CONTENTS

Abbreviations .......................... ix

Introduction: Occide, uerbera, ure! What about Violence in Ancient and Medieval Times? ......................... 1
Maria Cristina PIMENTEL & Nuno Simões RODRIGUES

VIOLENCE IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

1. The Dawn of Human Violence: A Reading of Posidonius, Lucretius and Sallust ................................. 17
Nicoletta BRUNO

2. Violence and the Feminine: The Elegiac Woman in Action ...................................................... 43
Arcangela CAFAGNA

3. Domestic Violence in Roman Imperial Society: Giving Abused Women a Voice ......................... 57
Margherita CARUCCI

4. Duel and Violent Death in Propertius’ Elegy 4,10 ...................................................................... 75
Irma CICCARELLI

5. The Wrath of Gods Falls upon Men: The Case of Ancient Arkadia ............................................ 93
María CRUZ CARDETE

6. Why Does Zeus Rape? An Evolutionary Psychological Perspective ........................................ 103
Susan DEACY

7. The Motif of verberare puellam in Latin Elegiac Poetry .......................................................... 117
Rosalba DIMUNDO
8. Violence as a Manifestation of ‘pietas’ . . . . . . . . 139
   Paolo FEDELI

9. Violence in Prayer: God’s “Other Side” in the Book of
   Psalms. A Literary Approach . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 167
   Maria FERNANDES

10. The Rhetoric of Violence and Erotic Masochism in the
    Epistles of Philostratus . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 181
    Rafael J. GALLE CEJUDO

11. Another Medea? Violence and Procne’s Family in Ovid’s
    *Metamorphoses 6* . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 197
    Nikoletta MANIOTI

12. Violence against Slaves as an Element of Theatre in Plautus
    Marc MAYER I OLIVÉ

13. Himerius’s Testimony on *mousike* as a Means of Preventing
    Violence in the Late Antique School of Rhetoric . . . . . 243
    José Guillermo MONTEM CLA

14. Violence and Myth: The Creative Violence of Dragon-
    Slaying in the Ancient and Early Medieval Worlds . . . . 259
    Daniel OGDEN

15. Death Omens in Aeschylus and Sophocles: Clytaemnestra’s
    Dream between Blood Revenge and the Struggle for Power
    Pierpaolo PERONI

16. Viriathus and his Contemporaries as Victims and Perpetrators of Conflict Violence . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 285
    Deborah L. POTTER

17. Strike, Smite and Terrify: Reflections on Physical, Ritual
    and Psychological Violence in Ancient Egypt . . . . . . . 295
    José das Candeias SALES

18. Blood Feud and Blood Pollution in Archaic and Early
    Classical Greece . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 315
    Irene SALVO
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Violence in Statius’ Tydeus: Against Others or against Himself?</td>
<td>Carlo Santini</td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Pursuit and Ritual on Early South Italian and Sicilian Red-figure Pottery. The Workshop of the Himera Painter and the New Iconographic Compositions of the late 5th Century BC</td>
<td>Marco Serino</td>
<td>349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>(Not) Doing Violence to Myth: The Suppression of Force in Pindar</td>
<td>Daniel Sicka</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Misit Thyestes preces: Cursing and Magic in Horace’s Epode 5</td>
<td>Gabriel A. F. Silva</td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Filicide in the House of Atreus</td>
<td>Maria de Fátima Silva</td>
<td>387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Female Group Violence in Greek Myth: A Case Study on the Lemnian Androctony and the Crime of the Danaids</td>
<td>Nereida Villagra</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>‘Visual’ Metaphors of Violence: Representations of Submission on Roman Coins</td>
<td>Marco Vitale</td>
<td>417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>VIOLENCE IN THE MEDIEVAL WORLD</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Violence in the Love Poems of the Carmina Burana</td>
<td>José Carracedo Fraga</td>
<td>433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Violence Reflected: High-Medieval Diplomatic cauleae as a Mirror of Society</td>
<td>José Manuel Díaz de Bustamante</td>
<td>447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>A Targeted Violence: The Early Years of Venetian Rule in Padua</td>
<td>Daniele Dibello</td>
<td>461</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
29. *Divino interime gladio*: The Suffering of the Judge in Some Visigothic Passions
   Ivan Neves Figueiras

30. Words, Actions and Controlled Lives. Women and Violence in Medieval Galicia
    Miguel García-Fernández

31. *Oportet te accipere virum et laetari*: A Form of Violence in Some Lives of Virgin Saints
    María Elisa Lage Cotos

32. Violence and Conflict in the Portuguese Medieval University: From The Late-Thirteenth to the Early-Sixteenth Century
    Armando Norte & André de Oliveira Leitão

Sources

Bibliography
STRIKE, SMITE AND TERRIFY: 
REFLECTIONS ON PHYSICAL, RITUAL AND 
PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE IN ANCIENT EGYPT

José das Candeias Sales

In a simple comparative analysis, ancient Egypt is commonly regarded as a less violent civilization than, for example, its counterpart in neighbouring Mesopotamia. However, we can easily identify traces of violence in many behaviours of ancient Egyptian society: there were corporal punishments for less committed students and peasants who dodged or intended to evade the tight mesh of pharaonic taxation. There were also attested practices of verbal, physical and sexual violence upon women. Despite being practiced in ancient Egypt, both in the domestic and public sphere, the Egyptian moral condemned violence, specifically the kind one could play on their own servants and/or subordinates, as can be found in The Book of the Dead, Chapter 125, Negative Confession: “I have not caused pain”; “I have not slighted a servant to his master.”

On the other hand, in the context of the ideology of the winner, each pharaoh must, even if only theoretically, be involved in and proclaim the domain repression of vanquished enemies, which was a recurring theme often depicted on a large scale, namely on the temples’ pylons. The scenes of ritual offering of enemies by the Pharaoh to the main gods of the Egyptian pantheon are, in this sense, an evident trait of what we might designate as “ritual violence”, which was greatly appreciated in the country of the Pharaohs.

In this paper we will present and characterize the practice of violence in ancient Egypt through some of its real expressions, whether deliberate or ritual and ceremonial, as a phenomenon with culturally and socially integrated forms and techniques. Finally, we will discuss a type of violence that is underlying many of the Egyptian iconographic and textual productions, especially those that relate to life expectancy: we refer to the threat of violence and constraints faced by one who does not align his existence by maatic behaviors and ends up, in many situations, acting as a powerful deterrent to the regulated
Egyptian way of living. Inherent to our questioning of the phenomenon of violence in ancient Egypt, in its various forms, is the concept and generic definition of violence, that is not restricted to the physical and material (the level of physical integrity) but also includes the level of moral or psychological coercion and any actions intending to violate individual autonomy and existential behaviours.

**Physical violence**

Whenever the all-controlling Egyptian bureaucratized central administration assumed that a peasant (*meretu* or *sekhetiu*) tried deceitfully to escape any tax payment — the peasant would be whipped.\(^1\) Such a conclusion can be plainly extracted when considering the lively parietal iconographic representations, sculpted or painted, on Egyptian private mastabas and tombs, as well as in some written records.

A frieze on the Mereruka mastaba, Teti I’s vizier and priests’ superintendent, dating to the 6\(^{th}\) Dynasty (c. 2300 BC) and located in Saqqara North — the largest mastaba from the Old Kingdom — depicts bended, subdued peasants being carried away to be punished for disobedience.\(^3\) The same motif appears on a detail from the inner chapel of the tomb of Akhethotep (5\(^{th}\) Dynasty), located today in the Louvre Museum (ground floor of the Sully wing), but which was

---

1 *Meretu*, “servants”, is a generic designation, used during the Old Kingdom, of peasants subject to conscription work; *sekhetiu*, “the ones from the field”, was used in the New Kingdom (Sales 2001b, 170).
2 Sales 2001b, 170; 2001d, 189; 2001f, 445; Caminos 1992, 31. According to the *Palermo Stone*, since the 1\(^{st}\) Dynasty a census was held annually (“each year”, *n t snw mnpt*) in every district of the Delta, whereas in the 2\(^{nd}\) Dynasty it became biennial (*t snw*) and extensible to all Egypt. It was directed to cattle, to “the gold and the fields”, that is, to movable and immovable property (Bleiberg 1999, 930; Katary 2001, 351, 352; 2007, 188; 2011, 2, 4, 5). The Egyptian fiscal machine was complex and it rigorously accounted citizens, peasants, cattle, fields, trees, artisans, manufactures, vessels, temple goods, etc., presupposing a hierarchical scheme. The royal treasure was supervised by a royal chancellor (*hmtw-btt*), reporter to the vizier (*tt*) who was supported by a vast bureaucracy that controlled taxable goods, storage, processing and distribution of State revenues (Katary 2011, 5; Cooney 2007, 173, 174).
3 Vide Wilson, Allen 1938, Plates 36 and 37; Porter and Moss 1978, 528.
originally at Saqqara.\textsuperscript{4} In a beautiful painted scene in the mid-18\textsuperscript{th} Dynasty tomb of Menna (TT 69), at Sheikh Abd el-Qurna, Theban necropolis, a worker under Menna’s supervision lashes, with a small staff, a prostrated man lying before him. A third man, on his knees behind the chastened one, raises his arms, pleading for mercy.\textsuperscript{5}

Also in literature there are memories kept of beating peasants. An elucidative case from the Middle Kingdom (Senwosret III’s reign, 12\textsuperscript{th} Dynasty) explores their lot of misfortunes through several angles, including the corporal, physical punishment they endured:

“Let me also expound to you the situation of the peasant, that other tough occupation. Comes the inundation and soaks him. He attends to his equipment. By day he cuts his farming tools; by night he twists rope. Even his midday hour he spends on farm labour, He equips himself to get to filed as if he were a warrior. The dried field lies before him; he goes out to get his team. When he has been after the herdsman for many days, he gets his team and comes back with it. He makes for it a place in the field. Comes dawn, he goes to make a start and does not find it in its place. He spends three days searching for it: he finds it in the bog. He finds no hides on them; the jackals have chewed them. He comes out, his garment in his hand, to beg for himself a team. When he reaches his field he finds it broken up. He does three ploughings with borrowed grain. His wife has gone down to the merchants and found nothing for barter. Now the scribe lands on the shore. He surveys the harvest. Attendants are behind him with staffs, Nubians with clubs. One says to him ‘give grain.’ There is none. ‘He is beaten savagely. He is bound, thrown in the well, submerged head down. His wife is bound in his presence. His children are in fetters. His neighbours abandon them and flee. When it’s over, there’s no grain.’”\textsuperscript{6}

Despite the biased nature which supports it (a systematic criticism of all manual labour in order to glorify the work of the educated and learned scribes), the text of \textit{pLansing} connects the harsh living conditions of the peasantry to the physical violence exerted upon them and

\textsuperscript{4} Block A3 of east wall, south side, of the inner chapel of the tomb of Akhethotep at Louvre Museum — Ziegler 1993, 74, 75, 136, 137, 199, 207.
\textsuperscript{5} Porter and Moss 1994, 135; Campell 1910, 89.
\textsuperscript{6} \textit{pLansing} (\textit{pBritish Museum} 9994; Lichteim 1976, 170-171; Caminos 1992, 33; Blackman, Peet 1925, 289-290; Cardoso 1987, 86-87.
their families. Not surprisingly, another satire does the same, also dating to the Middle Kingdom:

“The field hand cries out more than the guinea fowl. His voice is louder than a raven’s; his fingers have become ulcerous with an excess of stench. When he is taken away to be enrolled in Delta labor, he is in tatters. He suffers when he proceeds to the island, and sickness is his payment. The forced labor then is tripled. If he comes back from the marshes there, he reaches his house worn out, for the forced labor has ruined him.”

It is interesting to notice that the narrator begins his apology of the scribe’s activities with a general enunciation of physical violence exerted upon those who occupied all manual professions, a reason that sufficed, in his opinion, for his son to learn to write and to commit himself to studies:

“The beginning of the teaching which the man of Tjel named Dua-Khety made for his son named Pepy, while he sailed southwards to the Residence to place him in the school of writings among the children of the magistrates, the most eminent men of the Residence. So he spoke to him: ‘Since I have seen those who have been beaten, it is to writings that you must set your mind. Observe the man who has been carried off to a work force. Behold, there is nothing that surpasses writings.”

Among those who Khety saw as victims of beating were certainly peasants. The descriptions do not deceive: weariness, uncertainty, deprivations and misfortunes accompanied the peasants throughout his activities. Moreover, the violence exerted upon them by the tax collectors was, in fact, brutal, striking them and their families. To add to the sweat expended in the arduous and distressing tasks of working
the land were tears shed by those whom the State punished severely and exemplary, by physical maltreatments, lashes or whippings.9

Also from the reign of Amenemhat III (Middle Kingdom) comes detailed documentation (pBrooklyn 35.1446) about the aggressions and the suffering inflicted upon the families of peasants who fled to the Sinai or Egyptian oases. These fugitives, circumventing conscription work, jeopardized the right of the State to compulsively use their occasional work for ploughing the fields, maintaining irrigation ditches, working on construction projects or obtaining raw materials abroad.10 The families of such deserters were imprisoned until they had returned; when they did, many were permanently doomed to those conscription tasks.11

The literary account named Tale of the Eloquent Peasant also alludes to the thrashing and theft suffered by Khuenanupu, a peasant from Wadi Natrun, in the Lybian desert, by the hands of Nemtynakht, an unscrupulous and violent man, son of Iseri, a dependent of the high steward (men-per or imi-ra per uer) Rensi:

“Then he [Nemtynakht] took a stick of green tamarisk to him and thrashed all his limbs with it, seized his donkeys, drove them to his domain. Then this peasant wept very loudly for the pain of that which was done to him. This Nemtynakht said: ‘Don’t raise your voice, peasant. Look, you are bound for the abode of the Lord of Silence!’ This peasant said: ‘You beat me, you steal my goods, and now you take the complaint from my mouth! O Lord of Silence, give me back my things, so that I can stop crying to your dreadedness!’”


11 Katary 2001, 352; Cooney 2007, 166. As Edward Bleiberg writes, “The ancient Egyptians identified two major crimes associated with avoiding conscription: failure to arrive at work and flight from a place of work. The punishments for these crimes were very severe. The family of the offender was sometimes forced to work in his place while he performed state labor for an indefinite period of time. Each prisoner’s case seems to have been reviewed after ten years of servitude” (Bleiberg 1999, 931).

Enfeebled and oppressed by grief, the peasant, resorting to Rensi for justice, still gave proof of being “good of words” (*nefer medu*). He made nine consecutive appeals to the high steward for the return of his stolen goods and the restoration of the shattered justice. Although his pleas turned out to be ultimately successful due to the direct intervention of the pharaoh himself, Nebkauré Khety, the peasant was still being assaulted by men at the orders of the high steward: “*Now this peasant had made this speech*¹³ to the high steward Rensi, the son of Meru, at the entrance to the courthouse. Then he had two guards go to him with whips, and they thrashed all his limbs.*”¹⁴

Underlying this description of greed, villainy and physical violence employed against the eloquent peasant, there is a deep moral theorization around the concept of *maat*¹⁵ that, in order to strengthen its arguments, resorts to incidents well known in Egyptian daily life, such as beatings with rods or thefts — in sum, all kinds of authority abuses, aggressions and violations of the social order.¹⁶ Despite all the fictional indications inherent to the theme’s literary treatment in this text, it does not question neither the seriousness of the moral principles it expressed, nor the atmosphere of violence and attacks perpetrated by the administration’s high officials and magistrates upon the peasantry.

The mistreatments suffered by the eloquent peasant of the The Wadi Natrum were not punishments for evading taxes but, as a dependent individual and member of an inferior social stratum, he is subject to a coherent literary treatment. The construction of his character gains substance and dimension by becoming an “aggregating symbol” of the majority of peasants and a representation of field workers in general, rather than being just a simple literary personage.¹⁷

---

¹³ Third petition.

¹⁴ Lichteim 1975, 177; Canhão 2014, 413-414; 2006, 18; 2013a, 114; Lefebvre 1949, 59; Faulkner 1973a, 33-34; Lalouette 1984, 205; Parkinson 1997, 67; Le Guilloux 2002, 16, 57-59. The peasant ascribes Rensi’s attitude to a complete inability to understand the accusations and the justice of his own pretensions (Canhão 2007, 97).

¹⁵ Carreira in Canhão 2013, 9; Canhão 2007, 89. For Parkinson, the tale is a moral anecdote of profound irony (Parkinson 1997, 55).

¹⁶ Canhão 2004, 136-137.

In the *Admonitions of Ipuwer* a similar picture of generalized violence, anarchy, crime and pillage in which several physical maltreatments, namely beatings, are enounced, is also described:

“Lo, hearts are violent, storm sweeps the land, there’s blood everywhere, no shortage of dead, the shroud calls out before one comes near it. (…). A man strikes his maternal brother. (…) Wearers of fine linen are beaten with sticks. (…); He is assaulted with blows of the stick; he is criminally slain. (…) when the timid is not distinguished from the violent? (…). One man assaulsts another, and one transgresses (…)”

This tragic existential picture, in which violence and cruelty had a prominent place, reached Egypt in the late Old Kingdom and during the First Intermediate Period. It went on through other historical periods of pharaonic Egypt, such as the New Kingdom or the Late Period. Nevertheless, here and there we can witness some sporadic measures taken by the authorities to diminish the Treasury’s agents’ arbitrary behaviour, such as those taken in the reign of Horemheb, during which corporal punishments ceased to be extensible to the families of debtor peasants.

However, even after such reforms, authority abuses continued throughout the Ramessid Dynasty. Again, during the New Kingdom, satires on crafts and trades, widely used in an educational context (*pChester Beatty V, pSallier I, pAnastasi IV and V*), establish taxes and beatings as distinguishing features of dependent workers, in contrast with the social and economic status of scribes.

Also in educational contexts, physical violence upon students seems to have been used as a “pedagogical method”. An Egyptian proverb advocated that “The youth has a back and he hearkens to the beating of

---


19 Katary 2001, 353. During the New Kingdom, the army became the main entity that conscripted men, specialized in crafts or not, when the State required human resources to protect its imperial interests (Cooney 2007, 167).

20 Katary 2007, 193.

him.”22 Another one states: “There are excessive words in what you said. I’ll give you one hundred blows and you’ll leave them all. You are to me like an ass that was beaten”23; and yet another said: “Are you so deaf that won’t listen? You only listen when you are beaten.”24 These and other texts show that corporal correctives were considered as methods of “teaching” and training intellectual-moral values in the Houses of Life. The most indolent students could also even be led to imprisonment. However, the scribes responsible for teaching (tepi en seshu) sometimes seemed to wish they had other means at their disposal to convince reluctant boys of the good things that studying could provide for them. Thus speaks one of such scribes, with a tone of disenchantment, to his disciple: “I beat you with every kind of sticks, you do not listen. If I knew another way of doing it.”25

The fact that Egyptian society have admitted these punishments of students can only be understood in the light of the scribes’ privileged status and of the idea that education was key for students to have good and successful future careers. For a boy to suffer “pedagogical beatings” throughout his formative path would be better than being cudgelled for the rest of his life as a man relegated to manual labour. We are before one of those situations where the ends justify the means.

The sporadic thrashing and occasional penalties at school, which aimed to focus the student on his duties, would be rewarded with the lasting existential advantages afforded by a career, regardless of the specific area to which he would devote himself, as a text from the 20th Dynasty acknowledges: “He [the scribe] is the task-master of everyone. There is no taxing of the work of the scribe. He does not have dues (…). Exercise the office of magistrate, and then you will find it advantageous in old age.”26 Many of the texts collected in the “school miscellanies”, devised to train future scribes, sought precisely to encourage them in

23 pSallier I, 7,7-8,2; Vernus 2001, 378. Words addressed by Ameneminet, scribes’ responsible, to the scribe Pentauret.
24 pAnastasi IV, 2,4-3,2; Vernus 2001, 381.
25 Lichteim 1976, 169; pLansing 2,4-3,3; Vernus 2001, 385.
26 pSallier I, 6,9-7,9; Simpson 1973c, 344.
their studies, which seems to denote, nonetheless, that many of them would be neither very zealous in their duties, nor fervent supporters of studying and working...27

As in all patriarchal societies, ancient Egypt’s women were also subject to violence and to verbal, physical and sexual abuse by men, notwithstanding, on one hand, the many privileges they enjoyed in comparison with the existential situations of other women in the ancient world and, on the other, the great distance which separates it from what, to the modern eye, can be considered as full equality. As some wisdom texts allow to perceive, verbal intimidation — actions developed “with the head” — was the most general kind of violence.28

In the Old Kingdom, the 21st maxim of the Instruction of Ptahhotep advised: “When you prosper and found your house, and love your wife with ardor, fill her belly, clothe her back, ointment soothes her body. Gladden her heart as long as you live, she is a fertile field for her lord. Do not contend with her in court; keep her from power, restrain her.”29

In the New Kingdom, the Instruction of Any prompted to follow the same behaviour: “Do not control your wife in her house, when you know she is efficient; don’t say to her: ‘Where is it? Get it!’ when she has put it in the right place. Let your eye observe in silence, then you recognize her skill.”30

The warnings of the Egyptian wise men urged for an edifying maatic behaviour, though its explicit enunciation and repetition implies that many Egyptian men continued to deviate from such advice by using verbal, non-physical violence upon their women. It is admitted, therefore, in contrast with the idyllic picture of the harmonious monogamous Egyptian family, that disagreements and arguing, insults, offenses and pressures exerted on women marked Egyptian family life, which many times ended in divorce.31

Physical violence (carried out “with the arms”) also seems to have been present in the Egyptian familial circle.32 In the Tale of the Two

---

28 Orriols I Llonch 2007, 58, 67.
32 Orriols I Llonch 2007, 67.
Brothers (19th Dynasty), a woman, eager to take revenge for the disdain with which Bata, her young brother-in-law, demonstrated towards her sexual insinuations, feigns to have been physically abused by him in order to convince her husband, Anupu:

“Come. Let’s spend for ourselves an hour sleeping together (...).” Then the youth became like an Upper Egyptian panther in harsh rage over the wicked proposition that she had made to him, and she became exceedingly fearful. (...). The wife of his elder brother was fearful on account of the proposition which she had made. She then fetched grease and fat and feigningly became like one has been assaulted with the intention of telling her husband: “It’s your younger brother who has assaulted me.”

To compose a story with pedagogical plausibility in such a way that it could be recognized by its male and female listeners/readers, the author, resorted to the everyday practice of physical violence against women, surpassing the stereotype of female passivity in order to describe the character with the strong and active traits of a transgressor, seducer and cruel liar. A judicial manuscript of the 20th year of Ramesses II’s reign documents one such case of physical violence against a woman. Her husband, accused of maltreatment, was therefore taken to court.

The most important document referring to sexual violence (developed “with the virile limb”) on women is pSalt 124 (pBritish Museum 10055) which mentions the crimes (rapes or adultery?) of Paneb upon several “citizenesses” of Deir el-Medina:

“Charge concerning his robbing Yeemwaw of her garment and he threw her on the top of the wall and violated her. (...) Paneb debauched the citizeness Tuy, when she was wife to the workman Kenna, he debauched the citizeness Hunro, when she was wife to Pendua, he debauched the citizeness Hunro, when she was with Hensenebef; so said his son. And after he

33 pd’Orbiney 4, 5 - 4, 7 = pBritish Museum 10183; Simpson 1973a, 96; Lichteim 1976, 205; Eyre 1984, 93-94; Lalouette 1987, 163; Brunner-Traut 2000, 72; López 2005, 129; Araújo 2005, 201. The female character of the tale is not identified (Servajean 2011, 12; Orriols I Llonch 2012, 32, note 67).

34 Carreira 2005, 162; Orriols I Llonch 2012, 32-33.

35 Orriols I Llonch 2007, 63.

36 Orriols I Llonch 2007, 67. Paneb, who lived at the turn of the 13th to the 12th century BC (19th Dynasty), was the chief of the gang working on the right side of the tombs in the Valley of the Kings, being responsible, along with the chief of the left side, for the organization of the royal necropolis’ workers (Sales 2012a, 13-20; Rice 2002, 145).
...had debauched Hunro, he debauched Webkhet, her daughter, and Apahte, his son, also debauched Webkhet."

In the first case, we are clearly before a crime of rape, while in the others everything seems to point to adultery (abuses of authority over the property of others), eventually practiced with the consent of the women involved.

Ancient Egypt left us, however, other testimonies on different contexts where physical violence occurred. In wartime, for instance, captured spies were punished with harsh beatings. The temple of Abu Simbel (19th Dynasty) contains representations that illustrate these punishments inflicted by four Egyptian soldiers on two Hittite spies (shasu).

Similarly, along with the deprivation of individual freedom by imprisonment or forced labour, the repression of crimes and offenses, entrusted to local magistrates acting as delegates of the pharaoh, the supreme holder of legislative and judicial power, included physical punishments of various kinds, such as the “100 strikes”, either with hard rods or whips with flexible lashes.

Besides deportation as a penalty for minor offences, mutilation was usual, for instance, the severing of noses and ears. However, when infractions directly harmed the interest of the State (e.g., regicide),

---

38 That is why the names the husbands of these Deir el-Medina “citizenesses” are mentioned (Orriols I Llonch 2007, 66).
40 Peters-Destéreact 2003, 190.
41 Redford 2002, 118.
42 The case of the conspiracy destined to murder Ramesses III is present in the so-called Papyrus of the Harem Conspiracy, divided in three fragments, of which the most important is the Judicial Papyrus of Turin, whereon the sentences of those considered guilty are registered. The drafts/minutes of the four sessions of the process engaged against the conspirators came to us through the Judicial Papyrus of Turin and of several fragments, some of them in very poor condition of preservation, such as the Papyrus Rollin, the Papyrus Varzy, the Papyrus Lee 1 and 2, the Papyrus Rifaud I (A, B and C) and the Papyrus Rifaud II (E). According to Susan Redford, as consequence of this process, 32 men and women were condemned to death, all of them belonging to the circles of the court. Their family tombs and their family status were confiscated and abrogated, as well (Vernus 1993, 141-156; Mcdowell 2001, 317; Redford 2002, 133).
theft of sacred objects, vilification of the pharaoh, desecration of tombs and royal mummies, etc.) investigative committees and extraordinary courts were nominated to reinforce the centralization of the judicial power, applying dissuasive, violent sentences such as impalement (br tp bt or br r bt, “to place on top of wooden beam”, the most common of penalties) and death, even though the latter seems to have been rarely put into effect.

In criminal cases, whenever Egyptian courts could not apply a sentence after a process, it was the king who decided the penalties, that could range from beatings (misdemeanours, thefts, administrative abuses, verbal defamation) to death (tomb robbery, high treason), passing through the ablation of tongues (treason and perjury), severing of hands (scripture falsifications), noses and ears (false oaths) and forced labour in mines and borderlands, depending on the seriousness and degree of culpability of those convicted. During the questionings, judges and viziers could resort to several kinds of corporal abuses, torture and ordeals, which were considered not only legitimate, but legally established means of proof to obtain conclusive evidence, namely in criminal cases. The violence practiced in these contexts reached levels of cruelty.

Egyptian dissidents could even be burned alive. This can be deduced from the Chronicle of Prince Osorkon, from the 22nd Dynasty, of the Third Intermediate Period, regarding the rebels who revolted against Amun-Re. Exile was usually the sanction reserved for political opponents whose crimes were not punishable by death. For Egyptian high officials involved in judicial processes, the most severe punishment was a real “social death”, which consisted in the loss of

43 The process against the looters of the Theban royal necropolis’ tombs, in the time of Ramesses IX, is in Leopold II (Vernus 1993, 19-ss.).
44 Bedell 1973, 153. To Susan Redford, it was the most common form of execution in the New Kingdom: “Impalement appears to have come into vogue in the New Kingdom” (Redford 2002, 124).
45 The sentence used in legal texts for capital crimes was btsw ʾty n mtwt, “offenses deserving death” – Bedell 1973, 146-ss.
46 The use of river ordeals, “by the crocodile”, as they were designated, seems to have occurred only in trials of cases of adultery (Redford 2002, 120-121; Bedell 1973, 162-163).
47 Sales 2001d, 189; 2001e, 279; Redford 2002, 119.
49 Bedell 1973, 173.
properties, trade, status and, sometimes, even of their own identities, equally extended to their lineage.  

If we piously believe in many of the spells from the Book of the Dead, which survived to this day, all the images of real physical violence previously presented would not have existed in ancient Egypt. The Egyptian ethics, the so-called “ways of life”, *mtn n `nb*, rejected, in theory, all forms of physical violence. For instance, spell 125 explicitly condemns all corporal punishments. Many “confessions”/“declarations” state it:

“I have committed no evil upon men.  
I have not oppressed the members of my family.  
I have not wrought evil in the place of right and truth.  
I have had no knowledge of useless men.  
I have brought about no evil.  
I did not rise in the morning and expect more than was due to me.  
I have not brought my name forward to be praised.  
I have not oppressed servants. (...)  
I have not cause harm to be done to a servant by his master.  
I have not caused pain.  
I have caused no man to hunger.  
I have made no one weep.  
I have not killed.  
I have not given the order to kill.  
I have not inflicted pain on anyone.”

Devised to proclaim the spiritual “purity” and excellence of conduct of the deceased (“I’m pure! I’m pure! I’m pure! I’m pure!”), the negative confessions which declared the innocence of the dead demonstrate that all these actions, thus presented in a standard way, were practiced by ancient Egyptians, supposedly by those other than the deceased.  

Hence, more than evidencing that there was no place for physical harassment in Egypt, these texts truly manifest the contrary.

---

50 McDowell 2001, 318.  
51 “(...) the negative confession is a major source of ancient Egyptian ethical standards. A life lived in accordance with these standards was a life lived according to *maat*” (Stadler 2008, 2). Vide Lazaridis 2008, 3.
The so-called ritual scenes of smiting the enemies (sekher, skr, “crush”), also known as triumph scenes, constitute a military topos in iconography and plastic art which runs through almost all Egyptian history, from the 4th millennium BC to the 2nd century AD, and to which was given particular relevance within pharaonic ideology.52

These scenes of the ritual defeat of the pharaoh’s enemies proclaim the aspiration to a generalized, universal, dominion of political power through acts of expressive violence. The pharaoh is always depicted in grand scale, holding a mace-axe in his raised arm. Regardless of whether he is portrayed in a static or dynamic posture, he is barefoot. The foot farther from the enemy is in the air, though its toes touch the ground. He grabs one or more of his enemies (who are depicted on a much smaller scale) by the hair and whips them. The vanquished are either standing or kneeling; either curved, exposing their backs to the pharaoh, or raising their heads toward him. Sometimes, their arms fall helplessly alongside their bodies; sometimes one of the arms is raised, pleading for the pharaoh to be merciful, while the left hand is placed on the knee (a prevailing gesture before the New Kingdom).

The sovereign, holder of the ritual warrior strength, is usually pictured in an idealized way and in active stance. Bearing all the elements of the apparatus inherent to his function as warrior, he is clothed in a panoply of significant emblems and insignia of power (crowns, sceptres, shendjit-kilts, taurine tail, false beard, quivers, bows, hedj-mace and akhu and mibet axes, khepesh, ames-club, several uraei). As a rule, his enemies are depicted in a passive posture, waiting to receive the final blow. The final blow defines, basically, the essence of these scenes.

Many scenes also feature a high divinity from the Egyptian pantheon, to which the enemies are ritually delivered/dedicated (Amun-Re, Re-Horakhty, Khnum-Re, Horus, Isis-Hathor, Ptah, Thoth, etc.) The god is sometimes shown giving the pharaoh the khepesh, a small metal (bronze) curved scimitar, a “weapon of victory”, symbolizing the concession to the pharaoh, by the gods, of military triumph over his foes.

Thus, victory is a gift from the gods who, in the end, are the actual victors. The semantics of such signs are unmistakable: divine favour and military victory belong to the standing character that bears the regalia, in contrast to the diminished and helpless groups of enemies. The convening of all the royal insignia are enough to explain the significance of the depicted scene.

By executing antagonist chiefs, Egyptian pharaohs, as supreme rulers and, in theory, lords of warfare, used their prerogative as vanquishers of their internal and external foes. Following the prescriptions of maat, they pacified the land by drawing back Chaos and restoring the primordial Order. The emphasis placed on the acts of bravery performed solely by the king (as if he was not actually assisted by several officials with distinct and hierarchical competences) intended to exalt his exceptional category, physical courage, qualifications to rule and the divine support underlying his actions — all of which were requisites to exercise kingship.

If many of such violent scenes evoke actual combats opposing Egyptian forces, led by the pharaoh, and neighbouring peoples (such as the Libyans, Nubians and Asians, the “Nine Bows”), others are purely fictional, depicting massacres of enemies in a symbolic way. These scenes, which represent the Egyptian kings engaging their foes victoriously throughout eternity, have an apotropaic nature.

However, whether representing fictitious or real combats exaggerating the military prowess of the depicted kings, the smiting of enemies in such compositions, more than being considered ostentatious echoes of frantic conquests, should be regarded as particularly relevant testimonies to a form of bellicose violence, depicted in strong visual images (visual metaphor) which we could classify as “approved”, “official” and “legitimated”.

**Psychological violence**

The profuse decorations of pharaohs’ tombs in the Valley of the Kings, and the texts which accompanied them (Litany of Re, Book of Caves, Book of the Hidden Chamber, Book of the Amduat, etc.) recall the dangers the deceased had to contend with in the Hereafter. The enemy creatures which sought to hinder the pharaohs’ access to the promised world of blessedness were plenty: “demons”, usually male,
with special powers over determined activities,53 “wandering dead” (mwt), “disembodied spirits” (akh),54 gigantic and multiform serpents (hefaut),55 composite monsters, etc.

Frequently, the animals included in the composite bodies of demons were reptiles (especially snakes), felines and canines, but there were also other mammals (asses, baboons, hippopotamus, goats, bulls), insects, scorpions and birds (falcons, vultures). This iconography does not differ much from the divine animal or hybrid representations but, in their demonic iconography, ancient Egyptians also resorted to fantastic, monstrous and grotesque animals, combining in the same body two or more creatures or animals with human beings.56 Ammit, “The dead devourer”, whose presence in the Room of the Two Truths (Maaty) was mandatory, is perhaps the most well-known of these composite monsters.57

These hideous and frightening characters that populate the Egyptian mental universe and worldview acted directly upon the perception of post-mortem future that inspired ancient Egyptians. No matter how

53 Egyptian religiosity does not allow an easy distinction between “demons” and “divinities”. The main difference seems to consist in the fact that “demons” do not receive cult, at least until the New Kingdom. From a supernatural point of view, there is a hierarchy, in which “demons” are subordinate to the gods (netjeru). They could act individually, in pairs, in triads or in group (Lucarelli 2010, 3-4).

54 While the mwt beings were always malevolent, the akh-spirits could be malevolent or benevolent (Lucarelli 2010, 4).

55 The close observation of serpents or serpentiform figures incorporated in the decorative programs of Egyptian royal tombs, besides allowing to notice the existence of several kinds of serpents, also shows that such creatures from the beyond had several forms, some of them perfectly incomprehensible to our organizational logic: their size could be either normal or gigantic, with different stoutness or volume: they could also have several heads, wings, human feet, head and arms, etc. Rather than representing concrete animals from the Egyptian fauna, serpents constitute a polyvalent symbol of the different ctonic forms of evil and chaos with which the deceased had to contend in the underworld.

56 Lucarelli 2010, 5.

57 With a crocodile’s head, lion’s forelegs and hippopotamus’ paws and hind flanks, Ammit had a bizarre look, destined to emphasize the impossibility of the deceased to escape her destructive action, in case they were considered guilty on the Tribunal of Osiris, during the post-mortem Judgment. She would eat the heart ib of the non-justified deceased, eliminating for them the chance of a life in the Fields of Iaru. Therefore, her existence had a dissuasive psychological effect to the Egyptians concerned with their fate in the Hereafter. She represented thus a frightening force to be reckoned, like a “second death” (Sales 1999, 358-360).
much familiarity or assurance they expressed about their future, the imaginary formed by these creatures was certainly an additional form of pressure on their lives. In this sense, it is admissible that they represented some form of psychological violence upon the Egyptian community of believers, firstly on the higher members of Egyptian administrative elite and secondly, along with a demotization of the hope in the afterlife during the First Intermediate Period, to an expressive and ever-growing number of members of Egyptian officialdom.

Considering this problematic due to its inherent dose of moral coercion and psychological violence, the rites and magical-medicinal operations of mummification (e.g., ritual purification and mummification per se; funeral procession with fumigations and libations; hotep di nesu offerings; opening of the mouth ceremony; placement of the sarcophagus in the tomb; funeral services assured by specialized sem-priests) intended to transform the deceased into an “Osiris” and then into an akh (from mortal to immortal); the appropriation of spells specially endowed with magical and incantatory powers to assure the transfiguration of the dead (Pyramid Texts, Coffin Texts, Book of the Dead), tomb inscriptions and amuletic objects are no more than procedures to guarantee the rituals’ success and “decompression and psychological relief.”

As “protection and salvation methods”, they attest some of the forms of resistance used by ancient Egyptian people against anguish and existential despair. However, being in possession of adequate material-magical elements, the living, as a deceased-to-be, feels (better) prepared to deal with the fearsome threats of the Hereafter. The performative and apotropaic character of the spells was regarded as a warranty for success, safety and confidence.

Egyptian consciousness was, without doubt, centred on the mystic concern about existence and death. Such “living for death” was accompanied by distress that, when not involved in total negativity, gigantic fears or compelling frights, represented though a form of psychological pressure/violence.

58 Smith 2009.
59 Allen 1974, 1; Hays 2010.
Notwithstanding the several conflicts, dangers and threats posed by earthly life and by the passage into the life of the Hereafter, the “realm of silence”, ancient Egyptians developed an optimistic, positive, courageous and vibrant attitude towards death and the fate beyond the grave, all the more that everyone, well anchored in appropriate devices, intended to be “transformed into a god” ($bpr\ m\ ntr$).61

Final remarks

The phenomenon of violence in ancient Egypt was not confined only to actions that threatened physical integrity, but was also grounded on a level of moral and psychological coercion, which transgressed the autonomy of individual and collective existence and behaviour.

Physical violence had a real expression in Egyptian society. It was manifest in many of the behaviours observable throughout its history, such as corporal punishments inflicted on peasants and students, verbal, physical and sexual violence upon women or brutal acts of punishment against spies and criminals. Violence manifested by physical aggression was, therefore, a reality in ancient Egypt, affecting both the domestic and public sphere, although condemned by Egyptian moral values.

On the other hand, in accordance with an ideology of victory, each pharaoh was supposed to be victorious. Such capacity to achieve success by using violence had to be proclaimed, becoming thus a frequent visual theme, often depicted, particularly on temple pylons, in large scale scenes of domination and repression of vanquished foes.

This was a way to celebrate a victory, either an actual one, revived and perpetuated by its representations, or a fictive one, serving as an instrument of dissuasive propaganda directed at their adversaries. Through these fictitious scenes, the aggressive facet of the pharaoh’s power showed off physical strength and warned real and potential enemies with the unleashing of such force. The scenes of ritual offering of enemies by the pharaoh to the main gods of the Egyptian pantheon are, in this sense, an eloquent trace of what we might indicate as ritual or symbolic violence, much appreciated in the land of the pharaohs.

Apart from these real/deliberate or ritual/ceremonial expressions of violence, ancient Egypt knew yet another, more subjective kind of violence — *psychological violence* —, eloquently manifest in many textual and iconographic productions, especially related to the hope of life in the Hereafter: we refer to the violence and constraints that could be faced by those who did not accord his existence under maatic behaviours. For Egyptians, it worked, in many situations, as a powerful regulatory and dissuasive force that conditioned the living.

Archivio di Stato di Padova (ASP), Ducali, reg. 4, c. 4r.

Archivio di Stato di Venezia (ASVe), Collegio, Formulari Commissioni, reg. 6, cc. 34r-37r.


Catedral de León 1987: Ruiz Asencio, José Manuel. *Colección documental de la Catedral de León (775-1230)*, vol. III (986-1031), León: Centro de Estudios e Investigación “San Isidoro” - Caja de Ahorros - Archivo Histórico Diocesano [Colección Fuentes y Estudios de Historia Leonesa, 43].

Catedral de León 1990: Sáez, Emilio and Carlos. *Colección documental del Archivo de la catedral de León (775-1230)*, II (953-985), León: Centro de Estudios e Investigación “San Isidoro” (CSIC-CECEL) - Caja de Ahorros y Monte de Piedad - Archivo Histórico Diocesano, [Colección Fuentes y Estudios de Historia Leonesa, 42].


Documentos… 2003, Documentos selectos para el estudio de los orígenes del romance en el Reino de León. Siglos X-XII. Edición facsímil, introducción y estudio…, 2003, by José María Fernández Catón, Manuel C. Díaz y Díaz, José Antonio Pascual Rodríguez, José Manuel Ruiz Asencio, José Ramón Morala Rodríguez, José Antonio Fernández Flórez and José Manuel Díaz de Bustamante. Madrid: Fundación MonteLeón - Testimonio Compañía Editorial and Colección «Fuentes y Estudios de Historia Leonesa».


Jus municipale Vicentinum cum additio partium, ac decretorum serenisimi dominii, et indice, ac repertorio locupletissimo, Vicentiae 1706.

La Sagrada Biblia, 1863, La Sagrada Biblia traducida al español de la Vulgata latina, y anotada conforme al sentido de los santos Padres y expositores católicos, por el Ilmo. Sr. D. Felipe Scio de San Miguel, ex Provincial del Orden de las Escuelas Pías de Castilla y Obispo de Segovia. Tomo segundo del Antiguo Testamento. Barcelona: Sociedad Editorial La Maravilla.


Otero de las Dueñas 1999: Fernández Flórez, José Antonio - Herrero de la Fuente, Marta, Colección documental de Santa María de Otero de las Dueñas, I (854-1108), [Colección Fuentes y Estudios de Historia Leonesa, 73], León: Centro de Estudios e Investigación “San Isidoro” - Caja España de Inversiones - Archivo Histórico Diocesano.

Portugaliae monumenta historica, 1967, Portugaliae monumenta historica, a saeculo octavo post christum usque ad quintum decimum / edita Iussu Academiae Scientiarum Olisiponensis, Nendeln (Liechtenstein): Kraus Reprint, (4 vols.).


Statutorum magnificae civitatis Veronae libri quinque, una cum privilegiis in hoc volumine comprehensi, Venetiis 1747.
Statuta Patavina noviter impressa cum diligenti cura et castigatione et cum additionibus necessariis, tam provisionum ducalium, quam excellentissime Consilii Rogatorum et cum repertorio rubricarum omnium secundum ordinem iparum et iuxta observationem moderni temporis, revisa et correcta per eximium juris utriusque doctorem dominum Bartholomeum Abborario lecturam ordinariam notariae in florentissimo Patavino gymnasio legentem, Venetiis 1528.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Bibliography


BIBLIOGRAPHY


BIBLIOGRAPHY


García-Fernández, M. 2013b. “Las élites femeninas en las ciudades gallegas de la Baja Edad Media” Mirabilia 17, 2: 337-393.


Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments 1982-. Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus.


Tiverios, M. A. 1978. “Μι/uni1F70/uni1F73α/uni1F71σταση/uni1FE6/uni1F04θλου/uni1FE6/uni1F29ρακλ/uni1FC6/uni03BC/uni1F72Λερνα/uni1F77α/uni1F5Dδρα/uni1F08ρχαιολογικ/uni1F74/uni1F18φη/uni03BCερ/uni1F77ς/uni1F08: 109-118.


Wüst, E. 1937. “Penelope” *RE* 19/1: 460-493.


