In the period from 1500 to 1800 the problem of violence necessitated asking fundamental questions and formulating answers about the most basic forms of human organisation and interactions. Violence spoke to critical issues such as the problem of civility in society, the nature of political sovereignty and the power of the state, the legitimacy of conquest and subjugation, the possibilities of popular resistance, and the manifestations of ethnic and racial unrest. It also provided the raw material for profound meditations on humanity and for examining our relationship to the divine and natural worlds. The third volume of *The Cambridge World History of Violence* examines a world in which global empires were consolidated and expanded, and in which civilisations for the first time linked to each other by trans-oceanic contacts and a sophisticated world trade system.

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This four-volume *Cambridge World History of Violence* is the first collection of its kind to look at violence across different periods of human history and different regions of the world. It capitalises on the growing scholarly interest in the history of violence, which is emerging as one of the key intellectual issues of our time. The volumes take into account the latest scholarship in the field and comprise the work of nearly 140 scholars, who have contributed substantial chapters to provide an authoritative treatment of violence from a multiplicity of perspectives. The collection thus offers the reader a wide-ranging thematic treatment of the historical contexts of different types of violence, as well as a compendium of experience shared by peoples across time.

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