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Officials on the Scaffold: Lutheran Martyrdom in Andreas Gryphius' *Catharina von Georgien*

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Abstract: In a reading of Gryphius' *Catharina von Georgien* within its political and confessional context of Silesia at the end of the Thirty Years' War, this article analyzes the transformation of the Christian martyr cult within early modern German tragedy. It argues that Gryphius used the hagiographic type of the royal martyr as a moral example and figure of governmental order. He depicted the pious Georgian martyr Queen Catharina and her devout officials as an inspiring community of civic virtue to be imitated by his fellow Silesians. This patriotic injunction of the tragedy resonates with legal concepts of public law put forward by Gryphius' mentor, Georg Schönborner and others. The article finds that Gryphius' martyr tragedy must be read as an aesthetic contribution to some of the legal movements decisive for German state formation around 1650.

Keywords: early modern tragedy; Christian martyr cult; German state formation

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1. Introduction

Andreas Gryphius' (1616–1664) writings bear witness to an ongoing fascination with Christian martyrs. In his tragedies,[1,2] the martyr protagonists die pinched between their unbending faith and the cruel sentiments of tyrants. As they rejoice in suffering for their beliefs, they are at the same time devoted to the political causes of their fatherlands. In this double bond to worldly and otherworldly matters, Gryphius' martyrs reflect a core question in research on his tragedies: how are we to conceive of his dual interest in matters of politics and religion?[3]

In her monograph on Gryphius, Nicola Kaminski aligned what she considered the "heilsgeschichtlich-theologischen" and the "geschichtlich-politisch-staatsrechtlichen" readings of Gryphius' tragedies.[4] Approaching the same question theoretically, Oliver Bach analyzed the tragedies within a wide-ranging context of contemporary theological and legal thought. He grouped Gryphius with anti-Machiavellian legal thinkers emphasizing the moral aspect of politics (Bach 2014, p. 583). My present addition to these readings will be an analysis of Gryphius' Lutheran transformation of the medieval martyr's cult in his tragedy *Catharina von Georgien*. I will demonstrate how Gryphius' Lutheran concept of martyrdom shaped his ideas of the edificatory potential of tragedy. Additionally, how his tragic treatment of morals of government and civil service contributed to processes of German state formation in the period.

In *Catharina von Georgien. Oder bewehrte Beständigkeit*, published in 1657, but likely written during the years 1647–1649 (Mannack 1991, 921f), Gryphius dramatized the martyrdom of the Orthodox Queen Ketevan of Kakheti (a kingdom of Georgia) who was tortured and executed at the court of Shah Abbas I of Persia in 1624 after eight years of captivity.[5] This story of complex diplomatic crises and tenacious war bore clear similarities with Gryphius' own situation in Habsburg Silesia during and after the Thirty Years' War. A Habsburg hereditary land without representatives in the Imperial Diet, Silesia and its predominantly Lutheran population[6] continued to suffer under political and religious strife

after 1648. Gryphius was deeply involved in these conflicts in his work as syndic in the city-state Glogau.

Martyrs are abundant in Gryphius' funeral orations.[7] Here, their stories mirror his and his fellow Silesians' lives and deaths in a soteriological light. Through his funeral orations and tragedies, Gryphius repeatedly considers how the martyr invites her audience to imitation. In the prologue to *Catharina*, he presents the Georgian queen as entering the stage of his own fatherland, embodying in her suffering a virtuous disposition to follow.

By analyzing *Catharina*, I will investigate how Gryphius made use of Christian martyr figures as a playwright. First, I will give a short introduction to Gryphius' main influences as an author of tragedies. Then, I will turn to *Catharina* and analyze the protagonist's martyrial disposition as a way of regulating worldly desires through otherworldly faith. This leads me to an analysis of Catharina's wish to stage her suffering as a testimony of virtue, making martyrdom essentially a matter of spectacle. Following this, I will discuss how Gryphius draws on elements from medieval patron saint cults in his concepts of fatherland. This leads me to consider some of the political elements of Gryphius' martyr tragedies: how he connects royal martyr figures like Catharina to a broader concept of government as a civic community of virtuous officials. Finally, I will connect this reading of royal martyrs and civil servants within *Catharina* to movements in legal theory decisive to German state formation in the period, drawing on Robert von Friedeburg's recent work (von Friedeburg 2016). Here, the interdependence of morals and politics to Gryphius will be important.[8] Borrowing a term from James Hankins' work on the Italian renaissance, I will speak of the *virtue politics* of Gryphius' edifying tragedies (Hankins 2019).

A central question throughout will be Gryphius' Lutheran belief. Within 17th century drama, Gryphius stands out as a Lutheran writer choosing martyr stories as his recurring tragic material. If the Augsburg Confession had in article 21 acknowledged saints as exemplars of faith, it had still unequivocally rejected them as media of salvation. Although Gryphius drew inspiration from Jesuit theatre, I will argue that his depiction of martyrs differed markedly from that of his contemporary Catholic colleagues: He developed the political elements of the martyr stories in greater depth, and his protagonists displayed no saintly miracles. They rendered virtuous faith through passive suffering rather than brave deeds.[9]

2. Gryphius and European Martyr Tragedy

Gryphius was an avid reader of different kinds of literature: He delved into a wide range of sciences, studied patristics and Christian martyr stories. The aesthetic form of his tragedies, however, was drawn mainly from contemporary European drama.[10] Before analyzing *Catharina*, it is necessary to consider Gryphius' encounter with other tragedies of the period.

Like most of his contemporary Silesian writers, Gryphius' life was marked by both international travels and loyalty to his home region. As Herbert Schöffler has pointedly described, Silesia's lack of a university kept it in lively contact with most of Europe, as its students had to go on grand tours abroad after finishing the Gymnasium.[11] The orphaned Gryphius fled his war-ridden hometown Glogau already in 1628 and travelled and studied in cities such as Danzig, Leiden, Strasbourg, Paris, and Rome before returning to Silesia in 1647. Before finishing his first original drama *Leo Armenius* in 1647, he translated the Jesuit Nicolas Caussin's martyr tragedy *Felicitas* (1620) and the converted Catholic Joost van den Vondel's King David tragedy *Gebroeders* (1640).

The choice of *Felicitas* would prove telling for Gryphius' approach to his contemporary dramatists. In many ways untypical of Jesuit plays, Caussin's drama presented the story of the 2nd century Saint Felicitas of Rome, a patient martyr mother watching the executions of her seven sons before meeting her own. The play focused more on the enduring faith of the individual than on the great deeds of the Christian church. Its female protagonist and its drawn-out slaughter scenes rarely made it to the Jesuit school stages (Parente 1987, p. 189).

Additionally, Gryphius' critique of Pierre Corneille's 1643 *Polyeucte* in his prologue to *Leo Armenius* was very telling. Gryphius most likely read the play during his 1644 stay in Paris (Mourey 2020). Corneille's tragedy, initially labelled a *tragédie chrestienne*, staged the 3rd century martyrdom of the zealous convert Polyeucte in Armenia under Roman occupation. As could be expected of a French neo-classical tragedy of the era, *Polyeucte* featured a romantic side-plot between Polyeucte's wife Paulina and the Roman general Sévère. In his prologue, Gryphius condemned Corneille's introduction of such a liaison into the noble subject of a tragedy. He pointed towards his forthcoming *Catharina* as a proper treatment of love in the genre, hinting at Catharina's supreme love towards God.

As these examples reflect, Gryphius found his most important theatrical models and interlocutors in tragedies modelled on martyrdom and Christlike passions. This was in turn reflected in his four political tragedies *Leo Armenius*, *Catharina*, *Carolus Stuardus* and *Papinianus*, with the three latter in different ways deserving the designation of martyr dramas.[12]

Dramatic treatments of the passions of Christ and Christlike figures had been part of European culture for a long time. In the 10th century, Hrotsvitha of Gandersheim turned Terentian comedy into edifying dramas, with *Dulcitias* and *Sapientia* representing chaste female martyrs dying at the hands of their heathen admirers, much like Gryphius' *Catharina*. Hrotsvitha's plays were discovered and reprinted by Conrad Celtes in 1501 but found few readers before the 20th century.

More generally, Christ's passions recur as material in medieval liturgical drama,[13] represented in Easter plays and by imitation through saintly and biblical figures. These performative traditions declined in the 16th century in many parts of Europe, notably with the banning of French mystery plays due to civil unrest in 1548 (Teulade 2015). Manuscripts from the Latin Easter plays in the Silesian cities of Glogau, Breslau, and Brieg date no later than the 15th century (Lipphardt 1975, III, 811ff). However, medieval plays on the passions of Christ, martyrs, and biblical figures influenced the revival of classical tragedy in 16th century Europe. These stories proved apt subjects for writing new dramas in the style of Euripides, Sophocles, and Seneca (Muir 1997, 2007; Leo 2016; Lazarus 2020).[14]

A turning point in the development Christian tragedy was the 1542 *editio princips* of the Byzantine *Christos Paschon*.[15] The Greek passion play proclaimed itself to be written in the Euripidean style and was, in fact, to a large extent composed of verses from Euripides' tragedies. Reprints and translations of the play followed rapidly across the continent (Parente 1985). As James Parente has argued, the play helped solve a dramaturgical problem of the new tragedies modelled on Christ's Passions. With the redemption of mankind and the savior's resurrection, the story of Christ was not unambiguous materiel for tragedy. *Christos Paschon* let the mourning witnesses, especially the *theotókos* Maria, take the center stage as media of a proper tragic atmosphere.

An influential interpretation of the Byzantine play was Hugo Grotius' 1608 *Christus Patiens*. Here, the laments of Peter, Judas, Maria, and choruses of Jews and Roman soldiers make out most of the drama. Grotius' play influenced Vondel (Parente 1985, p. 116), it observed an English translation by George Sandys (1640) and a German by Johann Klaj (Klaj 1645), and Corneille mentions it as a source of inspiration in his prologue to *Polyeucte*. Gryphius more than likely read the play during his years in Leiden.

Gryphius' tragedies continue this early modern tradition of Christian revival of classical tragedy. His tragic models should not only be noted for their Christlike protagonists and their (not very classical) soteriological representation of death. Their use of mourning onlookers to create a tragic atmosphere around the suffering protagonist also deserves our attention, as Gryphius himself surrounded royal martyr figures like Catharina with grieving civic witnesses, modelled on Christ's apostles in the New Testament.

Gryphius' literary interlocuters also point towards which public he would address with his works: learned German readers like himself. Gryphius' plays—with their academic prologues, lengthy references, and stylized rhetoric—have not without reason been termed school dramas.[16] *Catharina* and his other plays would, according Gryphius himself, find their most important stages at the Breslau Gymnasium scene (Gryphius 1963, IV, 163ff).

Theatre and political life were closely connected in this literary public. All the Silesian dramatists of the 17th century held offices as civil servants (Newman 2016). There is evidence that the Breslau city council itself consulted the staging of Gryphius' plays here.[17] This must be kept in mind when considering Gryphius' political and religious treatment of martyrdom in *Catharina*.

3. Martyrial Faith and Desire

I will begin my reading of Gryphius' *Catharina* by considering the protagonists' *martyrial disposition*. What defines the martyr protagonist of the play? How does she relate to her faith as a Christian and to the Georgian nation as its queen?

Catharina depicts the last night and day of the martyr queen's captivity at Shah Abas' Persian court. The shah is madly in love with his prisoner and threatens to kill her unless she converts to Islam and marries him. Catharina fervently rejects this, and a group of Georgian and Russian officials instead seek her release through diplomatic negotiations. This is finally foiled by Abbas' sudden decision to have the queen executed. The last act shows the dying Catharina rejoicing at her release from earthly suffering and concludes with the tormented shah believing himself to be haunted by the ghost of his beloved.

Despite her faith in God and in a promised life beyond the worldly, Catharina cares deeply for the political causes of her country. To understand her disposition between otherworldly faith and her desire for earthly triumph, we might first consider the play's theme of the timely and the eternal. This is treated allegorically in the very first scene, where the figure of Eternity is lowered onto a vanity setting of corpses, weapons, pictures, and jewelry. Treading on this glimmering debris, Eternity admonishes the audience that they are searching in vain for lasting things in this world. It describes Catharina as an example to follow, in living *on the earth* as one not *of the earth*:

> *Ewikeit.* Die werthe Fürstin folget mir die schon ein höher Reich erblicket/
> Die in den Banden frey/nicht irrdisch auff der Erd/
> Die stritt und lid für Kirch und Thron und Herd.
> Ihr/wo nach gleicher Ehr der hohe Sinn euch steht;
> Verlacht mit ihr/was hir vergeht.
> Last so wie Sie das wehrte Blutt zu Pfand:
> Vnd lebt und sterbt getrost für Gott und Ehr und Land.
> (Gryphius 1963, VI, 141f | I, pp. 82–88)

> *Eternity.* The worthy princess follows me, eyeing a higher kingdom already,
> Free in fetters, not earthly on earth,
> She struggled and suffered for church and throne and hearth.
> You, carried towards the same honor by the high sense,
> Scorn with her what withers here,
> Let, as she, the worthy blood be a pledge,
> And live and die in solace for God, Honor, and Fatherland.[18]

Unearthly on earth, free in shackles; Catharina's life and longing is presented from the outset through figures of paradox. Notably, although she lives as an alien on earth, her life is committed to the worldly institutions of the church, the throne, and the herd. Those of a similar noble spirit are exhorted to mortgage their blood as they live and die for God, honor, and their country.

Eternity's call for self-sacrifice is echoed by Catharina later in the same act as she receives the good news that the Persian dominion over her country has ended, and her family has been freed. Hearing this, she gratefully turns to God:

> *Catharina.* Nun du/in dem ich hir verstricket
> Mein Reich und Kind hast angeblicket.
> Nu klag ich nicht was ich verlohren;
> Weil du diß Pfand erhalten hast.

Mir ist, als wenn ich Neugebohren;
Ich fühle keiner Kummer Last.
Ich wil diß Sorgenvolle Leben
Für Reich und Sohn dir willig geben
(Gryphius 1963, VI, p. 151 | I, pp. 401–8)

Catharina. Now you, while I am imprisoned there,
Have looked upon my kingdom and child.
I mourn not what I have lost,
As you have preserved this pledge.
I am as born anew;
I feel no weight of grief.
I willingly offer you this sorrowful life
for my kingdom and my son.

Catharina's prayer repeats Eternity's ideals: her faith in God is linked to a desire for the prosperity of her family and her country, and she prophetically declares herself willing to give up her own sorrowful earthly life for these. Moments before, at the outset of the play, Catharina had trembled with anxiety after a prophetic nightmare of her own death.

If her spirits change in the first act upon hearing the good news from her country, she, throughout the play, undergoes a further change towards a more steadfast disposition in her ordeals. The devotional ideals set forth by Eternity and herself become a spiritual support in her suffering. Facing death in the fourth act, she consoles the maid Salome who is worried for the future of Georgia and Catharina's son Tamaras:

Catharina. Wird er/wie jeder sol/Gott über alles liben;
So kan sein Hertze nicht der Vntergang betrüben.
Wofern er nicht für Gott die Mutter wagen kan;
Jst er nicht unser Kind und geht uns gantz nicht an.
[...]
Vnd denkt an unsern Tod. Hirmit bleibt Gott befohlen!
Wofern der Höchst' euch noch wird in Gurgistan holen;
So zeigt dem Tamaras und allem Land-Volck an/
Der möge nicht vergehn der wie wir sterben kan.
(Gryphius 1963, VI, p. 203 | IV, pp. 377–92)

Catharina. Will he love God above all, as everyone should,
Then the demise cannot afflict his heart.
If he cannot wage his mother for God,
He is not our child and means nothing to us.
[...]
And remember our death. With this, may God be with you!
Should the Highest still return you to Georgia,
Show Tamaras and the people of the land
He will not vanish who dies like us.

Catharina posits absolute love towards God as an ideal for everyone, including her son. This means that Tamaras should not care for her death which she believes was brought about by God. If her son does not share this faith of hers, she will reject him as her own, aligning herself with the believer's hatred towards their family in Luke 14:26.

In the second part of the quote, Catharina unfolds her notion of martyrial imitation. In not giving in to the shah's demands, she has proved that she will not give up her Christian faith or her loyalty to the country of which she is queen. She wishes for those surviving her to commemorate her death, and she hopes to show them that anyone dying like her will live on. In other words, she wishes to convey the same martyrial desire that has moved her to not give in to the shah's demands.

As an essential part of Christian martyrdom since early Christianity, Catharina models her death on the passion of Christ. This is carried out repeatedly with explicit comparisons: "Gott schenkt uns die Cron/wenn wir/wie Er gestorben!" ("God gifts us the crown when we have died as he!") (Gryphius 1963, VI, p. 203 | IV, p. 370). Catharina receives the crown of the holy kingdom by dying like Jesus. Interestingly, this verse is echoed by her later "Der möge nicht vergehn der wie wir sterben kan" (Gryphius 1963, VI, p. 204 | IV, p. 392). Through this doubling of "wie Er"/"wie wir", her imitation of Christ's passion not only aims at her own salvation, but also mimics Christ's way of becoming an exemplar of Christianity in death.[19]

We can, thus, outline three defining traits of Catharina's martyrial disposition: First, she carries an absolute faith in God. Second, this faith requires of her a certain regulation of her worldly desire: her fatherland, family, and honor are more important than her earthly life. Third, this desire entails a wish to create a worldly testimony for those surviving her to imitate; to bear witness (μάρτυς) to the unearthly faith that defines her earthly life by sacrificing that very life.

These dynamics of faith and desire make up the paradoxes of Catharina's martyrdom. Although she conceives of her earthly life as infinitely unimportant compared to her faith in God, her devotion still prescribes a commitment to certain worldly matters. Her faith demands of her to desire the well-being of her country and family, and it demands of her to leave a spectacular testimony to inspire her peers.

4. Martyrdom as Spectacle

The figure of Eternity begins the play with what must be considered an address to the readers and audiences of the play: perceive Catharina in her suffering as an example of virtue. Later in the play, Catharina's own urge for her entourage of officials to imitate her resonates with the initial address to the recipients the play. The play's audiences should look at the martyr queen as would her fellow Georgians officials.

Gryphius from the outset in his 1657 prologue to the play proposes that his readers see Catharina as a compatriot: "Die von mir öffters begehrte *Catharine* tritt nunmehr auff den Schauplatz unsers Vaterlandes/und stellt dir dar in ihrem Leib' und Leiden ein in diser Zeit kaum erhöretes Beyspill unaussprechlicher Beständigkeit" ("The Catharina so coveted by me now steps onto the scene of our Fatherland, and there represents to you, in her body and suffering, an example of ineffable constancy rarely heard of in these times".) (Gryphius 1963, IV, p. 133). Quite conscious of the theatricality of politics—he did own a copy of John of Salisbury's *Policraticus* (Seelbach and Bircher 1994)—Gryphius here has the martyr queen enter the stage of his own fatherland. She represents virtue in a martyrial form: through her body and suffering ("Leib' und Leiden").

The notion that martyrdom was a matter of spectacle can be traced back to early Christianity. Glen Bowersock has argued that the Christian martyr cult was a product of Roman city culture and its spectacular forms (Bowersock 1995). Writings on martyrdom then often referred to the *theatrum mundi* trope of 1 Corinthians 4:9: "For I think that God hath set forth us, the apostles, last, as it were appointed to death; for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men". Early Christian martyr stories regularly included an audience witnessing the martyr's death. Likewise, conceptual discussions of martyrdom, such as Tertullian's *On the Spectacles* and Origen's *Exhortation to Martyrdom*, considered martyrdom a transfiguration of Roman spectacular culture, edifying to men and pleasing to God (Castelli 2004, 104ff).

As Hans-Jürgen Schings has argued (Schings 1968, p. 42), Gryphius more than likely knew these early Christian discussions of martyrdom. He treats the passage from 1 Corinthians implicitly in the 1648 funeral oration "Folter menschliches Lebens" ("The Torture of Man's Life"). Addressed to his parish in Glogau, Gryphius begins the oration by comparing the deceased to "Die ruhmwürdigste Catharine, Königin von Georgien" in their common perseverance in suffering (Gryphius 1963, IX, p. 163). He connects their deaths to a vision of human suffering as martyrial spectacle:

> Doch mangelts bey dieser unserer versteckten Marter nicht an Zusehern und Auffmerckern/denn wie man deren Aussage/die in der Folter gerissen werden/ganz genau anzuhören and auffzusetzen pfleget. So siehet anietzt auf uns und unser Leiden die Gantze Welt/die sich entweder ob unserer Gedult spiegelt/oder ob unserm Abfall entsetzet: Es geben auf uns Achtung alle die nach uns leben sollen [...] Es sehen unsern Schmertzen zu alle heilige Engel: Welchen wir ein Schau-Spiel worden/welchen unsere Tugend als ein zerrieben und auff Kohlen verbrennend Räucherwerk/einen lieblich und angehnem Geruch giebet: Diese werden dermaleins in gegenwart Gottes und der Triumphierenden Kirchen bezeugen/ob recht oder übel mit uns gehandelt/sintemal doch nicht die Marter/sondern die Laster einem Schimpflich/so wenig als die Pein/und nicht die gerechte Sache einem zum Märterer machet/
> (Gryphius 1963, IX, p. 172)

> Still, our hidden torment lacks no onlookers and attenders as it is custom to listen and write down the words of those torn in torture. In this way, the whole world now looks upon us and our suffering, either mirroring our patience or appalled by our downfalls: All living after us offer us their attention [...] All holy angels look at our pains: To them we have become a spectacle, to them our virtue is like incense, torn and burning on coals, offering a lovely and pleasant odor: Someday, they will, in front of God and the triumphant church, testify whether we were treated right or wrong, as it is not the torments, but the sins that damn us, as little as the pain and not the just cause makes one a martyr.

The passage contains several paradoxes concerning the matters of spectacle, suffering, and judgement. We are first told that man's hidden suffering ("Marter") does not lack onlookers and listeners. Gryphius goes on to describe this hidden torment of human existence as a spectacle with three audiences: First, there is the world of mortals—the earthly onlookers who are to survive the ones suffering. They hear the stories of hidden suffering because it is custom to write down the words of those torn by torture. The earthly audience will then mirror any display of patience and be appalled by the downfalls of the suffering. This worldly spectacle notably depends on the role of the writer, which in this funeral oration, would be Gryphius himself. The writer should call to attention the lessons to be learned from the deceased's life.

Second, the holy angels will look upon the mortals in pain as a spectacle and draw in the lovely smoke of their burning virtue. Third, on the day of judgement, the angels will be God's witnesses as to what injustices have been committed in worldly life. Human suffering plays an ambiguous role in front of these two otherworldly audiences. On the one hand, the angels perceive human virtue like crushed incense on burning coals, a sacrificial image associating the charred flesh of saints. On the other, Gryphius underlines that the cause, not pain suffered, makes a martyr to God. Augustine drew this distinction, *non poena sed causa*, numerous times, setting a standard definition for Christian martyrdom (Kotzé 2020, 138f). Gryphius follows him and presents pain paradoxically as integral to the witnessing in the court of God, but at the same time, not that by which one is judged.

If Gryphius leaves the reasoning of God's judgement somewhat oblique, he still clearly posits that martyrdom and suffering (whether private or public) is a matter of spectacle. Figures of suffering leave a testimony to virtue that can be retold and passed on, inspiring others. This, at same time, reflects how he would perceive his activity as a writer handing down martyr stories. The historical Queen Ketevan's martyrdom was not a widespread subject in European literature. Gryphius' is the first drama on her, and his single cited source is the story from the French chronicler Claude Malingre's 1641 *Histoires tragiques de nostre temps*.[20] Rewriting and dramatizing her story, Gryphius expands the Georgian queen's audience to all German readers.

5. Fatherlands and Foreign Patron Saints

Who were the German readers of Gryphius, and how were they to be inspired? He imagines the Georgian queen entering the stage of his fatherland. However, what does he mean by *his fatherland*, and which role would a Georgian martyr play on its stage? These questions are complicated, both because of the German lands' political instability and because of Gryphius' ambiguous relation to sainthood as a Lutheran.

First, one might understand Gryphius' fatherland stage as the German literary public. Gryphius' writings were part of a new movement in German language literature marked by the literary society *Die Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft* and German poetics, such as Martin Opitz' 1624 *Buch von der Deutschen Poeterey*. In his 1647 prologue to *Leo Armenius*, Gryphius had used the term "unser gantzes Vaterland" to designate the war-ravaged German empire.

However, at the time, *Vaterland* also commonly designated smaller regions within the empire (von Friedeburg 2016, p. 174). Gryphius used the Latin *patria* specifically about Silesia in a letter to the legal scholar Johann Heinrich Boecler. Here, he describes himself in a martyrial image, returning from his grand tour to his fatherland and expecting nothing but to be buried in Silesia' sinking rubble (Seelbach and Bircher 1994, p. 149).

There are several reasons why Vaterland in the prologue to *Catharina* might more specifically refer to Silesia, at least for Silesian readers.[21] Gryphius' public figure in the region reflected the patriotic passion in his letter to Boecler: as syndic of Glogau, he fought for the rights of the local government in negotiations with Habsburg rule, and he edited and published the *Glogauer Landespriviligien* in 1653 to promote the case.[22] He was also involved in the region's struggle against Habsburg recatholization. In 1651, he held a speech at the opening of one of the three Lutheran Friedenskirchen in Silesia. Additionally, in 1653, he was arrested when protesting against the closing of the Lutheran church in Glogau (Deventer 2003, 272ff).

The story of *Catharina* itself suggests analogies between Silesia and Georgia. As Elida Maria Szorota and recently Jane Newman have argued, there are clear similarities between the international conflicts in the two regions: both were small polities squished between imperial powers (Szarota 1967; Newman 2016). Gryphius emphasized the analogy in a 1655 series of seven etchings to *Catharina* by dedicating the tragedy to Luise, Duchess of Liegniz, Brieg, and Wohlau, and Princess of Anhalt.[23] The first etching shows the Georgian queen leaning onto the dedication to Luise, conferring some of Catharina's saintly qualities upon the Silesian duchess. Gryphius stood close to Luise and the Silesian Piast line that she had married into (Pietrzak 1993).

The Piast dynasty represented Silesian independence and Lutheranism. The Piast Duke Friedrich II. von Liegniz had been the first Silesian prince to convert in 1523. Luise's duchies Liegniz, Brieg and Wohlau were three of only five (the others being Ohlau and Breslau) territories within Silesia allowed Protestant worship in the Westphalian treatises of 1648 (Deventer 2003, p. 250). Hagiographical portrayal of the Piasts was common in Silesian art and architecture of the 17th century. Gryphius' fellow Silesian dramatist Daniel Casper von Lohenstein wrote that the dynasty had "in Polen und Schlesien die ersten und meisten Kirchen gebeut, die gebaueten mit reichen Stifftungen versorget [...], fast alle Städte in Grund geleget, selbe nicht minder mit heilsamen Ordnungen, als Maueren befestigt" (Harasimowicz 2010, 356f). Gryphius himself wrote several laudatory pieces for Piast rulers, notably the comic music drama *Piastus* on the dynasty's medieval origin saga.[24]

Gryphius' comparison of Luise's rulership to Catharina's martyrdom draws on hagiographical forms from medieval dynastic cults still alive in some form in his own time. Gryphius' tragedies reflect the same interest in this connection between fatherlands and their saintly rulers: Not only does the Georgian Catharina represent a royal martyr, so does the English Charles I in *Carolus Stuardus*. If the regicide on Byzantine emperor Leo V in *Leo Armenius* is not exactly martyrial, the holiness of his office is still underscored by his clinging to a cross while he bleeds to death in the play's last act. Royal martyrs and similar saintly ruler types make out the core of Gryphius' tragic material.

Royal martyrdom was a late, but highly successful development in the Christian's saints' cult. It emerged, as Gábor Klaniczay has argued, as a new hagiographic type towards the end of the 10th century.[25] This holy ruler figure claimed dynastic rights by surrendering earthly power in a martyrial death devoted to Christ, the King of kings. According to Klaniczay, it paradoxically asserted rights to an earthly fatherland by subjecting absolutely to the heavenly Fatherland. In *Catharina*, Gryphius' repeatedly plays on this double meaning of *Vaterland* as both the Georgian queen's earthly kingdom and the heavenly kingdom awaiting her in death: "Der uns ins Vaterland wil auß dem Elend holen" (Gryphius 1963, IV, p. 202 | IV, p. 310). In the dedicatory etching for Duchess Luise, Queen Catharina is likewise shown choosing the crown of holy kingship above the earthly offered by the Persian shah.

Gryphius hagiographic comparison of Luise and Catharina worked both ways: On the one hand, it legitimized the Piast rule by comparing the dynasty to the Georgian martyr queen. On the other, it introduced Catharina as linked to Silesia.

Interestingly, all of Gryphius' political tragedies draw their stories from geographically or historically foreign countries and make similar forms of misidentification. The prologue of *Papinianus* likens the Breslau city council to the 3rd century heathen Roman prefect Papinian. *Carolus Stuardus* is dedicated to Gottfried Textor, secretary of Liegniz, Brieg and Wohlau, who Gryphius expects to be inspired in his righteous office by the martyrial constancy of the contemporary Charles I. In the prologue to *Leo Armenius*, the war-ravaged German lands are compared first to the Byzantine empire and afterwards to strife across the world.

Gryphius never chose material linked directly to the religious or political conflicts of the German lands for his tragedies. It would not have been hard for him to find Protestant martyr figures in contemporary anthologies such as John Foxe's famous *Actes and Monuments*, initially published in Latin. Most likely, the topic would have been too controversial, and Gryphius would rather not place himself on either side of the religious scheme of conflict. If he fought for the right for Lutheran worship in Silesia, he also worked in his daily office with the Catholic Glogau prince. His years of travelling in Catholic countries, his literary tribute to the Orthodox Ketevan and the Anglican Charles I all suggest that Gryphius did not wish to dig confessional trenches.

Gryphius' use of royal martyrs such as the Georgian Catharina in his dramas differs both religiously and politically from the medieval dynastic cults. He nowhere suggests that these figures should be objects of prayer or other religious practice. They hold no saintly powers and cause no miracles as medieval saintly rulers generally would. Politically, they are not deployed to make dynastic claims. Instead of this, the royal martyrs of Gryphius' tragedies first and foremost exhort their audiences to lead virtuous lives. In Gryphius' dedications, they also confer legitimacy upon local Silesian rulers and magistrates. Finally, his tragedies claim a certain natural order of government: The fall of the ruler leads to political chaos.

Gryphius' particular use of royal martyrs may explain the one exception to the general rule that he wrote his political tragedies on regicides of Christian rulers. *Papinianus* dramatized the unjust execution of the Roman prefect Papinian at the hands of an emperor tyrant. Gryphius follows Melanchton in reading the heathen Papinian's noble death as an example of man's natural disposition for virtue, independent of religion.[26] The death of the magistrate Papinian in the name of righteousness and the regicides of Christian rulers in Gryphius' tragedies are in many ways similar. In their worldly suffering, they all exemplify virtue in office and the importance of governmental order for societal peace.[27]

These ideas of virtuous government resonate with an influential concept of Vaterland within the legal thought of Gryphius' German contemporaries. As Robert von Friedeburg has shown, the term was used from the 1580s and on by new Aristotelian and Ciceronian legal movements decisive for the development of the modern notion of state in the German lands. These movements described princely office not only as a set of privileges, but also as bound by certain governmental duties towards the well-being of the nation

(von Friedeburg 2016, p. 168). During the Thirty Years' War, these legal discussions fed into a wave of literature critical of warmongering princes.

The legal scholar Georg Schönborner, Gryphius' mentor in Danzig in the 1630s, was part of this Ciceronian tradition. Schönborner conceived of government as a community of citizens constituted by their shared political virtue. He differed from the contemporary monarchomachs that were outright critical of kingship: the officials were to Schönborner the backbone of the government, but the prince was important for political stability. Virtue was key to both princes as well as to lower magistrates, and Schönborner specifically emphasized the dangers of unrest for a prince not caring properly for his subjects.[28] Gryphius not only wrote laudatory poems and dedications to his mentor, he also very likely arranged the 10th issue of Schönborner's *Politicorum libri VII* in 1642 (first printed 1610).[29]

Gryphius' use of the term Vaterland in *Catharina* might have meant different things to Silesian readers and to other German regions. To most of them, however, Vaterland would have denoted a certain concept of virtuous government committed to the common good of a country. In the *Catharina*, Gryphius presented this idea through the royal martyr figure Catharina and her faithful civil servants.

6. Unbloody Martyrs

How do Gryphius' tragedies more precisely present the nature of orderly government? How do they depict the relation between the ruler and the civil servants? Of his works, *Papinianus* most strongly emphasizes the role of the magistrate in maintaining civic peace. However, magistrates and other types of civil servants play important roles in all his political tragedies. These figures have generally received undeservedly little attention in the scholarship that has focused more on the martyr and tyrant figures.[30]

As we observed above, in *Catharina*, the relation between the queen and her civil servants is one of imitation. There is, however, a limit to this. She strictly rejects Salome's wish to join her in death: "Gott heist uns nur allein/nicht dich zur Marter führen" (God bids us alone, not you, to wield this ordeal) (Gryphius 1963, IV, p. 202 | IV, p. 346). Seeing an exemplar of faith in the martyr queen does not mean seeking one's own death actively. God chooses the proper time and person.[31] How are we to understand this dual relation of division and imitation between the queen and her officials?

We might approach this question through the concept of *the unbloody martyr*. In the funeral oration "Tod als Arzt der Sterblichen" ("Death as Doctor of Mortals"), Gryphius refers to this as someone who suffers as a testimony of faith without dying a glorious death (Gryphius 1963, IX, p. 190). The term is traceable back to a change in the conceptions of martyrdom in the 4th century, as Constantine's conversion brought a halt to the imperial persecutions of Christians (Castelli 2004, 117ff). As an avid reader of patristics, Gryphius could have encountered the notion in many texts.[32] He was likely inspired by the foreword from a martyr story by John Chrysostom which he refers to elsewhere in "Tod als Arzt der Sterblichen" (Gryphius 1963, IX, p. 188). Chrysostom here observes the persecution of Christians by fellow humans as a thing of the past; in his own present, they are persecuted within their souls by demons (according to Chrysostom, a greater ordeal), but can still draw inspiration from the old martyria.[33] Notably, Chrysostom uses the notion of καιρός, the right moment, to designate a proper time for bloody martyrdom. This is not unlike Catharina in her dismissal of Salome's wish to follow her in death.

The notion of a bloody martyr inviting unbloody imitation might thus be understood as a conferral of the martyr's disposition, not an exact doubling of her acts. The Lutheran Gryphius presents martyrial imitation as a matter of regulating faith and desire, not (at least directly) deeds.

Arguably, this mimetic relationship between ruler and magistrates is already at work before Catharina's death. The dispositions of the play's two rulers from the outset reflect the orderliness of their governmental body. On the Georgian side, Salome, Serena, Cassandra, Demetrius, and Procopius cling closely to their queen and discuss diplomatic matters with

her openly. Prepared to die for their ruler, they also listen to her orders when told to stay alive for their nation.

Compared to this, Abbas' two privy councilors, Seinelcan and Iman Culi, make out a rather irregular and undisciplined magisterial body. The half-wit Iman Culi carries out the shah's order of execution without acknowledging his ruler's indecision: "Verzeuch! geh hin! ach nein! | Halt inn! komm her! ja geh! es muss doch endlich seyn" (Gryphius 1963, IV, p. 190 | III, p. 459). Additionally, not recognizing that he himself will make for the perfect scapegoat, Iman Culi ends up framed as responsible for Catharina's death.

Seinelcan, on the other hand, knows how to serve both his own interests and those of the Persian empire. At first somewhat sceptic of Abbas' mad love for Catharina, he quickly adapts to the situation and joins the shah's Petrarchan laudations of the Georgian queen: "Abas. Der nasen helffenbein, | Seinelcan. die lippen von corall", (Gryphius 1963, IV, p. 168 | II, p. 95). Throughout the play, he prudently navigates diplomatic crises with various forms of dissimulation, keeping his own position safe and tending to Persian interests with remarkable resourcefulness. He half-heartedly tries to lessen Abbas' emotional torment but fails in his attempt.

Seinelcan and Iman Culi are not without patriotic feelings towards their empire. However, they lack basic coordination in their governmental decisions, relying on them as creative individuals rather than on a collective rulership. The disorganization of the Persian councilors mirrors the unruly emotions of their ruler, as the Georgians imitate their queen in patriotic fidelity.

7. Civic Witnesses

The Georgian officials of the tragedy also play a role as witnesses to the execution of Catharina. In this relation to their queen, they resemble that of Christ's relation to the apostles. In "Folter menschliches Lebens", we observed that the writer witness for Gryphius plays an important part in facilitating the martyr's spectacle. Without the writer, the martyr's suffering will be unknown to the world. Witnesses to the martyrial execution recur through the final acts of Gryphius' martyr tragedies. In *Papinianus,* a direction note even mentions that a group of "Geschicht-Screibern" should be present as extras on stage during the hero's noble death (Gryphius 1963, VI, p. 268).

The witnessing on stage in Gryphius' tragedies takes the form of a debate of the legacy of the deceased. Following the death of the Georgian queen in *Catharina*, a Russian official and a priest each offer their interpretation of her death to the surviving Georgians:

> *Gesandte aus Reussen.* Ihr auch Gurgistans Helden/
> Helfft eurer Königin erschrecklich End' anmelden:
> Vnd zeugt im Angesicht der Völker stets und frey:
> Daß weder Redlikeit noch Trew in Persen sey.
> *Prister.* Zeugt liber; mit was Mutt die Königin gesiget
> Die sterbend/von Qual/Angst und Lust und Tog bekriget;
> Doch herrlich überwand. [...]
> Glaubt auch/daß euer Reich darfür diß Blut geflossen/
> Als ein verbrandtes Feld vom Regen übergossen;
> Vnd die bedrängte Kirch/die diser Taw genetzt/
> Mehr früchte tragen werd/als da sie unverletzt.
> (Gryphius 1963, VI, p. 215 | V, pp. 229–44)

> *Russian official.* You heroes of Georgia,
> Help proclaim the terrible end of your Queen,
> And witness, constant and freely, in the face of nations:
> That neither integrity nor loyalty is found in Persians.
> [...]
> *Priest.* Witness rather with what courage the Queen prevailed.

> Though dying, assailed by agony, fright, lust, and death
> She still gloriously overcame [...]
> Believe too, that your kingdom for which this blood flowed,
> Like a burned field drenched by rain;
> And the oppressed church, moistened by this dew,
> Will carry more fruits than if they were unscathed.

The Russian official urges his Georgian allies to retell the cruel end of their queen, to face the nations ("Völker") and witness ("zeugen") openly the lack of honesty and loyalty in the Persians. Countering this diplomatic exercise, the priest retorts that the Georgians should rather testify to the bravery that their queen met her demise with. With a patriotic, soteriological image, he describes how her blood will fertilize their war-torn empire and church.

The two interpretations of her death clearly differ: Whereas the Russian official uses it strategically to denounce his political enemy, the priest observes a salvific hope in the queen's sacrifice. If the Russian messenger uses her death mainly for his own diplomatic purposes, the priest envisions a redemptive promise given to Georgia.

Ironically, the priest's speech is soon after broken mid-sentence by a valet calling for the Russian official to come speak to the Persian captain Seinelcan: "*Prister.* Dass sie. *Gesandte.* Wer da? *Diener.* Mein herr der Haubtman spricht ihm zu" (*Priest.* That she. *Official.* Who's there? *Servant.* My master, the captain addresses him") (Gryphius 1963, VI, p. 215 | V, p. 251). The Georgian officials and the priest leave, and Seinelcan enters with a group of servants carrying gifts for the Russian. Seinelcan proceeds to quench the retributory thirst of his rival by threatening him with war and ensuring him that those responsible for Catharina's death will be decapitated.

Where does this put the two conflicting interpretations of Catharina's death? At first, it might seem to affirm the Russian's political appropriation of it: Power and prudence dominate the politics of Gryphius' tragedy; religious hope means nothing in worldly matters. Even if the Russian morally detests the shah's execution, he is mollified by the gifts and threats offered by the prudent Seinelcan.

However, the play does not end here. It ends with the mad Abbas tormented by visions of his beloved Catharina, convulsively exclaiming: "Recht so! Princessin! recht! greiff unsern Sigkrantz an. | Bekrige Persens Ruh! reiß was uns schützen kan" ("Rightly! Princess! right! Snatch our victor's wreath. | Fight the peace of Persia! tear away what might protect us") (Gryphius 1963, IV, p. 221 | V, pp. 441–42). The shah's speech breaks down; he is "Entzeptert" ("de-sceptered") (Gryphius 1963, IV, p. 220 | V, p. 411) and Persia's future uncertain. The play's final lines attest that the emotional indisposition of the ruler will have great consequences for the Persian empire.

Taking the play's ending into account, the two testimonies to Catharina's death might be considered true in each their way. The Russian prudently uses her death to criticize his Persian rival. Compared to this, the priest is naive in his salvific hope, and his preaching is cut off by political negotiations ultimately uninterested in it. Even if the shah's rule is destabilized at the ending of the play, the cunning dissimulation and threats from the now de-facto ruling Seinelcan ensure Persian political power.

However, the priest's figural reading of Catharina's virtuous suffering might still carry political truth: As a belief able to constitute a new Georgian government. If the Georgian magistrates seek stable rulership, they will have to draw common inspiration in the image of their virtuously dying queen. Even if religion deals foremost with the otherworldly, for Gryphius, it is also the regulatory principle founding a patriotic virtue politics.

These negotiations between witnesses of political and religious truth were read and staged by German students in Silesia and elsewhere; the same students about to become part of the expanding German state bureaucracy themselves (Stolleis 1990, 197ff). At the Breslau school stage, the Silesian youth played the part of the saintly Catharina and the civic witnesses to her death, embodying a martyrial spectacle of virtue for the whole city to

see. In this way, they were not only taught to fear the inconstancy of the world and to love God, they were also introduced to their own active role in the virtue politics of government.

8. Conclusions

Besides Gryphius, one of Georg Schönborner's more famous students was the legal scholar Veit Ludwig von Seckendorff, author of the 1656 *Teutscher Fürstenstaat* on German public law. According to Friedeburg, *Teutscher Fürstenstaat* would, with its twelve editions until 1754, become one of the works most decisive for the formation of the German *Fürstenstaat*. Seckendorff's term of *princely state* was conceived of the prince's role as a servant of the people and bearer of public order, more than the possessor of privileges. Like Schönborner and Gryphius, Seckendorff was critical of Machiavellian *reason of state*. The moral disposition of the ruler was crucial to him as it was to so many legal thinkers in Germany in the period (von Friedeburg 2016, 313ff).

What I argue here is that we read Gryphius' tragedies as shaped by the movement in German legal thinking critical of the prince's role during the war. We should read him as a contemporary of Schönborner, Seckendorff, and even of monarchomach thinkers such as Bogislaw von Chemnitz. Royal martyrs represent the ideal ruler in Gryphius' tragedies because they devote their lives to fatherlands beyond themselves: primarily the kingdom of God, and secondarily the kingdom that they rule. Gryphius' tragedies stage how the martyrial disposition of this ruler figure upholds civic order even as an exemplar beyond death. Gryphius' preference for this hagiographic type resonates with the concept of the pious prince presented by Seckendorff and many others in the period (Stolleis 1990, p. 215; von Friedeburg 2016, 314f).

As German state bureaucracy expanded in the 16th and 17th century, new notions civil servant ethics developed (Stolleis 1990, 197ff). A generalist education was important to most positions in the civil service. In his *Teutscher Fürstenstaat*, Seckendorff required of advisers to be students both of "Christlichen Religion" and "Politischen Welt-weisheit" (Stolleis 1990, p. 214). Gryphius gave a lesson of this exact kind in *Catharina*: Christian faith should ground a steadfast virtue towards the inconstancy of the world, both existentially and politically.

However, Gryphius delivered these lessons in a way completely different from Seckendorff and other contemporary legal thinkers—in the aesthetic form of martyr tragedy. He not only sought to build up the morals of his audience, but also to instill fear of the cruelty and instability of earthly life, offering consolation solely through faith in God. By his deployment of a martyrial spectacle of rulership, he also showed how his magisterial colleagues played their own role in the worldly theater of politics. He showed how a community devoting their lives to a common cause would shape the virtue politics of government, playing their part as officials on the scaffold.

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Notes

1 I use Szyrocky, Powell and Steiger's edition of Gryphius' works with references to volume (roman) and page (roman/arabic). References to his dramatic works also include a reference to act (roman) and verse number (arabic).

2 I translate *Trauerspiel* with *tragedy* as Gryphius' drama engaged with a wider European reception and transformation of classical tragedy. Gryphius himself used the Latin *tragoedia* (Gryphius 1963, IV, p. 56) and the Italian *tragiche* (Gryphius 1963, VI, VIII) to designate *Carolus Stuardus* and *Catharina*. Gryphius' tragedies are of course very different from other types of the genre, but a generic term does not exclude formal variations across literary traditions and writers.

3 An overview of the literature on Gryphius can be found in Bach and Dröse's anthology (Bach and Dröse 2020, 4ff). The works of James Parente and Jane Newman deserve mentioning as well (Parente 1987; Newman 2011, 2016).

4 (Kaminski 1998, p. 73) I agree with Kaminsky that this must be a main concern when reading Gryphius' tragedies, though I will question that earlier readings, such as those of Hans-Jürgen Schings, so one-sidedly focus on questions of salvation history (Schings 1966).

5 With Ketevan, I refer to the historical queen of Kakheti, and with Catharina, I refer to Gryphius' literary treatment of her.

6 Deventer estimates that almost 90% of the Silesian population were Lutherans in 1570. (Deventer 2003, p. 52)

7 For a list of martyrs in the funeral orations, see (Schings 1966, p. 168, n75). On the Lutheran tradition of funeral orations in the 17th century and Gryphius treatment of it, see (Kaminski and Schütze 2016, 414ff).

8 I disagree with Torsten Leine that research focusing on the ethics of Gryphius' tragedies cuts itself off from political questions (Leine 2010). I instead consent with Oliver Bach's argument that Gryphius should be read as part of the anti-Machiavellian climate dominating 17th century German political thought outside the Helmstedt school (Bach 2014, p. 583; von Friedeburg 2016). As will be clear from my reading of *Catharina*, Gryphius' writings offer a moral critique of cynical power politics.

9 Whether Gryphius' Lutheran faith formed his tragedies is a contested topic. Herbert Schöffler goes as far as to say that they could have been written by a Jesuit (Schöffler 1974, p. 85), while Walter Benjamin strongly emphasizes their Lutheran theology, seeing it reflected in their bleak world view (Benjamin 1972, 149ff). I find myself agreeing especially with Schings and Ingen on the ways Gryphius' martyr figures reflect Lutheran beliefs (Schings 1968; van Ingen 1999). It is wrong to mention Gryphius among dramaticians trained at Jesuit schools (Hoxby 2015, p. 203). An excellent overview of the Lutheran martyr cult can be found in (Gregory 1999, 139ff).

10 James Parente's investigation of this receives undeservedly little attention in research (Parente 1987).

11 (Schöffler 1974, 30ff) A statistic survey of the lives and travel routes of Silesian students abroad in the 17th century can be found in (Komorowski 2005).

12 Kaminski offers a good overview of the differences in the martyriological and christological ideas of Gryphius' tragedies (Kaminski 1998, 81ff).

13 For a discussion of the term, see (Petersen 2016).

14 As is clear from the overview of Medieval drama found in Muir's books, there was across Europe at this time a variety of stage forms committed to representing the lives of Christ, saints, and biblical figures. My focus here, however, is on dramatizations with these subjects that were shaped by the more widespread reception of classical tragedy from 1500 and onwards.

15 On the origins of *Christos Paschon*, see (Mullett 2021).

16 *Papinianus* made it to the German Wanderbühnen, but Gryphius' main stages would be courts and schools.

17 According to Max Hippe's reading of the Elisabeth Gymnasium's headmaster Elias Major's diary, Major noted that the council was consulted during the 1660 staging of *Papinianus*. Major also recounts public lectures and newspaper readings on Sundays at the school (Hippe 1901, 166f, 181f).

18 Translations are my own. Janifer Gerl Stackhouse recently published the first English translations of *Catharina* and *Leo Armenius* known to me (Stackhouse 2020).

19 The importance of this notion of a 'chain of imitation' since early Christianity is accounted for by Moss (Moss 2010).

20 (Malingre 1641, pp. 469–533) Gryphius refers to Malingre only in "Folter menschliches Lebens".

21 *Catharina* was first published in Silesia's capitol Breslau as part of the 1657 *Sammelausgabe*. The 1663 *Sammelausgabe* was published both in Breslau and Leipzig. We know of two stagings of *Catharina* in Silesia in the 1650s (Gryphius 1963, IV, XIff).

22 Due to Habsburg censorship, the Landesprivilegien were published in Poland. (Lentfer 1996)

23 (Gryphius 1963, VI, VIII) The series was made by Johann Ursing and published on occasion of a planned staging in Silesia.

24 Gryphius source was Jacob Schickfuß' 1625 *New vermehrte Schlesische Chronica* (Mannack 1991, p. 1258)

25 Klaniczay argues that the royal martyr is different from earlier types of saintly rulers that were only endowed with saintly qualities, not absolutely committed to the heavenly kingdom (Klaniczay 2002, 62ff).

26 (Kühlmann 1982)Papinian founds his civic virtue on a faith in Themis, the Goddess of Virtue. His disposition is, thus, structured very much like Catharina's.

27 Gryphius' single non-political tragedy *Cardenio und Celinde* also takes seriously the civic virtue of the lesser nobility. Telling the story of four youths bewildered by love, this tragedy—like *Catharina*—posits that moral steadfastness depends on faith.

28 (von Friedeburg 2016, 181ff) In Friedeburg's account, these discussions of princely rights and duties led finally to a modern concept of state with Veit Ludwig von Seckendorff's *Teutscher Fürstenstaat* in 1655. Here, the concept of state denoted for the first time in German legal theory a unity of a territory, a jurisdiction, and a population.

29 (Seidel 2020, p. 348) In seeing Schönborner's mentorship as an important influence on Gryphius, I am following Oliver Bach (Bach 2014, 148ff, p. 583)

30 Notable exceptions are the research on *Papinianus* and Mauser's reading of the *Beamententum* in Gryphius' sonnets (Mauser 1976).

31 This connects to discussions of voluntariness of martyrdom in early Christianity. Clement of Alexandria coined the term "athletes of death" for seekers of martyrdom like Salome (Middleton 2013, p. 7).

32 A widely read text from the Middle Ages, using the notion is the *Legenda Aurea* (de Voragine 2012, p. 662).

33 "Καὶ πῶς δυνατόν, φησί, μιμήσασθαι μάρτυρας; Οὐδὲ γάρ ἐστι διωγμο καιρός· οἶδα κἀγώ. Διωγμοῦ μὲν καιρός οὐκ ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ μαρτυρίου καιρός ἐστι· παλαισμάτων τοιούτων οὐκ ἔστι καιρός, ἀλλὰ στεφάνων καιρός ἐστι. Οὐ διώκουσιν

ἄνθρωποι, ἀλλὰ διώκουσι δαίμονες. Οὐκ ἐλαύνει τύραννος, ἀλλ' ἐλαύνει διάβολος, τυράννων πάντων χαλεπώτερος". (And how, they ask of me, is it possible to imitate the martyrs when it is no longer the time of persecutions? Yes, I know this only too well. It is not time for persecutions, but it is time for martyrs. It is not time for this kind of struggle, but it is time for crowns. It is no longer men who persecute, but demons. It is not a tyrant who follows us, but the devil, much crueler than all tyrants) (Chrysostome 2018, 296ff).

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