implications of Public Health,” *Social Research* 55 (1988), 444-446.

the people quite quickly.⁹⁷⁸

This coverage barely scratches the surface of late medieval religiosity during plague outbreak, but it sets the general tenor of spiritual need and provision when people were under the imminent threat. This religiosity reflects the need for emergency measures in public space, with processions and special masses, and at home, with devotional literature.

Reformation of Emergency

As the theology of salvation changed in the wake of the Reformation, religious practice around emergency situations of sickness also changed. Reformation theology argued that reconciliation was possible through the faith of the believer throughout their time of suffering, rather than suffering purifying the soul in the image of Christ.

Images of plague saints were still visible after the Reformation. The St. Sebastian Chapel was destroyed in the Second Margrave's war, but the Rochus chapel, outside the walls, and the altar, inside St. Lorenz, were never removed. Reformation preacher Andreas Osiander wanted to expung any of these "lying images" that hindered the preaching of the Word, but the council would not allow them to be removed. It was decided that images could remain but could not be integrated into the Mass, as though their veneration brought any additional power.⁹⁷⁹ St. Sebastian's mass endowments, like Nuremberg's other religious houses, were incrementally incorporated into the city's alms system.⁹⁸⁰ The new theology condemned almost all of the

⁹⁷⁸ Kirchberger, *Aphorismi*, Aiiii r. *Dann dise Seuch ergreiffet und überfellt die Leut sehr schnell.*

⁹⁷⁹ Dormier, "St. Rochus," 55.

⁹⁸⁰ Bridget Heal argues that the conservative nature of the Reformation allowed Nuremberg to condone images of Mary. I believe this principle could extend to the continued presence of the plague saints as well. Bridget Heal, *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Early Modern Germany: Protestant and Catholic Piety, 1500-1648* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 126-130.

tangible rituals that gave parishioners assurance of reconciliation with God in the face of death.

Nuremberg's pastors sought to bring consolation, *Trost*, with the publications of sermons in place of plague saints, processions, and votive masses. Lengthy sermons were to replace saint broadsheets in the home.⁹⁸¹ Wenceslaus Linck's sermons on the sick and suffering were published eight times; Spengler, the administrator and theologian, wrote two sermons with four editions; Osiander's, *Whether a Christian Should Flee from Plague*, was republished ten times; and Veit Deitrich in the 1540s published three sermons that had twenty additional editions.⁹⁸²

In Osiander's, *Whether a Christian Should Flee*, he admonished believers to contrition and faith. Faith in God was like the tiniest of fire on rotten wood. No amount of darkness could put it out. He advocated that if God struck down the faithful, then it was simply their time. If someone is sinful, there was no avoiding God; therefore, it was useless to fret before plague. For the believer, as David says in Psalm 91, God "will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge."⁹⁸³ As love of neighbor is the natural outgrowth of faith in Christ and an understanding of the grace given, he admonished his parishioners not to flee out of fear of plague, but to stay in the city and help the sick.⁹⁸⁴

Ronald Rittger argues that the historiography of plague undervalues Protestant theology because the new theology did not seem to offer the same wealth of comforting rituals found in late medieval religiosity.⁹⁸⁵ He argues in a later work that the Reformation brought a greater

⁹⁸¹ The reading of sermons and scripture was a prime impetus to new educational programs. Gerald Strauss, *Luther's House of Learning: Indoctrination of the Young in the German Reformation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 193-202.

⁹⁸² Rittgers, *Suffering*, 269-274.

⁹⁸³ *AOGA*. 5: 391.

⁹⁸⁴ Osiander, "Wie und wohin ein Christ fliehen soll," also the same argument in Martin Luther, "On whether one may Flee Plague." Nuremberg still struggled in 1533 and 1562 with a full third of their population leaving and with leading council members refusing to do their job.

⁹⁸⁵ Rittgers, "Protestants and Plague," 144.

emphasis in pastoral care that substituted for Catholic ritualized practices. The preachers enacted “ritual consolation.” Suffering was an intense point at which reformers sought to “re-Christianize” their generally ignorant populace.⁹⁸⁶

When Sebald Schreyer designed St. Sebastian for spiritual care before the Reformation, he aligned with late medieval religiosity. It provided for “hearing all confession, preaching and holding of the mass. Also the Holy Sacrament of the Holy Corpus Christi of our Lord Jesus Christ and the last rites.”⁹⁸⁷ Each of these elements was incorporated into the Protestant ritual with a new emphasis on faith and consolation.

In the contagious disease hospitals, patients were preached to on arrival and admonished to confess, be contrite, and have faith in God, even in their dire circumstance. The Reformation lessened the need for extended confession. Veit Dietrich pushes for confession more than other evangelical pastors, but even he regarded the individual naming of sin as voyeuristic on the part of the pastor.⁹⁸⁸ Wenceslaus Linck wrote that confession should always begin with the Decalogue. It was not intended for the parishioner to enumerate every tiny sin, but the law was meant to point the sinner to his inevitable failure to please God. Only with true and right contrition could the individual be prepared for grace. From there, Linck advocated preaching the Gospel, the Creed, and the Our Father. This was the proper way to show how sin and grace interacted. According to Luise Schrottroff, the whole evangelical theology could be summed up in the believer’s recognition of temptation of sin (*Anfechtung*) and the end goal of faith in

⁹⁸⁶ Rittgers, *Suffering*, 163.

⁹⁸⁷ StadtAN 21-2 Nr. 116 8r. *alle Cristenliche ornung alls peichthören / predigen und meßhallten. Auch die hailigen Sacrament. des hailigen Fronleichnambs unnsers herren Jhesu Cristi und die letzten ölung an der genannten pfarrherren.*

Here again parsing the sight of the mass and the fact that it is being held from the taking of the Sacrament.

⁹⁸⁸ Rittgers, *Suffering*, 169.

Christ's propitiation (*Trost*).⁹⁸⁹ After showing contrition, the individual was to be consoled.

Pastors, chaplains and prayer leaders in the hospitals were instructed to give God's consolation in cases of need or when the sick were desirous of it.⁹⁹⁰ "Also where it is needed to the poor people, go and pray in 'their' name to provide consolation and speak good over them."⁹⁹¹ In his handbook for pastors, Veit Dietrich highly recommends giving the full instruction on *Trost*. He did not write a shorter version for fear that unpracticed pastors would take it as license to use the shortened version. Further, he claimed that the sick needed the comfort more than the healthy because as their body was afflicted, they were more easily cast into despair.⁹⁹²

Sickness brought additional opportunity for the devil to lead individuals to despair. The sick are told to remember their baptism and the forgiveness of sins that it promised. He encouraged them that suffering from sickness was better than a quick death. In Luke 16, Jesus' story of the beggar, Lazarus, the rich man did not have the opportunity to recognize and turn away from his sin before he was condemned.⁹⁹³ If the individual asked how a loving God could do this, the pastor was to reply that it reminds us of our sinful nature, hinders the sins of the body through physical confinement to the bed, helps to fight sin, and through consolation, encourages prayer. It "prevents an inordinate love of life" as the believer yearns for home in heaven, and finally, it lessens the punishment in this life and the next. While suffering could bring spiritual fruit, it was never a good work or meritorious of salvation. With the believer's faith in the

⁹⁸⁹ Luise Schottroff, *Die Bereitung zum Sterben Studien zu den frühen reformatorischen Sterbebüchern* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012), 16-17, 77-79.

⁹⁹⁰ StAN Rep 52b. Nr. 234 160v.-161r.

⁹⁹¹ StAN Rep. 52b. Nr. 61 63r. *Auch wo vonnotten zu den armen geen unnd sie inn Iren Nähm trösten und guts vorsag(en).*

⁹⁹² Dietrich, *Agend Büchlein*, n.p. "Wie bey den krancken sol."

⁹⁹³ Dietrich, *Agend Büchlein*, n.p. "Wie bey den krancken sol."

resurrection of Christ, he should not fear cruel death because he already believes in the resurrection of the flesh.⁹⁹⁴ Accordingly if sickness and death came to the believer, it did not mean that it came from God's wrath, but rather it should be seen as desirable to go from a mere life of death to an eternal life that Christ earned for us.⁹⁹⁵

In theory the preaching of comfort brought the same, or more, consolation as the entire spectrum of late medieval religiosity, but times of plague called for emergency succor that evangelical theology did not provide to all of Nuremberg's parishioners. Veit Dietrich complained about the persistent use of the plague saints: "We all know, what kind of idolatry was in Catholicism and still especially in times of plague, that people called on St. Rochus, St. Sebastian, or St. Barbara and in some ways to serve them... Therefore, it is not a wonder that this plague does even more harm to them."⁹⁹⁶ It is not surprising that the people resisted the reformers' solutions during the extreme circumstances of plague. Just as the reformers believed it was vital to have correct theology in such a threatening period; the people often wanted to cover all their bases in the threatening time.

In the Lazaret ordinances, the duties of pastors, chaplains, and prayer leaders were never divorced from preaching comfort. They were ordered to speak or cry over "the sick and deathly weak ... with beautiful little prayers, or other contrition and consolation."⁹⁹⁷ The preaching of this comfort was designed to bring the individual to the right understanding of the Gospel. Daily

⁹⁹⁴ Dietrich, *Agend Büchlein*, n.p. "Wie bey den krancken sol." Rittgers argues that later Reformers emphasized that with a righteous life, suffering did not always have to be interpreted as God's wrath for sin. Rittgers, *Suffering*, 217

⁹⁹⁵ Rittgers, *Suffering*, 172.

⁹⁹⁶ Carolin Pörcelt, *Die Pest in Nürnberg: Leben und Herrschen in Pestzeiten in der Reichsstadt Nürnberg, 1562-1713* (St. Ottilien: EOS, 2000), 165.

⁹⁹⁷ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19, *den Krancken und todtschwachen auch, in abweßen das besondten pfarrers, schöne [sorr]gebetlein und [sonsen] anderer Trost Reüch vorsprechen, und zuschreyen.*

prayers, confession, and general spiritual preparation for death were not effective in their practice alone, but the practices were designed to elicit belief and feeling. For both confessions, however, the greatest form of consolation was the body of Christ himself.

V. Holy Communion and Last Rites

Up to this point, this chapter has discussed the importance of spiritual maintenance, yearly, weekly, daily, hourly, and in moments of emergency. It has explored the growing importance of correct understanding and practice as individuals experienced extreme life-threatening situations. The Mass, or Communion, was a key component in regular spiritual maintenance whether done once a year, every quarter-year or, more frequently. It was the most intense of all religious practices as one took the divine himself into the body. It was also the most intimate religious practice because it required a healthy priest to come into close proximity to place the elements in the mouth. In both confessions, the sacrament was the most important component for the preparation of the soul about to cross the threshold of death. This section will explore the sacrament as it was given to the sick and dying.

Even though churches were regularly fumigated during an outbreak, they were dangerous places of contamination.⁹⁹⁸ In 1505 after many members of the clergy died, the people coming down with sickness were supposed to attend church services only in St. Moritz or St. Kunigunden Chapel instead of the parish churches.⁹⁹⁹ St. Moritz in Nuremberg was the same chapel that hosted the contaminating leper during their Holy Thursday communion.¹⁰⁰⁰ The sick were continuously told to avoid the large parish churches and attend the smaller chapels, Moritz

⁹⁹⁸ StAN B 19/1 Nr. 481 9r.

⁹⁹⁹ Müllner, *Die Annalen der Reichsstadt Nürnberg von 1623*, 3: 308.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Roper, *The Holy Household*, 102.

and Martha.¹⁰⁰¹ The council could not stop people from flocking to the churches during the threat of plague, so they attempted to shorten the length of services in the city.¹⁰⁰² The council ordered that church leaders were to “read Paul’s letters and the gospels, do the announcements, sing the litany, and as soon as one is finished with everything, commence the sermon and do not make it over a half hour.”¹⁰⁰³ In 1533, the ever-less practical, Osiander objected to this practice citing the importance of faith even in the dire circumstances.

Preachers and priests were paid more for the extra services and the increased danger to them during outbreak.¹⁰⁰⁴ They were instructed to keep an eye out for the sick trying to take the sacrament in the parish churches. The priest performing the Mass was then to keep a pan of hot coals and smoking herbs nearby so that the healthy did not bring the poisonous airs home.¹⁰⁰⁵ This practice replicated the protocol used for lepers during the Schau. After the Reformation, the contact during Communion became more complex with the introduction of the chalice to the laity.

Reformers wanted to increase the approachability of the altar, attempting to raise the status of the laity. The “idolatrous” idea of gaining God’s grace through the mere seeing of the transformed Host became moot as Christ ordered his body and blood to be consumed by all believers.¹⁰⁰⁶

For both confessions, administering the sacraments to the sick was an essential

¹⁰⁰¹ On the other hand, St. Johannis was to be altogether avoided because it was reported that locals were falling ill due to the bad odor of the cemetery StAN B 19/1 Nr. 481 30v.

¹⁰⁰² StAN B 19/1 Nr. 481 13r.

¹⁰⁰³ StAN B 19/1 Nr. 481 14r. *die Epistel unnd Evangelia zu leßen, verkundigungen zuthun, die Letaury zusingen unnd als paldt mann mit den allen fertig, die predig anzufahen. unnd dieselbig uber ein halbe stund nit zumachen.*

¹⁰⁰⁴ StAN Rept 60a Nr. 825 21v.; 27.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Kirchberger, *Aphorismi*, Aiiii r.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Lee Palmer Wandel, *The Eucharist in the Reformation: Incarnation and Liturgy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 79.

preparation for death, but to be in such close proximity to the miasma of the sick was dangerous. In the medieval period, the church had a precedent of managing the consumption of the sacrament due to parishioners' perceived physical or social pollution. Women after childbirth were excluded from communion until their ritual cleansing. Executioners and prostitutes often attended alternative church hours, sat in separate sections, or took communion last. As we have seen, lepers were given their own separate Masses behind closed doors.¹⁰⁰⁷

The specter of priests avoiding the sick has a long history dating back to the original outbreak of the Black Death. In 1520, the city council had to search to find a priest for the neighboring village of Mögeldorf because their priest had fled the plague's airs.¹⁰⁰⁸ One chaplain had complained about the parish churchyards on which Nuremberg held the sick and expiring waiting for transport. He said that religious personnel were so afraid of getting infected that instead of "serving the infected people willing and gladly with the comfort of God's Word and the conferring of the most worthy Sacrament..." that good Christians were dying without Christian ceremony and genuine members of the body of Christ were being buried "unqualified, rejected and cast out from the church of God."¹⁰⁰⁹

¹⁰⁰⁷ Lyndal Roper, *The Holy Household: Women and Morals in Reformation Augsburg* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 102. Executioners were often denied the sacrament all together, sat separately or took communion last. In Worms in 1517, the executioner received a papal dispensation that allowed him to take communion once a year. They often celebrated births and marriages in the home instead of the communal religious space.

Bamberg court ordinances from 1507 stated that any executioner who was paid per execution was split off from the Holy Communion and had no hope of achieving salvation, for the blood lust that comes with payment for each execution. Cities needed to provide the executioners with standard salary in order that their souls could possibly be saved. Kathy Stuart, *Defiled Trades and Social Outcasts: Honor and Ritual Pollution in Early Modern Germany* (Oxford, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 28-29, 59.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Bühl, "Die Pestepidemien," 128.

¹⁰⁰⁹ B19/1 Nr. 483 Leichzug und Begräbnis in Seuchenzeiten 1562, 1582.

inficirte personen mit trost gottlichs wortts, und raichung der hochwurdigen Sacrament willig und gerne dienen, so kommen Euer E. und FE W wir nicht bewegen, daß wir ein hertzliches

Measures were put into place to keep pastors from becoming contaminated. In plague hospitals, the methods used by priests to avoid disease varied. In the *Civiale del Friuli* in Seville, chaplains were required to remain three steps separated from the sick, offering confession through a little window. In Venice's *Lazaretto*, body carriers brought patients to the doorways, thus eliminating the need for religious personnel to enter patients' rooms, a place regarded as particularly dangerous.¹⁰¹⁰ The clergy wore wax hoods so that the fabric did not absorb smell. Such clergy also wore gloves and shoes, which would have been a departure from the usual sandals.¹⁰¹¹ As seen with the Schau, often pastors held vinegar in front of their noses or bit herbed/spiced vinegar substances and keep it under their tongues.¹⁰¹² In Nuremberg, pastors were instructed to use prophylactic medications against plague. The council ordered chaplains to buy them from specific apothecaries in the city.¹⁰¹³ It was suggested that they take a small red-poison-electuary, a medical paste sweetened with honey or syrup. The pastor was also to wash his hands, head, hair, and beard with ampfer water and rub poison-balsam in his nose and ear holes. Then, "finally by means of first imploring God's help, go to the sick with an undismayed heart."¹⁰¹⁴

erschrecken, und entsetzen haben, wann wir hören, daß frumme leut, deren Christlichen gebrauch, one alle Ceremonien, Alß ob sie untuchtige, abgeschnittene, und aus der kirchen Gottes verworffene Glidmassen werden zur Erden bestattet werden.

¹⁰¹⁰ Jane L. Stevens Crawshaw, *Plague Hospitals: Public Health for the City in Early Modern Venice* (Farnham, Surrey, England: Ashgate, 2012), 129. I argue in an unpublished paper that Nuremberg did not regard its body carriers as having any religious function. The repulsive, utilitarian nature of their occupation gave them little social connection to the city; therefore, they could be paid an unseemly amount of money, then be forgotten once plague was over.

¹⁰¹¹ Crawshaw, *Plague Hospitals*, 129.

¹⁰¹² Crawshaw, *Plague Hospitals*, 128; Kirchberger, *Aphorismi*, Aiiii r.

¹⁰¹³ RV 1562 #1213 20r. There was also a request for money from the council to pay for these prophylactics for other plague workers. The council approves if there is opportunity. RV 1562 #1213 20r. Sept 19 4r.

¹⁰¹⁴ Kirchberger, *Aphorismi*, Aiii r. *und endtlich divino prius auxilio implorato, mit unverzagtem hertzen zu dem kranken gehen.*

In the original schematics for St. Sebastian, the pastor's room was on the northeast corner of the complex. This would have been the purest area, as the rooms used for cooking or washing were downriver.¹⁰¹⁵ When the council brought in a new chaplain to replace an ailing pastor in 1585, they stressed the need for the Hofmeister to find him a place, if not in the pastors' lodging, somewhere else that was clean.¹⁰¹⁶ This need to preserve the religious personnel may have been a practical consideration because priests were hard to replace, and possibly because of the symbolic need for the pastor to be a healthful intercessor for the inhabitants.

In the early seventeenth-century, Johannes Heinrich Kirchberger compiled a work of memories and aphorisms about being a physician in Nuremberg's lazaret. He tells religious personnel and pastors how to minister in the lazaret. He instructs them to keep confession short; God knows more of the heart anyway. He advised that the prayer leader should warn the patients not to move when a cleric came to visit or do anything that would make the poisoned air come up from the bed. A prayer leader or chaplain was to enter the sick person's room before the pastor. He was to smoke with herbs the room, open the window, and let in a little fresh air -- but not for long as the cold air was bad for the patient. Before entering the room, the pastor was to smoke his own clothes, so they did not absorb the poison. He was to catch his breath and not rush into the room huffing and puffing. The priest was to remain standing on one side of the sick person's head, listen to the confession, quickly absolve him; "however with powerful words" and perform the prescribed liturgy.¹⁰¹⁷ Upon coming out of the room, the prayer leader should once again fumigate him and hang up his protective clothing immediately outside.

Kirchberger recommended that when the sick wish to take the body and blood of Jesus

¹⁰¹⁵ Bühl, "Die Pestepidemien," 148.

¹⁰¹⁶ StadtAN B19/1 484 32-33.

¹⁰¹⁷ Kirchberger, *Aphorismi*, Aii r.

Christ, the pastor, or chaplain should not place his mouth up to the sick person's face; on the contrary, the sacrament should be performed on the side. "Let a thick burning wax candle be held up to the mouth of the sick, for the poisonous exhalations..." Thus, the poisonous breath can be dissipated through the fire. He was to close with a short version of the liturgy and the prayer of thanksgiving.¹⁰¹⁸ Sources from Italy mention the use of an instrument or tool to place the sacrament on the sick person's tongue. Catholic Reformer Charles Borromeo chided priests for the use of these objects.¹⁰¹⁹

The chalice brought a particular problem for evangelical communion. In the cities, Kirchberger warned against the sick drinking from the same chalice as the healthy. Veit Dietrich in his instruction on how to minister to the sick emphasized the importance of both the bread and the wine.¹⁰²⁰ He ordered that no chaplain was to perform the sacrament in one kind as the Church had previously let people die like that.¹⁰²¹ "The Reason: Christ has not so commanded. And we should in everything uphold his commands."¹⁰²² But the mouth was a particular problem as poisoned breath contaminated. Kirchberger recommends that pastors administering the sacrament wipe the rim of the chalice between parishioners using a clean little cloth well-moistened with a "theriac" medicinal vinegar.¹⁰²³

Dietrich instructed that the Pastor say to the sick, "drink all up, this is my blood of the New Testament, that for you and for many was poured out for the forgiveness of sins. As often

¹⁰¹⁸ Kirchberger, *Aphorismi*, Aiii r. *soll er seinen Mund nicht auff deß krancken Angesicht gleichsam legen/ sondern es auff der seiten verrichten: Dem kranken aber ein dick brennende Wachskertzen für den Mund halten lassen/ auff daß die Gifftige exhalation., Athem vnd Bratel durch Feuer sich zerthaile.*

¹⁰¹⁹ Crawshaw, *Plague Hospitals*, 128.

¹⁰²⁰ Rittgers, *Suffering*, 173; Dietrich, *Agend Büchlein*. n.p. "Wie bey den krancken sol."

¹⁰²¹ Dietrich, *Agend Büchlein*. n.p. "Wie bey den krancken sol."

¹⁰²² Dietrich, *Agend Büchlein*. n.p. "Wie bey den krancken sol.". *Ursach/ Christus hats nit so befolhen. Und wir sollen in allen uns seines befelhs halten.*

¹⁰²³ Kirchberger, *Aphorismi*, Aiiiiir.

as you do this, drink in my celebration.” The priest handed the cup to the sick with the usual words “take in and drink the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.”¹⁰²⁴ Hospital ordinances explicitly mention wine used in the Communion. It is one of the only exceptions to give a patient extra wine.¹⁰²⁵ One ordinance declares, “in case of emergency,” here meaning death, the sick “should receive the Holy Sacrament of the body *and* blood of Christ.”¹⁰²⁶

Dietrich recommended that if the sick person would like to take the sacrament but from sickness has no capability to drink wine, the chaplain should drip a drop or two of wine from the chalice into a little drink

of water. In that way, they can consume the body and blood of Christ; there would be no disadvantage to those individuals spiritually as they had received what Christ had poured out.¹⁰²⁷ Although



¹⁰²⁴ Dietrich, *Agend Buechlein*, n.p. “Wie bey den krancken sol.” *Trinket alle darauß/ das für euch/ und für vil/ vergossen wirdt/ zur vergebung der sünden. Solches thut/ so offt irs trinckt/ zu meinem gedechnuß...Nymb hin und drincke/ das ist das blut unsers herrn jesu Christi/ das für dein sünd vergossen ist.*

¹⁰²⁵ StAN D1 Nr. 2 1547, 3.

¹⁰²⁶ StAN Rep 52b 234 161r. *und im fall der noth, die heiligen Sacrament des leibs und bluets Christi raichen soll.*

¹⁰²⁷ Ministering to the sick could also be a site of confession building. Veit Dietrich contended that proper pastoral care was particularly important in areas that had held on to their popish ways. In the baroque period, the image of Charles Barromeo tending to the plague victims becomes a particular image of devotion as Barromeo was the most powerful Catholic reformer known for his particularly selfless service of plague victims. Rittgers, *Suffering* 17, 229; Christine M. Boeckl, *Images of Plague and Pestilence: Iconography and Iconology* (Kirksville,

the *ex opera operato* function of the Communion was decreased in evangelical theology, Dietrich implies that the sick person's soul would possibly be in jeopardy without the proper consumption of both elements of communion (brought by the proper understanding of the Gospel).

The Hour of Death

Finally, after exploring the entire range of spiritual practice, we return to the deathbed. Whether the path to the deathbed was long and slow or quick and unexpected, everyone met at the deathbed, where the battle between sin and salvation would finally end. The deathbed was the powerful threshold for all of the inhabitants of the leper houses, syphilis and plague hospitals as well as the whole city.

In the late medieval period, stories of saints' lives are filled with the great anticipation of the saint's death. Onlookers strove for the perfect time to call the priest for last rites and the sacrament. In 1447, Heinrich Leubig from St. Sebalds was given permission from the Bishop of Bamberg to bring the sacrament to the house of the dying, a practice called the *Krankenabendmal* or the Communion for the Sick.¹⁰²⁸ In Nuremberg, this practice was excessively celebrated. Emperor Friedrich III gave an endowment in 1475 to pay for the priest to be accompanied by two (or four) choir boys to sing the *antiphonen* and *responsorien* while wearing special robes and holding banners and lanterns. The Eucharist was consecrated in the church and was then carried in a *Tragaltar* (Image: Viaticum). It was processed through the streets with a ringing bell preceding it. Parishioners could receive indulgences by partaking of

MO: Truman State University Press, 2000), 234.

¹⁰²⁸ Schlemmer, *Gottesdienst*, 243-244.

the sacrament, processing with it to the person's home, or giving alms to the choir boys.¹⁰²⁹ This colorful and loud procession called neighbors to venerate the pathway and if possible watch the infirm take the Eucharist. This practice was similar to gaining spiritual benefit from watching the Mass.

The priest offered peace and a prayer of the seven penitential psalms, and a call on St. Sebald and Elizabeth. He used his thumb to apply holy oils, “making a cross on the eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth, hands and feet of the dying.”¹⁰³⁰ The anointing of the body parts absolved any sin attributed with that part.¹⁰³¹ He ended with Trinitarian Blessing and Absolution, Psalms 66, “God have mercy on us,” the Lord's Prayer and a prayer for the sick.¹⁰³² If at all possible, no Christian was to die without the sacrament. Leper houses' ordinances ordered that the Siechmeister “attend with all diligence that no sick person died without the Sacrament.”¹⁰³³ Although they had entire separated spiritual services and graveyards, they were never cut off from last rites or consuming the body of Christ.

Osiander wasted little time in reformatting the last Communion. He silenced the bells and made sure that bread and wine were not consecrated until arriving in the home of the sick. He did not want a “magical” pathway that could be followed. He argued that all that singing, clanging, and banging was more likely to scare than provide comfort. The box was to be carried with a little candle if necessary.¹⁰³⁴ The Communion for the dying was to begin with holy instruction and admonish the believer of the need for Christ's forgiveness. This practice was the instruction of *Anfechtung* and *Trost* discussed previously. The pastor was to say a prayer to Jesus, the Our

¹⁰²⁹ Esser, *Pest*, 245.

¹⁰³⁰ Karant-Nunn, *Ritual*, 141.

¹⁰³¹ Karant-Nunn, *Ritual*, 141.

¹⁰³² Schlemmer, *Gottesdienst*, 245-246.

¹⁰³³ StadtAN D07 Nr. A2a 10r.; StadtAN D07 2b 5v.

¹⁰³⁴ AOGA, 1: 169.

Father, perform the sacrament, and finally close with a German prayer. He was to lecture the sick again on “baptism, the cross and suffering and admonish [him] to patience.”¹⁰³⁵

While evangelical theology lessened the impact of the deathbed ritual, there was a continued emphasis on a good death. Reports and images of Luther’s death spread far and wide attesting to his peaceful countenance upon death.¹⁰³⁶ Lazarus Spengler reported to his sister, during the 1533 bout of plague, “Friderich Behaim is dead, he had a very Christian end that Herr Dominicus, who was with him at the time, could not say enough about....God had made out of a Saul, a righteous Paul.” He also tells of an Oswald, who had died on his estate (presumably outside of Nuremberg) because he had fled at the moment of outbreak. Spengler quipped that he may have traveled on a pathway here and there, but ultimately “into the arms of the devil now.”¹⁰³⁷ Reformers were adamant that Communion was not given to anyone who did not believe or did not seem contrite: no pearls were to be thrown before swine.¹⁰³⁸

In the plague hospital, the sacrament for the dying was explicitly the job of the “designated pastor.”¹⁰³⁹ The pastors were always to close with a short prayer of thanksgiving. Dietrich’s prayer of gratitude mirrors the fifteenth-century instruction for the administration of spiritual medicine.

I thank you, Almighty God, that you have revitalized me through your medicinal gifts of the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ; and I pray to you, that you desire to let such

¹⁰³⁵ AOGA, 5: 166. *tauff, creütz und leyden und zu gedult vermanen.*

¹⁰³⁶ Robert W. Scribner, “Incombustible Luther: the Image of the Reformer in Early Modern Germany,” in *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany*. London: Hambledon Press, 1987), 329

¹⁰³⁷ Lazarus Spenger, “Brief Datum 25 Septembris 1533,” quoted in J.K. Ohlau, “Neue Quellen zur Familiengeschichte der Spengler, Lazarus Spengler und seine Söhne,” in *MVGN* 52 (1963/64), 243.

¹⁰³⁸ Dietrich, *Agend Büchlein*, n.p. “Wie bey den krancken sol.” If someone in their sickness was a sinner but was admonished and showed signs of contrition and suffering, they should be able to take the full sacrament.

¹⁰³⁹ StadtAN A 21-2 Nr. 116 8r.

gifts blossom in me to strengthen my belief toward you, that I surmount all things by the help of your Son and the Holy Spirit, and in accord with your consent... I can live eternally, Amen.”¹⁰⁴⁰

Without denying the changes in theology, Susan Karant-Nunn stresses the similarity between pre- and post-Reformation death ritual. They both show the central role of the clergy, the need for confession and the sacrament, the idea that the sick person’s deathbed is surrounded by angels and demons fighting for the soul, and finally a pedagogic *Art of Death* that is intended to become an *art of living*.¹⁰⁴¹

It is amazing how inconvenient the practice of the sacrament to the dying was. Osiander’s first reaction after the Reformation was for the sick to drag themselves out of bed and go to the church if they wanted to take Communion; clearly, that was not going to work in all cases.¹⁰⁴² Outside of the apostate or unrepentant, the last Communion was meant for all believers. It was the ultimate unifying force in the body of Christ.

VIII. Burial

While the moment of death may be the end of the story in our eyes, the dead were ever present in late medieval and early modern life.¹⁰⁴³ Placement of intramural cemeteries, sepulchers in churches, *in memoria* art, and mortuary masses, show that death and all its imagery

¹⁰⁴⁰ Dietrich, *Agend BÜchlein*, n.p. “Wie bey den krancken sol.” *Ich danke dir allmechtiger God/ das du mich durch dise heylsame gaben/ des leybs und bluts deines Sons Jesu Christi hast erquicket/ und bitte dich / du wöllest mir solches gedeyen lassen/ zum starcken glauben gegen dir/ das ich auff deines Sons unnd des heyligen Gesystes/ alles uberwinden/ und deiner zu sag nach/ ewig leben möge/ Amen.*

¹⁰⁴¹ Karant-Nunn, *Ritual*, 170.

¹⁰⁴² AOGA 1: 170.

¹⁰⁴³ Bruce Gordon and Peter Marshall, *The Place of the Dead: Death and Remembrance in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), and Kathryn A. Edwards, *Werewolves, Witches, and Wandering Spirits: Traditional Belief and Folklore in Early Modern Europe* (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2002); Claude. Lecouteux, *Fantômes et revenants au Moyen Âge*. Paris: Pontface de Régis Boyer, 1986.

surrounded people in late medieval Nuremberg. Beliefs in ghosts or restless souls were also common despite official church sanctions against them. As seen in the death ritual itself, participants, pathways and sacred objects, all played crucial roles in helping the individual on his path to reconciliation with God in the afterlife. For example, on New Year's Day at St. Johannis cemetery, a mortuary mass was endowed by Kuntzhen Stawd. The endowment ordered a mass read in the chapel every three months after New Year's day, a celebration for all believers and souls who were at rest in the cemetery at St. Johannis. The order continued with a list of liturgical songs to be sung in the chapel and processed around the cemetery.¹⁰⁴⁴

In the pre-Reformation period, the opulence of the funeral procession to the cemetery depended on the importance of the individual. Common people were merely accompanied by neighbors or relatives; while lower-level guild members were accompanied by a schoolmaster and choir boys singing "Out of the depths we cry unto Thee" and the Apostle's Creed, which explicitly spoke of the afterlife.¹⁰⁴⁵ This guild practice was particularly hard for the council to eradicate when trying to lessen funeral customs during plague. During the plague, decrees repeatedly banned artisan guilds whose members gathered around their expiring associates even under threat of contracting plague.¹⁰⁴⁶ At the death of a patrician, religious personnel adorned in vestments were accompanied by the schoolmaster, choir boys, and soul nuns. They rang a great bell and sang as they processed, "Lord have mercy on us" and "in the middle of life we are surrounded by death, who is it, who brings us help, that we might attain grace? It is you, Lord, alone. [We] repent our misdeeds, Lord, which have angered you."¹⁰⁴⁷ They carried a cross,

¹⁰⁴⁴ StadtAN D 15 J VI Nr. 4 90r.-91r.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Karant-Nunn, *Ritual*, 180.

¹⁰⁴⁶ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 31.

¹⁰⁴⁷ Porzelt 104. *Mitten wir im Leben sind mit dem Tod umfängen, Wer ist, der uns Hilfe bringt, dass wir Gnad erlangen? Das bist du, Herr alleine. Uns reuet unsre Missetat, die dich, Herr,*

incense, bells, candles and holy water, which prepared the way for the dead into the cemetery for final resting.¹⁰⁴⁸

Seelnonnen or soul nuns were normally tasked with cleaning the deceased, sewing the body into a shroud, and accompanying the procession to the burial. Reports for supplies of shrouds to be carried to the chaplain in the lazaret occasionally occurred.¹⁰⁴⁹ The hospital also had a designated account for cloth and burlap that may suggest that it made their own.¹⁰⁵⁰ During times of outbreak, soul nuns were instructed to be diligently alert for signs of contagious disease at which point they should alert the administrative authorities. If any signs occurred, they were not to carry that person with an open procession, but the corpse was to be quickly removed if it presented a contaminating problem.¹⁰⁵¹

Particularly during times of plague, proper funerary customs were curtailed. The sounds of bells that occurred at the moment of death and funerary processions became disheartening and panic-inducing. From the late fifteenth-century during outbreak, the council ordered that one bell to be rung on Friday to account for all who had died in preceding the week. The council commanded, "Such singing is desired to be shortened and to be no more than one verse."¹⁰⁵² In 1562, the council forbade all choir boys from escorting the dead from their house to the walls,

erzürnet hat."

¹⁰⁴⁸ Karant-Nunn, *Ritual*, 171-173, 180. Studies for Catholic Reformation Spain and Church of England can be found in: Carlos Eire, *From Madrid to Purgatory: The Art and Craft of Dying in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), and David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage, and Death Ritual, Religion, and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1999).

¹⁰⁴⁹ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 7r.

¹⁰⁵⁰ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 49 1574-5 8r.

¹⁰⁵¹ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 26r.-26v.

¹⁰⁵² RV 7 Oct. 1562 RV #1214 23v. *solch singen. soviel sich wid() will. unnd uber() einen verß nit singen.*

and only on Friday should any funeral rites be observed.¹⁰⁵³ A few days after the edict was issued, there was a petition to the council for the funerary rites of Helena Kress, widow of Christoff Kress. The petition came predominantly from the wives and widows of Nuremberg's patricians, including the families Müffel and Starck. The council declared that the procession was impossible in that dangerous time. "Out of humble friendship," they had to say no. The council would not even allow a smaller procession because Kress would have needed to be carried to the dangerous area outside of the city walls.¹⁰⁵⁴

Within the consecrated ground of the cemeteries, the deceased were buried on the South side of the church.¹⁰⁵⁵ Bodies were placed with the head on the West, facing East in anticipation of Christ's return and their bodily resurrection. Although laid with care, there were few individual graves at the time. When gravediggers uncovered old graves, they collected the bones into ossuaries that were attached to the church wall. This practice was not seen as dishonorable, but it was viewed as a communal manner typical of medieval thought.¹⁰⁵⁶ This communal burial was in contrast to dishonorable people such as executioners, skimmers, apostates, criminals or prostitutes who were buried in separate grounds.¹⁰⁵⁷ Each individual had an appropriate cemetery in which he should be buried. Even during the tumult of plague, it mattered. Inhabitants from the eastern suburb of Wöhrd, who had died near the gate, were to be carried to the parish at Wöhrd instead of buried in Nuremberg's cemeteries.¹⁰⁵⁸

Lepers had their own cemeteries, as was determined by the Third Lateran Council. While

¹⁰⁵³ RV 1 Sept 1562 20r.

¹⁰⁵⁴ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 RV 45r.-45v., RV #1213 1562 32; In 1585 the council's policies were not drastic; people who did not die of plague could retain some funerary practices. Porzelt, *Die Pest*, 105.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Karant-Nunn, *Ritual*, 176. The north side was connected with diabolical beliefs.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Karant-Nunn, *Ritual*, 177.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Karant-Nunn, *Ritual*, 175.

¹⁰⁵⁸ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 8v.

there is little information on the ritual of burial in the lepers' complexes, archaeological evidence from leper burial grounds in England reveals that they were placed with care according to Christian rite, as much as can be expected.¹⁰⁵⁹ In some cases, the leper house was built around its central burial purpose, such as St. Peter's, which was originally named the *Siechgraben*.¹⁰⁶⁰ As Nuremberg began to see its need to remove bodies that had died of plague from inside the city walls, the leper cemeteries were a natural solution. Starting in the 1480s, all Nuremberg's leper cemeteries were commandeered for the purpose of plague burials; the majority of victims were placed in a mass grave in St. Johannis. By 1520, the city greatly expanded St. Johannis cemetery, and it was consecrated by the Bishop of Bamberg.¹⁰⁶¹

In 1519, the city began burying Lazaret plague victims in St. Johannis Cemetery.¹⁰⁶² From inside the city, body carriers brought plague deaths to the gravediggers at the city gate. From there they were conveyed on specially covered wagons to St. Johannis.¹⁰⁶³ The graveyard had a rowdy atmosphere during plague. Gravediggers took on a number of assistants to help with the burials. In addition, other "wandering" people, who had not been allowed in the city, camped out there.¹⁰⁶⁴ The noise and the smell caused many complaints among locals.¹⁰⁶⁵ Once in the cemetery, the gravediggers were instructed that they must "watch over the mass grave with diligence, [and] with reverence." Where the grave was properly prepared and maintained, no one

¹⁰⁵⁹ Louisa Cunningham, "The Walking Dead: Challenging the classic image of the outcast Leper Using the Archaeological burial evidence from English Medieval Cemeteries," unpublished manuscript, 27-33.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Seidel, "Die Siechköbel," 40.

¹⁰⁶¹ Müllner, *Die annalen Der Reichsstadt Nurnberg von 1623*, 3:440.

¹⁰⁶² Müllner, *Die annalen Der Reichsstadt Nurnberg von 1623*, 3: 455. The lazaret was not fully functioning at this time.

¹⁰⁶³ StadtAN A 21-2 Nr. 116 7v.; StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 28v.

¹⁰⁶⁴ StadtAN D15 S14 Nr. 19 18r.

¹⁰⁶⁵ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 31r.

would be upset.¹⁰⁶⁶ While in the modern perspective the concept of mass graves and reverence are mutually exclusive, in the early modern period they were not.

The council's desire to change to extramural burial coincided with the Reformation. While the practice was not exclusively Lutheran, Luther's eventual denial of purgatory and "superstitious" connections to the dead, lessened the need for close connection to the dead; nevertheless, many of the funerary customs listed above, remained. For elite funerals, schoolmasters, choir boys and neighbors were processed to the city gates. Bodies were placed in the same ordered way, although with differences to account for theology, such as teaching concerning unbaptized babies. Funeral sermons also began to typify Lutheran funerals as people's lives became instructional models of grace and faith.¹⁰⁶⁷

The confluence of medical and religious support for extramural burial resulted in the moving of all burials outside the city.¹⁰⁶⁸ This policy stretched beyond merely burying the corrupting bodies of the sick or bodies that may worsen miasma during an outbreak, but it applied to all Nurembergers, at all times. This movement was not uncontested. City patrician and religious orders tried to confine the use of the extramural burial to the sick in the lazaret, but they were overruled.¹⁰⁶⁹ The patrician Imhoff family built the extramural St. Rochus chapel and cemetery in order to provide an honorable place of burial for the city's elite.¹⁰⁷⁰

¹⁰⁶⁶ StadtAN B19/1 Nr. 481 29v. *Unnd die Todtengruben mit fleis zubewachern, mit der vererhung. Wo Sie sich recht geschaffen und also halten, damit niemannndt beschwert wurde. Wolle mann Inen zu und ein gute Verehrung thun.*

¹⁰⁶⁷ Karant-Nunn, *Ritual*, 155-162.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Karant-Nunn, *Ritual*, 155-162.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Ernst Mummenhoff, *Die öffentliche Gesundheits- und Krankenpflege im alten Nürnberg* (Neustadt an d. Aisch: Schmidt, 1986), 24-25.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Heinrich Dormeier, "St. Rochus, die Pest und die Imhoffs in Nürnberg vor und während der Reformation" *Anzeiger des germanischen Nationalmuseums* (1985), 15. The chapel was funded by the Imhoffs and several other leading families. Money was given to fund a priest to say four masses a week.

In a great irony, the leper cemeteries now hosted almost all of the deceased from the city of Nuremberg. It was the same philosophy that called for the separation of the lepers that eventually extended to all dead bodies. This is not to say that in the sixteenth-century, and particularly in the post-Reformation period, the dead were cut off from spiritual service; it is to say that this movement of the healthy dead to forever rest with the contaminating dead accentuates the belief that the communal body of Christ had always extended beyond the walls. The cemetery, like the courtyards of the leper chapels, was a place of contact. It was in these separated spaces that early modern Nurembergers awaited “the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.”¹⁰⁷¹

Conclusion

Overall this chapter has tried to balance three complex progressions. One, I followed the temporal-structured religious maintenance of patients in Nuremberg’s contagious disease hospitals. As the disease of leprosy moved slowly, their spiritual care most reflected the practices of the Church calendar. The separated chapels hosted many of these events and became a contact point between the sick and the healthy. Daily and weekly devotions were practiced throughout the leper, syphilis, and plague hospitals; however, the intensity of the practice increased with the severity of the disease. Plague called for emergency measures; special devotions and sermons encouraged the faithful to right relation with God. Finally, the last rites or deathbed Communion brought the height of spiritual intensity. It was the last moments of spiritual preparation for reconciliation.

Two, the chapter also follows the chronological progression of early to late and,

¹⁰⁷¹ Apostle’s Creed.

therefore, from pre- to post-Reformation. As the early portion of the chapter explores the slow-moving disease, I was able to explore lepers in their late medieval religious context. As the spiritual care in the plague hospital was only fully practiced in the post-Reformation period, the trajectory was a natural one. Religiosity developed from seeing to hearing: from seeing the Eucharist through the open doors of the church and through the carefully designed windows of the hospital chapel to hearing the Gospel in front of the chapel or spoken over one's bed. Through the hearing of the Word, the individual was capable of proper belief and comfort. While both confessions certainly had an array of practices and beliefs in times of emergency and on the deathbed, Reformation theology emphasized the condition of the heart of the individual before God. Pastors were to confirm that the individual was taught, contrite, and truly believing before taking the sacrament.

The Reformation shorted religious rituals and transformed practices; however these changes should not be over emphasized. The general shape of spiritual services received by inhabitants in these hospitals remained largely the same. The inhabitants participated in intermittent celebrations, meals of specialty foods, and religious services throughout the year; they said/heard morning and evening prayers; they made confession and took Communion with pastors and priests; and finally they received direction in proper devotion for an artful death at the end that enabled reconciliation to God through Christ. While Nuremberg no longer held an account in the "treasury of merit," the form of spiritual services offered in the post-Reformation largely followed the shape of the late medieval *Corpus Christianum*. While preachers and theologians may have viewed their theology as a radical departure, the deeper structures of culture held the form of interlocking salvation.

Third, I followed the progression of physical proximity to disease. The lepers lived the

farthest outside the city. Interaction with them would have been limited to alms collecting, the sending out of a priest or choir to their chapels, or attending spiritual events or celebrations on their courtyard. The spiritual care of plague and syphilis would have been more intimate because of the sheer number of city inhabitants who would have passed in and out of this care. Finally, all inhabitants, who did not die completely unexpectedly, would have experienced some form of *Ars Moriendi*, last rites or final Communion.

The pastor acted as the bridge between the sick individual and the community in addition to being the bridge between the sick individual and God. Even in those intimate moments, layers of herbs, vinegar and clothing acted as buffers between the pastor and the contaminating sick; they functioned like asymptotic lines never quite touching: separate, yet together. In Christ, however, there was no distinction "...neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female..." nor sick or healthy "...for you are all one in Christ Jesus."¹⁰⁷² Christ's body and blood was to be fully touched, tasted, and consumed.

As the inhabitants of Nuremberg in the Catholic and Lutheran Church followed the theological arc from baptism to the deathbed, they participated in spiritual maintenance and soul preparation in a structured, predictable pattern. The care of souls was interlocking throughout the city: to ameliorate the condition of their neighbor's body was to ameliorate their own soul. For both confessions, disease provided a spiritual opportunity that offered pedagogy and a sense of immediacy for spiritual reconciliation. While the patients may have been located outside the walls, they were never cut off from the body of Christ; they may have been the "poor limbs" but "all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ."¹⁰⁷³

¹⁰⁷² NIV. Gal. 3:28.

¹⁰⁷³ 1 Cor. 12:12.

Conclusion

I would like to conclude by bringing together the important themes woven throughout my chapters. I will lay out my conclusions and discuss some implications for the trajectory of Nuremberg by exploring the end of the *Lepraschau*.

My central quest has been to determine the extent to which patients in Nuremberg's external contagious disease hospitals participated in the goods, services, and general life of the city. Across these pages, I have explored a range of boundaries that served as the organizing structures of sixteenth-century Nuremberg culture. These structures guided the interactions between Nuremberg's external patients and the inhabitants of the city center. My project slices Nuremberg into conceptual units, revealing that diseased people were defined as being both inside and outside the community, a complex and seemingly contradictory status. Further, I explored how the movement of bodies upheld, recreated, and challenged the culture's prescribed boundaries.

The patients in Nuremberg's contagious disease hospitals were located outside the walls, and therefore *outside* the boundary of physical purity; nevertheless, they participated *inside* many normative aspects of Nuremberg's culture. Indeed, they were inside the council's provision, protection, and administration. In addition, their spiritual health was just as important as their physical health, reflecting their enduring membership in the body of Christ. These vulnerable bodies were the ultimate stretchers and exemplifiers of Nuremberg as a communal unit. They were the geographical stretchers of Nuremberg because they were relocated outside the city, thereby moving the city's physical boundaries outward and necessitating the transportation of city resources to them. They were also stretchers in the sense that they were a

significant financial burden. They truly stretched the city's fiscal resources and tested the city's sense of responsibility to care for them. It was in this burden that these patients were the exemplifiers of communal belonging, as the city was not willing to extend this definition of belonging to sick foreigners. In this measure of selectivity, the demonstration of communal belonging was more exemplified in the hospital than in the city center.

The city performed the communal imperative to provide for both the body and soul of Nuremberg's weak and needy. In providing extramural patient care, city leaders balanced two crucial elements: maintenance of the holistic integrity of the city and provision of tangible resources to the sick. In addition, they orchestrated and oversaw of the complex movement of bodies that achieved these goals.

Integrity

In the 1490s, the time my study begins, Nuremberg functioned as a cohesive unit. In religious terms, it was a *Corpus Christianum*, much like the body of Christ in 2 Corinthians; it was a living organism, composed of many functioning parts. In order to protect Nuremberg's integrity, the city needed to remain intact, salubrious, and sound; thus, the city needed to maintain purity. This purity was maintained at an ostensibly utopian level by its insurmountable walls, its quality products, its unadulterated food supply, its law-abiding inhabitants, its healthy atmosphere, its sinless parishioners, and its efficient, public-spirited city council.

Nuremberg's walls provided the city a practical, protective barrier that lent a sense of intactness. The most obvious use of the walls was against attacking enemies. Though, battered and beaten, the medieval walls of Nuremberg proved impenetrable throughout the early modern period. Its gates formed functional bottlenecks that channeled people and products past layers of

inspectors and guards. As with any living organism, nourishment needed to come in from the outside world. Raw materials, vendors, commodities, and visitors regularly filtered into the city. When plague or armies besieged Nuremberg, commerce slowed to a near standstill, choking the city's very livelihood. As we have seen, the council even imported resources in order to keep the city fed. In times of peace, the walls were a permeable boundary, but also became an impenetrable barrier when under threat.

Guards at the gates monitored all incoming people to ensure no one with obvious disease symptoms slipped into the city. Begging judges regularly monitored the incoming poor; officials at toll stations inspected wagons for illegal or spoiled products. Despite these tactics, unwanted elements inevitably slipped through the gates or rotted after they were brought in. These toxic elements threatened to corrode and endanger the city's integrity. Religious impurity, disobedient inhabitants, and material corruption were all met with expulsion, purgation, and banishment. City workers conveyed these elements out of Nuremberg's walls. Night-workers hauled excrement; executioners flogged criminals; washerwomen and guards transported the clothes of the infected sick; and body carriers transferred corpses. This ritualized cleansing process wore proverbial ruts into the landscape of the city; the purging of harmful elements reasserted (the physical and mental) integrity within the walls.

The city's expurgation of dangerous elements was not intended to remove these corrosive elements from the proximity of all healthy populations; rather, the city's priority was to simply remove them from inside the walls. These impure elements were not carried far outside the city. To the annoyance of local inhabitants, animal corpses and other waste products were dropped just outside of *Tiergärtner* gate. Clothes, dishes and pigs were washed just outside the walls. One might assume that leper houses were isolated and far removed from healthy people, but they

were in fact located in the midst of suburban populations. Cemeteries too, such as St. Johannis, were also located in suburban areas. Despite general bans against going into the St. Johannis area during a plague outbreak, suburban inhabitants and vagrants regularly collected there.

Nuremberg's greatest vulnerability resided within the city walls. This vulnerability made the maintenance of its integrity imperative.

The removal of harmful waste, animals, and polluted objects was less complex than the removal of problematic humans. People could not be purged without careful consideration. Even heretics were given a chance to recant. The sick constituted a different kind of danger. The city needed them removed in order to maintain purity within the walls. Unlike animal carcasses, they could not simply be thrown out of the city, and unlike criminals, they could not simply be banished and forgotten. Hospitals became temporary holding spaces for sick, polluting bodies. The sick had to be removed to reduce the city's vulnerability, yet they were still humans whose bodies and souls were the responsibility of the city.

In order to maintain the city's purity, Nuremberg created designated spaces for material pollution; these areas typically hosted multiple forms of contamination. The parish churchyards were places to bury the dead, but they later became holding spaces for the sick. The Siechhaus was built to temporarily house lepers during the Lepraschau, but it was later used to house syphilis patients. St. Moritz chapel hosted the lepers' spiritual services during the Schau, but it became the designated space for suspected plague victims to take Communion. The Neu Bau section of the city held the Schau, Siechhaus, syphilis huts, and the pig market, and the *Unschlitthaus* (which also utilized foul smelling methods to produce tallow and lubricants). This polluted space was located downstream; thus, the city became progressively more contaminated and malodorous toward the western outflow of the river. From east to west, pollution

progressively worsened. Contributors were: the eastern mills (where illegal prostitutes were known to gather), the Holy Ghost Hospital, the Market, the Butcher's Bridge, the Siechhaus, the Unschlitthaus, city waste disposal at the walls, the lazaret, and finally the wash-hut for the washing of the most dangerous, infected clothing. This wash-hut was not originally established for the lazaret; it was originally established to wash the bed linens associated with the growing Lepraschau which became so many in number that they could no longer be washed inside the city. Finally, within the hospitals, there was a hierarchy of pollution; the rooms of the patients were considered the most polluted space.

Thresholds of spaces were particularly important. The only workers allowed to transgress the doorways of patients' rooms were caregivers, barber-surgeons, and pastors. Windows, in hospital rooms, were opened to allow in healthful air, but were not left open long enough to allow foul odors from the room to permeate the area immediately outside. Doors of the church were opened to allow those outside to hear or see spiritual services but were closed during the leper's Mass. At the city thresholds, guards stopped the incoming infected, unapproved beggars, and suspect products. As seen in Chapter 2, it may have been this filtering process that caused the sick and dead to pile up at the gates. Guards at the lazaret kept workers, patients, and objects (tainted by their presence in the hospital) within the thresholds, that is, inside the building - sometimes resorting to on-site jailing of the disobedient. When the presiding authorities were not able to keep contaminating people or objects in their approved spaces, the council renegotiated the space, then reinforced its thresholds with even more regulations.

Each one of these spaces was cleansed at the conclusion of its usage. Churches, homes of the infected, and hospital rooms were cleaned and fumigated. After the Schau, the workers disposed of straw, washed and put away dishes, and scrubbed the Siechhaus. In a symbolic

gesture, the Mother of the Schau held a concluding feast for the workers in the house after it was made again “pure.”

Just as with every living organism, the city continually ingested nutrition and purged toxic waste. The city’s integrity was dependent upon the healthy opening and closing of its bounds to let this process work. It relied on working bodies to maintain this process by guarding, carrying, and cleaning.

Tangible Resources

By the late fifteenth-century, the council of Nuremberg had brought all of the hospitals’ religious endowments under its financial supervision. It ensured payments and made up shortfalls. City-managed funds provided the hospitals’ food, medicines, clothing, bandages, firewood and workers’ wages; however, these tangible resources were finite. As such, not everyone was deemed worthy of these resources. Patient admission criteria depended upon their disease’s pace of physical deterioration and potency of its physical pollution. Since the progression of leprosy was slow, this disease had the most stringent admission requirements. In contrast, plague’s onset and progression were rapid, therefore, it had the least restrictive admission requirements. In addition to the consideration of disease parameters, the council only admitted citizens, inhabitants, and those who had worked in the city for at least six months to a year. Foreigners were purged from the city since they were regarded as the responsibility of others. The exception to this rule was any person who was found lying incapacitated within the city; he was to be cared for out of Christian mercy, “according to God’s will.” Once that individual was well enough to walk, he was required to walk away from the city since he was no longer Nuremberg’s responsibility.

The city council imposed increasingly rigid administrative oversight and infrastructure on the hospitals to ensure their integrity. As part of this process, the council prosecuted disobedient workers or it increased their pay to ensure that it was more profitable for workers to comply with the rules than to conduct extortive schemes of their own. The council also increased administrators' accountability to ensure that limited resources were being properly dispersed to patients. Just as there needed to be guards at the gates of the city, there needed to be safeguards on the city's resources. During crises, resources became more limited, thus prompting even more controls. Food regulations, for example, reflect this tightening of control in the famine years of the early 1570s. Nuremberg's quest to define its own finitude came with the resignation that it must refrain from helping everyone if it hoped to maintain its ability to help those for whom the city was responsible.

The Place-Ballets of the External Hospitals

The provision of care in these hospitals was always *performative* in time and space. Patients and workers replicated the cultural structures of the city within the hospitals. Male administrators replicated the role of the patriarch in a culture that valued established authorities and obedience. Gender roles of the home were also replicated within the hospitals. Women were caregivers, maids and cooks; they nurtured and comforted the sick on the threshold of death. Men did manual labor and brought supplies; they also stood guard on the border between the polluted hospital and the healthy community while the women remained in the domestic realm of patient care. Pastors gave consolation to the souls of the dying, just as they would in the city. The hospitals also replicated the city's food culture, both in variety and standards of quality. Patients and staff celebrated the same holidays as those within the walls, and they ate the same symbolic

foods of fish, lamb, Easter bread, and, of course, the bread and wine of Christ. Most of these cultural mores, or what Susan Leigh Star calls “boundary objects,” were used and traded below the level of conscious choice; they were simply the currencies of common decency and proper behavior.¹⁰⁷⁴

The city’s provision for patients’ bodies and souls was not only orchestrated by space, but it was sustained in time. Food items had to be eaten when ripe and disposed of when rotten. Medicines were dispersed at certain times during the day; windows were regularly opened and closed for appropriate ventilation. Throughout the day, workers constantly purged the hospital of harmful waste - bandages, dirty bedding, and excrement. *Wartgeld*, or waiting money, was paid weekly for the completed service of the contagious disease employees. Prayers, sermons, and sacraments were administered weekly, daily and at the hour of death. The duties of working bodies were carefully orchestrated in time to reflect an intensional rhythm of care.

To further illustrate the complexity of boundary issues, the tasks of disease-related workers crossed the simple barrier of pure/impure. Body carriers, food carriers, washerwomen, and chaplains or pastors in the chapels continuously brought food, supplies and religious services between the city and its external buildings. Barber surgeons, caregivers, and soul nuns touched the physical, tainted bodies of the sick and dead. Finally, pastors and caregivers were to touch the *soul* of the sick. Pastors were to preach consolation to the sufferers – reminding them to hope in Christ’s resurrecting power on the cross. Caregivers were to provide care with compassion, *Mitleid*; they were instructed to open their hearts and suffer with the patients. These bodies provided a buffer between the healthy and the sick.

As one observes the council’s provisions by looking through the lens of working bodies,

¹⁰⁷⁴ Tim Cresswell, *Place* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2004), 7.

the contagious disease hospitals were not static buildings on a map. Managers, caregivers, maids, guards, and chaplains danced “body-ballets” as they carried out their jobs.¹⁰⁷⁵ They fulfilled their tasks within cultural structures, but did so in ways that changed on a daily or even momentary basis. All of these body-ballets moved to create a place-ballet. David Seamon argues that one cannot look to simple natural, geographic space to know what a place means. Place is only created through human interaction.¹⁰⁷⁶ When evaluating these hospitals as places, we see the interactions within a network of moving bodies that continually provided goods and services to the sick. We also see misbehaving body carriers rolling corpses off stretchers, workers furtively diluting wine casks with water, and administrators impregnating female patients. It is the provision of goods and services to vulnerable bodies through the mediation of human action that gave these hospitals meaning – *imperfect* but concerted places of care outside the walls.

Contributions

This study does not sit comfortably in any early modern historical subfield. My contribution is to bring the consideration of disease into its multifaceted context: medical, social, cultural, economic, dietary, social-welfare, gender, geographic, and religious. Through exploring patients’ cultural milieu, I show how the experience of the contagious sick was more multi-layered than merely external or marginalized. This reconsideration provides an alternative perspective to the reductionist views of early modern prejudices in works such as that of R. I.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Allen Pred, "Place as Historically Contingent Process: Structuration and the Time-Geography of Becoming Places," *Annals of Association of American Geographers* 74, no. 2 (1984): 279-297.

¹⁰⁷⁶ David Seamon, “Body-subject, Time-Space Routines, and Place-Ballets.” In *The Human Experience of Space and Place*, ed. Anne Buttimer and David Seamon (London: St. Martin’s Press, 1980), 159.

Moore.

My work also highlights the physicality of cultural meaning. Most of the boundaries that I explored created the mundane structure through which people unconsciously moved, rather than the high profile religious or social divisions. The physical experience in space and time can display multiple and seemingly paradoxical demarcations of the sick that were all held at the same time.

The example of the event of the Kirchweih on a leper chapel courtyard displays how several of these layers of meaning occur at the same time. One, healthy city inhabitants had to transverse the geographic separation that defined lepers as outside. The fact that healthy individuals were willing to transgress that space, defined the lepers as inside the ritual life of the city. Two, lepers' participation in celebrations on the courtyard defined them as members of and participants in the spiritual community of Nuremberg, throughout the rhythm of the liturgical year. Three, the meals eaten together defined all partakers as worthy of being adequately fed; furthermore, they were also worthy of common culinary enjoyment. Four, there still remained interpersonal buffers through which lepers always had to interact with the healthy population. The fact that lepers were not allowed to speak upwind of a healthy person and had to wear layers of protective clothing defined their continued physical presence as threatening and, therefore, separate. All of these boundaries were observed in the single physical interaction of the Kirchweih, defining the sick as together and separate. This example demonstrates why the simple designation "clean" or "unclean," written on the papers of physicians, cannot define the whole of who these people were or what they meant to the community.

My final contribution is in the realm of civic history. By comparing the city's management of the three very different diseases, my study highlights the balance between

Nuremberg's vulnerability to the patients' physical pollution and the city's responsibility for their welfare. When the hospitals outside of the walls were threatened, the city leaders prioritized their responsibility to the sick by bringing them into the city and not abandoning them to death by war or starvation. Rather than confining one's view of boundaries as impervious dividing lines for exclusion, my use of psychological theory utilizes boundaries as a means to primarily define what is on the inside.

Every living entity needs a healthy maneuvering of the good and bad, in and out. These principles continue to be important in nations, organizations, and in individuals today – *the crucial point pivots on the selection criteria: what is healthful and what is harmful*. On an obvious level, in the twenty-first century, we do not agree with the purging criteria of the sixteenth-century. We generally do not believe individuals should be purged based on religious creed, sexuality, or health status (sadly, there were many who wanted to purge Africans indiscriminately due to the threat of Ebola), but we also do not agree with Nuremberg's purging of miasma, stray dogs, and innovators; as historians we must see this purging within its proper ideological context and within the full range of perceived threats to their integrity. I argue also that this *perceived* inability to maintain boundaries and intactness was the motivation for their increasingly exclusionary practices. When boundaries become progressively less permeable defensive walls, they choke the entity, depriving it of the good and often retaining the bad.

The Trajectory of Nuremberg – The End of the Lepraschau

The end of the Lepraschau exemplifies all of the forces discussed above: the philosophical and physical integrity of the city within the walls, the allocation of the city's limited resources, and how the movement of human bodies forced the renegotiation of the

event's boundaries. Throughout the second half of the sixteenth-century, Nuremberg faced hardship at every turn. It endured religious change, siege by its neighboring margrave, a spurious relationship with the emperor, alienation from former allies, increased taxes levied by the emperor for the war against the Turks, growth in criminal and displaced populations, massive inflation, famine, and intermittent debilitating plagues. In the wake of these threats, the city's policies turned from expansion to retraction behind its walls. This movement was exemplified in the final removal of the Lepraschau to a location outside of the city walls.

After the destruction resulting from the Second Margrave's War in the 1550s, unprecedented swells of displaced beggars came with the lepers to the Schau. The council lent money to the fund to increase the needed supplies and personnel, and it also enacted plans to filter the beggars from the lepers by means of the walls. The council erected a hut at the *Neutor* for a barber surgeon to examine festival attendees on the Monday before the Schau. The purpose of the screening was to ensure that only genuine lepers received eating-badges that "let them in" to the goods of the Schau.¹⁰⁷⁷ In 1558, Schau overseer, Georg Ketzl, advocated a new system that would designate one place where a single patrician could ensure that too many badges were not given to any leper. The recommendation was echoed two years later by Barnubas Bemer, who argued for "a special place, at which every poor person was to appear and come together and process from that same place."¹⁰⁷⁸

Overseers recommended posting begging judges at the city gates because they would be familiar with the local poor and vagrants who used the Schau as an opportunity to "slip inside the

¹⁰⁷⁷ StadtAN D1 Nr. 2 23v.

¹⁰⁷⁸ StadtAN A 26 Rep 90 Nr. 109 Bemer 1560 2r.

city walls.”¹⁰⁷⁹ A few years later, Gabriel Nützel suggested sending the prospective participants through the *Hallerthurlein* instead of the city gate. The small, narrow gate led directly off the meadow into the Neu Bau where the Schau was held; because it was narrow, it could serve as a more effective bottleneck entrance than the larger gate.¹⁰⁸⁰ Within the city, overseers complained that beggars were using the event to gain entry past the the walls, to beg in inappropriate streets, then leave “many sick and children behind them, and thereby burdened the alms-system, hospitals, and orphanages.”¹⁰⁸¹

Additional fund-raising and increasing restrictions on entrance into the event gave administrators a temporary respite in the 1560s; however, in the early 1570s, they faced a widespread grain shortage. As the city imported, subsidized, and protected grain for its own population, more beggars gathered at the gates. By 1574, it was reported that over 2,500 beggars attended the Schau, and over 700 healthy beggars were locked out. It was the final straw.¹⁰⁸²

The council split the Schau in two: one for citizens and inhabitants of the city and another for foreigners. The council printed a broadsheet announcing that citizens with suspected cases of leprosy were to go to an examination in the Siechhaus on Holy Tuesday.¹⁰⁸³ The foreigner Lepraschau was to be held on Holy Wednesday at St. Johannis leper house, outside the walls. The internal Lepraschau seems to have been largely a ceremonial gesture. There would have been no more than a handful of suspected lepers from within the city center; council decrees show that they generally evaluated internal cases of leprosy throughout the course of the year; an almost identical broadsheet published the next year, announced the removal of the Schau from

¹⁰⁷⁹ StadtAN A 26 Rep 90 Nr. 109 Diagram; StadtAN A6 Nr. 267; StadtAN A 26 rep 90 Nr. 109 Bemer 1560 4v.

¹⁰⁸⁰ StadtAN A 26 Rep. 90 Nr. 109 Nutzel 1564.

¹⁰⁸¹ StAN Rep 50a Nr. 32 2292v.

¹⁰⁸² StadtAN A 6 Nr. 55; StadtAN A 6 Nr. 352.

¹⁰⁸³ StadtAN A 6 Nr. 352.

the city center and omitted any mention of an internal Schau at the Siechhaus.¹⁰⁸⁴ The council forbade all foreign poor, leprous or not, from entering the city during Holy Week. The Lepraschau was effectively moved outside of the city walls.

The Schau continued in much the same way at St. Johannis with a shortened version of communion, food, and examination. The sworn physicians of Nuremberg continued to be renowned for producing documents attesting to the diagnosis received there.¹⁰⁸⁵ In the seventeenth-century, the numbers of the poor and leprous remained relatively constant; in 1614, for example, 2,828 people came, and 501 were found to be leprous.¹⁰⁸⁶ The event continued until the second half of the seventeenth-century when the number of diagnosed lepers began to dwindle.¹⁰⁸⁷

It is important to note, that the city's decision to move the Schau was not done out of resistance to all charity for non-residents. Since the 1540s, the Holy Cross Hospital fed over 12,000 local poor every year during Holy Week, the same week as the Schau.¹⁰⁸⁸ In 1564, Gabriel Nutzel justified blocking the poor from the Schau by arguing that the council also offered three public meals a year at St. Johannis. The city council was well aware of surrounding poor and regularly gave them aid, but it was only willing to do so outside of the city walls. Nuremberg could no longer "let in" the chaotic, overwhelming element that refused to stay within the prescribed bounds.

¹⁰⁸⁴ StadtAN A6 Nr. 356.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Georg Wolfgang Karl Lochner, "Die Sondersiechen in Nürnberg, ihr Almosen und ihre Schau" *Deutsche Zeitschrift für die Staatsarzneikunde* 17 (1861): 235. Theoretically the doctors' responsibilities remained the same even though they were central justification for the ending of the Schau.

¹⁰⁸⁶ StadtAN D5 Nr. 29 Mentzer 1609.

¹⁰⁸⁷ StadtAN B35 B 1508.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Helmut Haller von Hallerstein and Ernst Eichhorn, *Das Pilgrimspital zum Heiligen Kreuz von Nürnberg: Geschichte und Kunstdenkmäler* (Nuremberg: Selbstverlag des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nuremberg, 1969), 47-50.

The fate of the Schau displays many of the components discussed throughout my work and was emblematic of trends at the close of the sixteenth-century. It shows the failure of medieval religious endowments to keep pace with the demographic changes of the sixteenth-century and the struggle surrounding the council's efforts to keep them solvent. The greatest financial problems correlated with the rise in food prices; it was impossible to host bodies without an affordable food source. Even during those difficult years, there remained the abiding importance of spiritual services to the lepers even in the face of economic troubles.

One of the most fascinating aspects of the Schau was that the city leaders never considered completely canceling it. The event was a burden to the physicians, the central account office, and to the populace who complained about the noise, smell, and pesky beggars. The council could have used any excuse to cancel the event, just as it used the Reformation to cancel the Corpus Christi procession and Passion play;¹⁰⁸⁹ however, the Schau was the ultimate emblem of the piety of Nuremberg's people, the magnanimity of its patricians, and the skill of its physicians. Perhaps moving the event was a way to dodge the publicity of ending the event; and perhaps they wanted to avoid the publicity of the council's inability to pay for and control the poor and leprous coming through the city's walls.

Finally, the removal of the Schau outside of its walls was prompted by the movement of physical bodies. As participants slipped out of the Schau grounds to beg, to steal or to hide within the city, their bodies tested the boundaries of the approved, polluted space. These transgressions threatened the fundamental integrity of the city. The council attempted to control

¹⁰⁸⁹ The council wrote to the bishop of Bamberg who advised them to advertise the Schau with no mention of the Indulgence usually offered for donating to the event. Johannes Müllner, *Die Annalen der Reichsstadt Nürnberg von 1623*, vol. 3, edited by Michael Diefenbacher, and Walter Gebhardt (Nuremberg: Im Selbstverlag des Stadtrats, 2003) 3: 483.

the bodies by adding layers of filtering at the walls; however, these efforts failed in the face of such overwhelming numbers. It also threatened the city's resources when they abandoned incapacitated loved ones and children to be cared for by the city. While not wanting to end the illustrious event for which Nuremberg was well known, the only solution was to move it outside of the walls. In removing the event, the city limited its custodianship of the foreign lepers and beggars while restoring the integrity within.¹⁰⁹⁰

The removal of the Lepraschau shows the spatial and financial orchestration the city leaders used to limit the city's vulnerability, strengthen its integrity, and provide for those for whom it was responsible. At the same time that participants of the Schau were being locked out, the goods and services in the extramural hospitals were being locked in. The food supply to the separated hospitals never faltered in this time of crisis. In parallel with increased regulations within the city center, the council expanded administrative regulations in the hospitals to ensure that expensive resources were properly dispersed. At a time that the council carefully scrutinized who belonged to the city, their inclusion of patients in the hospitals never wavered.

Internally, the use of the Siechhaus also displays shifting city needs. The Siechhaus was originally established to be the special separated space for foreign lepers during Holy Week, but during the rest of the year, it was intended to only be used for the storage of Lepraschau tables, benches and dishes. By 1562, the building was outfitted for syphilis patients when the French House was temporarily used as a plague hospital. It became an inspection site for cases of plague before patients were sent to St. Sebastian's plague hospital. The Siechhaus was also used as a weigh house for wine, an extremely expensive and threatened resource. Finally, in 1588, the

¹⁰⁹⁰ Jason Coy, "Magistrates, Beggars, and Labourers: Migration and Regulation in Sixteenth-Century Ulm," *Gated Communities?: Regulating Migration in Early Modern Cities*, ed. Bert De Munck and Anne Winter (Farnham, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2012), 157-158.

house was converted into a *Spinnhaus*, Nuremberg's first form of a workhouse. The Siechhaus was more than just a building on the map; the *place* of the Siechhaus was a storehouse for the city's contaminating influences. Its conversion was emblematic, not of the diminishing leper threat but that the threat of the lepers was eclipsed by the increased threat of the poor. The city's policies for poor relief and management ran parallel to the phenomena discussed in my study. The poor embodied every possible fear: they carried disease, immorality, anonymity, swindling and falsifying, begging, stealing, and blasphemy. The conversion of the Siechhaus initiated a new phase of identifying and rehabilitating (at least in intention) the threat of the internal poor. As the council took on increasing paternalistic responsibility over its people, it attempted to neutralize the problems of poverty through facilities to improve its poor children through vocational and moral training.¹⁰⁹¹ It was designed to be a cleansing process from within.

Nuremberg's policies of discouraging innovation and rigidly controlling all aspects of commerce paralleled this blocking out of the Lepraschau. Nuremberg effectively hid behind its walls until 1806, when Napoleon broke them down, and 1868 when it was forced to integrate into the Kingdom of Bavaria. Outstripped and outmoded, its role in European life was relegated to that of a museum of all things medieval.¹⁰⁹²

Like the medieval *Raitung* that demarcated the standard loaf of bread, the city of

¹⁰⁹¹ Joel Harrington, "Escape from the Great Confinement: The Genealogy of a German Workhouse," *The Journal of Modern History* 71, no. 2 (1999): 317-318, 326. Harrington describes the new workhouse as "not a new cruelty but an old kindness." He describes the council's process of "bureaucratic momentum." He argues that the workhouses were a result of bureaucracy that tends to build on itself; any changes made were more procedural than ideological, and the most powerful impetus to change was fiscal. He contends about community that "Rather than narrowing the definition of 'community' and treating local beggars like outsider criminals, the early workhouse progressively treated alien beggars and delinquents like the city's own poor, traditionally provided for and rehabilitated by a paternalistic magistracy."

¹⁰⁹² Gerald Strauss, *Nuremberg in the Sixteenth-Century: City Politics and Life between Middle Ages and Modern Times* (New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1976), 151.

Nuremberg was also designed to achieve a particular size, shape, and purity. The price of the raw materials defined how much tangible provision could be given to its people; its shape was fleshed out by the performative actions of city leaders and workers; and its purity was continually tested and any corruptions purged. While patients in Nuremberg's contagious disease hospitals found themselves outside the boundary of physical purity, they were still within the boundary of civic responsibility. They were also partakers in the bread of Christ's body. Like the *probemahlen und backen*, Nuremberg was both stable and predictable, yet was continually being re-written and re-defined.

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