

4.3 In Frankfurt am Main and the Palatinate

4.3.1 Millennialist Premonitions and Political Realities

"Even if the whole world opposed us, our own parents included, we will nevertheless want to remain true to that which is our true Father," [Pietist leader] Philipp Jakob Spener wrote in a letter of 1689 that also mentions Franz Daniel Pastorius and the Pennsylvania Quakers. The awareness that an earthly father might comprehend the words of the Gospel but not their deeper significance, especially when this leads to separation and the loss of "all paternal love," is "surely one of the most oppressive sorrows that any soul may have to experience."³¹

With the friendship and support of Spener and the Saalhof Pietists, young Pastorius coped with "oppressive sorrows," including paternal separation and the guilt he felt as a lawyer, that were intensified by the political insecurities of 1679-83, when France was aggressively expanding into the Rhine territories while oppressive Hapsburg policies were leading to revolt in Hungary and the subsequent siege of Vienna by the Turks in 1683, military events in a spiral of destruction offering some justification for Pastorius' claim that God would soon destroy Europe. At the same time, however, his contact with religious diversity and modern commerce in Frankfurt and on excursions to the Calvinist Palatinate were providing some of the insights that would convince him to join William Penn's "holy experiment" in Pennsylvania and escape the escalating violence then centered upon Europe.

Despite personal misgivings, Pastorius "still plaid the Lawyer & kept Collegia privata Juris [i.e., taught law courses as a private docent, or instructor] to some young Patriciis of" the city, sons or close relatives of ruling city aristocrats, known as the Frankfurt patricians. He was thus sponsored, in effect, by the city's elite not only in Frankfurt but also on his grand tour of Europe, undertaken as "Conductor & Guide" to Johann Bonaventura von Bodeck, from a family of rich patrician bankers. Setting off on June 26, 1680, Pastorius traveled the first stretch of this tour (from Frankfurt to Mainz) in the company of young Bodeck, the aristocratic city officials he identified as "Juncker Günterod" and "Juncker Lerssner," and the wives of Günderode and Lersner (to use the official spellings of these names). A typical patrician outing, it reflected the exclusivity that had long prevailed in Frankfurt government. Young Bodeck, Pastorius notes in this "Res Propriae" entry, was a relative or "in-law" of both Günderode and Lersner. Intermarriage and nepotism were as *de rigueur* among the Frankfurt patricians as they were in a small imperial city like Windsheim.³²

With its unusual concentration of merchants, bankers and oligarchs, Frankfurt offered Pastorius job security but little peace of mind. Its senate resolutely opposed guild attempts to gain a role in city government, which led to violent uprisings in 1355, 1525 and 1614, and, beginning in 1705, to a 27-year legal battle for a modicum of political representation ("Frankfurt contra Frankfurt"). Protestant Frankfurt nevertheless avoided the economic stagnation that plagued many German cities, in part by accommodating an influx of Jewish and Calvinist Dutch and Walloon guildsmen and merchants, although popular and ecclesiastical intolerance limited the success of this accommodation. Family or business ties to Holland among the Frankfurt Pietists as well as the Krefeld emigrants and Pennsylvania Quakers would encourage Pastorius' interest in enlightened Dutch ideas engendered by the political and religious diversity of the Netherlands, whose Stadtholder, William of Orange (1650-1702), would be proclaimed king of Britain and Ireland following the Glorious Revolution of 1688. As the traditional site of imperial elections and coronations, the Frankfurt cathedral remained by treaty a Catholic enclave, reflecting the city's

strategic importance--and precarious position--within the empire. A huge ring of fortification around the city, constructed during and after the Thirty Years' War, offered some degree of security until it was demolished during the Napoleonic Wars in 1804-09.

As he traveled south to the Palatinate, a territory devastated by the Thirty Years' War and threatened by French expansion, Pastorius encountered burgeoning commerce and religious diversity along with reminders of wartime destruction and forebodings of wars to come. While practicing law in Frankfurt, he writes in "Genealogia Pastoriana," he had "good Opportunity to see Worms, Mannheim, Speyer & other places of the [Palatine] Neighbourhood." He went to Mannheim, "Res Propriae" notes, on behalf of "Samuel the Jew," providing (and being "abundantly paid" for) unspecified legal services at the court of the Elector Palatine Karl Ludwig (1617-80) in September, 1679, and March and April, 1680, and (ten days after his second Mannheim trip) to Speyer with a "Dr. Fuchsén," presumably a senior attorney with a case to present before the Imperial High Court there, the only apparent reason for the journey of about one hundred kilometers from Frankfurt. These business trips to Palatine cities provided abundant inspiration for reflection on the interplay of European politics and divine justice.

Lacking a modern economic base, the old cathedral cities of Speyer and Worms had been reduced to small-town obscurity by the Thirty Years' War despite their central role in medieval and Reformation history, and, exacerbating this decline, Speyer would soon lose even the Imperial High Court, moved to Vienna in 1688. Modern Mannheim, however, managed to image both the transience and the persistence of civilization, proudly or poignantly rising and falling and rising again in little more than half a century, with further cyclic repetitions occurring after Pastorius' departure for Pennsylvania.³³

In 1606, before the Thirty Years' War, the Elector Palatine Friedrich IV (1574-1610) established Mannheim as a center of commerce and a Calvinist bulwark at the confluence of the Neckar and Rhine rivers just twenty kilometers from his Heidelberg court. Sixteen years later, then a town of some 1200 inhabitants, Mannheim was bombarded and captured by Hapsburg forces even though its defenses included the "impregnable" citadel of Friedrichsburg and massive city walls with eight newly-designed bastions. Further wartime devastation, including fire and plague, reduced Mannheim to an uninhabited wasteland of pillaged and burned-out buildings.

After the war, though, the liberality and determination of Elector Karl Ludwig, back from exile in Holland and England, helped Mannheim attain all-too-enviable wealth and influence. He rebuilt the city and its citadel during the 1650s, and brought relative prosperity to the Palatinate, in part by offering religious freedom and economic opportunity to immigrants--predominantly Calvinists but also Lutherans, Mennonites and Jews--from Switzerland, France, Walloon Belgium, Holland and Portugal. The population swelled to around 12,000 by 1688, profit-making industries flourished, especially in wine, tobacco and textiles, and experimentation led to advances such as cheaply-brewed beer, and potatoes for nourishment during the long winters.

With his first wife residing at Heidelberg Castle, Karl Ludwig built a palace of French design within the citadel of Friedrichsburg, where Italian musicians and painters and the comedies of Molière and Shakespeare entertained the Elector and his second wife, derided as a paramour by those who contested his self-proclaimed divorce. He avoided exorbitant lavishness, and supported the education of his populace, but proudly envisioned Mannheim as a second Rome and, having established a territorial army, aggressively defended or expanded his influence, which led to a brief war with Lorraine in 1668. He became a master of the popular art of appeasing Louis XIV, not only accepting the French "subsidies" that assured the neutrality of many German princes but also, in 1671, marrying his daughter Liselotte to the French king's brother--and, among

the Calvinists, pretending ignorance of her Catholic conversion.

Despite this alliance, the Palatinate had become a target of French expansion by the time Pastorius visited Karl Ludwig's Mannheim court in 1679-80.³⁴ Following attacks on the Palatinate in the mid-1670s--part of the Dutch War concluded in 1679, when Leopold I ceded the German free city of Freiburg to France--Louis XIV embarked upon the "reunions" of 1679-84, an audacious scheme of bribing or coercing Rhineland princes into recognizing his sovereignty over German territory that had presumably been "separated" from French principalities in the course of centuries. Alsace was "annexed" in 1680, Strasbourg and portions of the Palatinate and Trier provinces in 1681, shortly after Karl Ludwig's death. By 1685, preparing for war, Louis XIV claimed the entire Palatinate as an "inheritance" through his sister-in-law Liselotte, the Palatine princess, silenced and scorned at the French court when the devastating battles began.

Patriotic outrage swelled among the German populace during Pastorius' Frankfurt years, especially when Strasbourg was taken without a battle. The Reichstag created a standing army, and, at Frankfurt (while Pastorius was touring Europe), negotiated unsuccessfully with France in 1681-82, but numerous princes had decided their own interests were best served by appeasing the mighty French indefinitely.

Autocratic Hapsburg rule, meanwhile, was creating violent unrest to the east. In 1680 peasants throughout Bohemia, armed with scythes and pitchforks, were dispersed or captured by the army and hanged, beheaded, quartered or impaled. In Hungary, rejecting military occupation and enforced recatholicization, aristocrats and nationalists had organized a Protestant crusade against Leopold I in 1678. The Hungarian rebels later sought Turkish assistance, an opportunity the Grand Vizier, by 1682, had turned into the last great campaign to subject Christendom to Muslim conquest. In March, 1683 (with Pastorius back in Frankfurt, and deciding to leave Germany), the Turkish legions began heading north from Adrianople, convincing Poland and most of the German princes to join Leopold I and Pope Innocent XI in a counteroffensive against the Turks, although even then Louis XIV refused to aid the Hapsburgs. When the Turks began their siege of Vienna in July, Pastorius was halfway across the ocean, and he had safely arrived in Philadelphia weeks before they were routed in an awesome September battle that claimed some 15,000 lives, two-thirds of which, reflecting superior Western strategy and technology, were Muslim. As the dead were carted from the battlefield, he was already going about the rewarding tasks of building a new--and essentially pacifist--colony in America.

Before gaining the option of emigration--and for a good while thereafter--Pastorius was subjected to intense psychological pressures that, in varying degrees, were also felt by many men of learning and conscience who found themselves forced into unacceptable compromises by their careers in church, state and commerce. These widespread personal, religious and political tensions, in a period described as the Age of Angst, helped create a genre of popular literature and art that Pastorius could draw upon as he reported on his emigration and criticized European society.³⁵ The theme of God's retribution on an unrepentant humanity was illustrated in Windsheim textbook references to comets and earthquakes, in Johann Heinrich Horb's 1680 penitential sermon, and in countless other references to imminent or future violence or calamity, many of which involved interpreting heavenly portents in the context of anticipated political events, above all war or rebellion. Related millennial beliefs, based on biblical prophecies that Christ would come again and reign a thousand years, found adherents in the established churches and among the general populace as well as in radical religious groups like the Saalhof Pietists of Frankfurt.

A series of comets accompanying the political excitation of Pastorius' final years in Europe--

those of 1675, 1677 and 1680 were followed by Halley's Comet in 1682 (though first identified as such in 1705)--generated exceptional interest in celestial events, a combination of awe or fear and, increasingly, scientific curiosity. In Germany these four comets, often described as fiery rods of divine punishment, elicited several dozen published sermons, poems and artistic depictions. Other celestial bodies, meteors or planets, were mistaken for or exaggerated as portentous comets. Even a local lightning storm could be described, in the dramatic prose and poetry of a Nürnberg broadside, as a warning to "the Turks as well as the Christians," especially since an accompanying illustration placed a huge but fictive comet in the midst of the storm.

The emotionality of these predictions of punitive destruction often reflected more political realism than otherworldly mysticism. The massive destruction of the Thirty Years' War could still be seen in the landscape of Germany, and was felt in the consciousness of many Germans. At the same time, men like Pastorius--who observed dozens of young German aristocrats complacently practicing the martial arts and enjoying life at French courts despite the open confrontation of France and Hapsburg Germany--knew that political cynicism and military technology were together capable of producing calamity on a scale similar to or even greater than that of the Thirty Years' War. In fact, history would soon provide partial confirmation of Pastorius' 1683 and 1684 predictions, as Pastorius himself noted in later correspondence. There is a captivating portentousness in these predictions, a fascination deriving less from their religious emotion than from the political and psychological depth that seems to have motivated them. Pastorius could again reflect on this blend of religious and political insight as he recalled his visits to the Palatine cities of Worms, Speyer and Mannheim in the "Genealogia Pastoriana" jottings of around 1715.

Balance-of-power politics virtually demanded new conquests, and escalating destruction.³⁶ Hapsburg victories against the Turks added Hungary to the empire and opened the possibility of further conquests in the Balkan, greatly enhancing Leopold's influence among the German princes, which also swelled his military ranks, and threatened France's European predominance. Louis XIV, countering these developments in 1688, forced Leopold to fight on two fronts by having French forces invade the Palatinate and other Rhine territories, and then advance on into Swabia and Franconia, spreading destruction and terror in the west and south of Germany as the Turkish War continued to the east. At the outset, France had expected token opposition in a short war, but even reluctant princes felt obliged to join a decisive counterattack that, under normal circumstances, would have meant a rapid and embarrassing French retreat.

Slowing its retreat and simultaneously denying the enemy potential matériel, Louis XIV ordered his army to employ the most systematic destruction then conceivable, violating all previous conventions of war. Palatine towns, villages, fields and orchards were devastated, as were castles all along the Rhine and Mosel rivers. Worms, Speyer and other cities were burned to the ground, and in the Speyer cathedral crypt, the graves of medieval emperors were desecrated and destroyed.

Louis XIV and his war minister together consulted over the fate of Mannheim, the pride of the Palatinate, and decided it was to be "so completely destroyed," the minister wrote, "that not a single stone remains standing upon another." Two days after ordering its evacuation, an occupation army began plundering and demolishing. Then torches and mines were laid and ignited according to a coolly-executed plan that might have been meant to symbolize civilization's transience or ultimate futility. As the homes of 12,000 Mannheimers caught fire singly and (with sudden incendiary bursts) in clusters, a wall of flame raged through the city toward the castle and fortress of the Elector Palatine and, in pyrotechnic culmination, engulfed and consumed this monument of regal might and splendor--simultaneously marking the end of Karl Ludwig's

experiment in religious tolerance and benevolent despotism, and the ascendancy of a new line of absolutist princes.

Ignoring orders to resettle in Catholic Alsace, many of the Mannheim refugees fled to neighboring Lutheran provinces, to Calvinist Brandenburg, or to England and ultimately to America. Although Mannheim would flourish again, and again be destroyed and subsequently reconstructed in the Napoleonic Wars and World War II, the Palatinate was ruined for decades to come. Despite the appeasement or complicity that had encouraged the French to miscalculate their position--even Leopold I had accepted French 'subsides'--this massive and fortuitous destruction created deep-seated resentments that would lead to renewed aggression and counteraggression, part of the cycle of violence repeated throughout European history, increasing in geographical scope and destructive potential to such an extent that Pastorius' 1684 prediction of total European destruction now finds an altered context in global fears of cataclysmic regional unrest or nuclear Armageddon, a reinterpretation of the Revelations 16 text Pastorius paraphrased as God's "woeful wrath . . . poured out over" Europe.

Although a number of German poets, historians and propagandists up to World War II would see in the Palatine devastation a moral inspiring vigilance and commitment to the Fatherland, the lesson most directly related to Pastorius' German experience is reflected in the reaction of Princess Liselotte, the daughter of Elector Karl Ludwig, whose name was repeatedly invoked as her brother-in-law Louis XIV attacked and destroyed his 'inheritance' and her Palatine homeland. Writing to relatives in Germany, Liselotte described her feelings of complicity in this destruction, and her overwhelming depression, expressed in an impotent and belated resistance that could not relieve Palatine distress:

What causes me the most pain is that my name was used to drive the poor people [of the Palatinate] to such dire extremity, and when I cry out in protest, they [French court officials] accuse me of ingratitude and ridicule me. But even if they were to take my life for it, I simply cannot keep from weeping and complaining . . . Oh, I have such an abhorrence of everything that was blasted to bits in this way, that every night, as soon as I have begun to sleep just a little, I get the impression that I am at Heidelberg or Mannheim and I see all the devastation, and then I awake with a start and cannot get back to sleep for another two hours at least; then I think about how everything was when I was there, the state it is in now, the state I myself am in as well, and then I cannot keep from crying any longer.³⁷

Princess Liselotte's sense of depression in 1689 was not very different from the desperation Franz Daniel Pastorius experienced in introspective moments as a Frankfurt lawyer and European traveler in 1679-83. "Here in this province," he writes in his October, 1691, letter to his father, "we have listened with compassion to reports of that barbarous French conduct which involved devastating such beautiful cities, churches and emperors' graves." These reports convinced him that no bulwark of stone or masonry can protect Germans or Americans from enemy attack, "that we should rely solely upon the protective hand of God . . . instead of physical force and mighty fortresses," a sentiment reiterated in poems opposing war and empire.³⁸ It is in this letter that he describes the French and Turks as instruments of God's punishment of "European impenitence," and lists Christian principles of government contrasting with "the Babylonian vanities and disordered human laws and precepts" he saw, in 1684, as the object or source of the divine punishment he was then anticipating.

Both Pastorius and Princess Liselotte were, in short, responding to the human suffering which they perceived around them, and which they also perceived as resulting in part from their own involvement in the social fabric of the era, and the political deeds that were its weft--the sum

total of the conformist or callous attitudes of all of those who merely played the roles thrust upon them by their society. Like the more generalized compulsions of men and women of learning or station, to some extent the result of resisting a similar awareness, Liselotte's morose sleeplessness and Franz Daniel's millennialist piety reveal individuals confronting an awareness that there can be no abiding satisfaction in a life of callous behavior, or of passive conformity to values perceived (no matter how obscurely) as ungenerous or inhumane--an awareness so basic that it became, in essence, the leitmotif of all of Pastorius' transatlantic correspondence.

Notes

³¹ *Theologisches Bedencken*, 3, 763:

Daß im übrigen auch dessen leiblicher Vater sich nicht nur unter den widersprechern dieser göttl. warheit finden lasse, sondern von demselben dieser ursach wegen alle väterl. liebe abziehe, bekenne ich daß es wol eines der schweresten leiden, so einer seelen widerfahren könne, seyn müsse . . . Also ob alle welt sich widersetze, und auch unsre Eltern, so wollen wir dennoch an dem treu bleiben, welcher der rechte Vater ist . . .

The reference to Pastorius is quoted on p. 60, n. 24 of this study.

³² *Deutsche Städtebuch*, ed. Keyser and Stooß, 4,1 (1957), 122-54 passim; *Handbuch der Historischen Stätten Deutschlands*, ed. Georg W. Sante, 4 (1967), 130-36. Wealthy members of the Bodeck, Günderode and Lersner families are listed on pp. 738-44 of an appendix ("Größe Vermögen," or "Large Fortunes") in Alexander Dietz, *Frankfurter Handelsgeschichte*, vol. 4 (1923; rpt. Glashütten im Taunus: Auvermann, 1970). Young Bodeck is probably the Johann Bonaventura von Bodeck who left a fortune of 258,324 gulden when he died in 1700, presumably around the age of forty, but the identity is not certain since Dietz does not give years of birth. "Juncker" (the variant spelling of "Junker") identifies an aristocrat with an estate. Pastorius was probably referring to Philipp Wilhelm von Günderode (d. 1689) and Heinrich Ludwig von Lersner (d. 1696), both city stewards (Stadt Schultheißen), or Maximilian von Lersner, a Pietist friend described on pp. 330-31 of this study.

³³ *Handbuch der Historischen Stätten*, 5 (1965), 356-57, 414-15; 6 (1965), 420-21; *Deutsche Städtebuch*, 4,2 (1959), 110-23 passim; articles on Friedrich IV and Karl Ludwig in *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, 5 (1961), 532-35, and 11 (1977), 246-49; Friedrich Walter, *Aufgabe und Vermächtnis einer Deutschen Stadt: Drei Jahrhunderte Alt-Mannheim* (Frankfurt/M.: F. Knapp, 1952), pp. 9-28.

³⁴ *Handbuch der Deutschen Geschichte*, ed. Braubach, 2, 270-77; *Rheinische Geschichte*, ed. Petri and Droëge, 2, 246-55; *New Cambridge History of Modern Europe*, ed. Clark et al., 5, 219-21, 494-98, 512-17.

³⁵ Hartmut Lehmann, *Das Zeitalter des Absolutismus* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1980), pp. 105-35 passim; Wilhelm Heß, *Himmels- und Naturerscheinungen in Einblattdrucken des XV. bis XVIII. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig: Drugulin, 1911), pp. 51-75 passim, 104-05, 112-13.

³⁶ *Handbuch der Deutschen Geschichte*, 2, 278-82; *Rheinische Geschichte*, 2, 255-57; Walter, *Aufgabe*, pp. 32-37.

³⁷ Letter of 20 March 1689 quoted in Walter, *Aufgabe*, pp. 37-38:

Was mich am meisten daran schmerzt, ist, daß man sich meines Namens gebraucht, um die armen Leute ins äußerste Unglück zu stürzen, und wenn ich darüber schreie, weiß man mirs gar großen Undank und man protzt mit mir drüber. Sollte man mir aber das Leben darüber nehmen wollen, so kann ich doch nicht lassen zu bedauern und zu beweinen ...

Ja, ich habe einen solchen Abscheu vor alles, so man abgesprengt hat, daß alle Nacht, sobald ich ein wenig einschlafe, deucht mir, ich sei zu Heidelberg oder zu Mannheim und sehe alle die Verwüstung, und dann fahr ich im Schlaf auf und kann in zwei ganzen Stunden nicht wieder einschlafen; dann kommt mir in Sinn, wie alles zu meiner Zeit war, in welchem Stand es nun ist, ja in welchem Stand ich selber bin, und dann kann ich mich des Flennens nicht enthalten.

³⁸ *Beschreibung Pa.*, p. 49:

Dann deren Frantzosen barbarische Procedures mit Verwüstung so schöner Städte, Kirchen, und Kayserlicher Begräbnussen, auch Mord-brennerey haben wir hier zu Lande mitleydentlich angehört, und sind dardurch in unsern Glauben gestärcket worden, daß man nicht auff fleischliche Macht und veste Castellen, sondern einzig und allein auff die göttliche Schutzhand vertrauen solle, deren es so leichte ist uns gegen alle feindliche Anfälle zu beschirmen, als unmöglich es sothane steinerne Schantzen thun können.