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Monstrosity as Spectacle: the *Two Inseparable Brothers*' European Tour of the 1630s and 1640s

This article analyses the historical phenomenon of human exhibition by focusing on the celebrated case of the Italian gentleman Lazarus Colloredo, who during the 1630s and 1640s successfully toured Europe exploiting the multi-faceted interest generated by the parasitic twin protruding from his sternum. The case study draws on contemporary performance theory to examine 17th-century audience responses to Lazarus and, in so doing, offers a fresh perspective on how the self-exhibition of these famous twins might be read. For modern scholars the apparent attraction of human exhibition throughout history invites investigation into notions of performance and spectacle, and the ways in which prevailing cultural forces shaped spectators' interpretations of such acts. Audiences in the 17th century regarded Lazarus and his brother as an awe-inspiring work of God and wonder of nature, and his exhibition offers instructive insights into the way in which the spectacle of monstrosity embodied a potent and multi-layered form of early modern entertainment. Karen Jillings is Lecturer in History at Massey University. Her research interests broadly encompass medicine and healthcare from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries. She has published on various aspects of this including early humanism and medical teaching, medieval and early modern plague outbreaks, and European responses to the introduction of tobacco.

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Colloredo, who during the 1630s and 1640s successfully toured Europe exploiting the multi-faceted interest generated by the parasitic twin protruding from his sternum. The showcasing of monsters, to use contemporary parlance, was an increasingly popular form of entertainment during the early modern period that capitalised on a contemporary obsession with the strange and marvellous.[1] The spectacle of monstrosity harnessed the "insatiable curiosity"[2] of the age by impelling reflection on such issues as personhood and identity, and in the case of many, Lazarus included, it further served as a potent allegory for the current religio-political milieu. In drawing on entertainment and performance theory as well as the latest research on historical human exhibition, this article analyses the cultural views of so-called human monstrosities during the early modern period to offer a fresh perspective on how Lazarus's self-promotion might be read. It is clear from contemporary sources that he engendered the "agreeable effects" required "to draw, grow and maintain audiences,"[3] stemming from an interpretation of monsters as wondrous evidence of both divine omnipotence and nature's ingenuity. That the very appearance of Lazarus and his ilk became a popular source of entertainment which "enthralled all classes"[4] invites investigation by scholars of performance and history alike.

Human oddities had been a continual source of fascination since antiquity,[5] and the compulsion to interpret and explain the existence of monstrous individuals and races had long been articulated through medical and travel literature, often with reference to mythical antecedents from classical times. Part of this allure was an exoticism that, as Nadja Durbach has recently argued, enabled "the particular meanings attached to these monstrosities [to be] easily shaped precisely because the consumers of these texts rarely had an opportunity to see the body in question itself."[6] By the 17th century, when the protagonist of this discussion lived, human exhibition was proliferating throughout Europe, presenting the public with an opportunity to witness examples of the monstrous for themselves at an extremely wide variety of venues. The most celebrated acts, Lazarus included, entertained the royal court and wealthy hosts could procure performers for private shows staged in their own homes. Those human exhibits who could afford to often hired lodgings in which to perform (as Lazarus did in the Scottish city of Aberdeen), while the cheapest shows simply took place in the streets. This potent form of entertainment garnered extremely broad appeal and "were the occasion of a mingling of the classes that may have been unprecedented."[7] The presence of such an act was often advertised to locals through the cheap printed medium of broadsides, literary "vehicles of mass communication"[8] written primarily "to astonish and entertain readers."[9]

Likewise, two of the main objectives of displaying the monstrous were to astonish and entertain audiences, and the curiosity which drove so many to witness the spectacle of monstrosity sought to explain as well as revere encounters with novelty in whatever form.[10] This compulsion was a crucial aspect of the popularity of human exhibition as a source of early modern entertainment. The expectations of

both audience and performer at such an event shared much in common with those of a traditional theatrical production, where the parties involved enter into a "social contract" in which "the spectator accepts a passive role and awaits the action which is to be interpreted."[11] The passivity of spectators who gazed upon the monstrous has been linked to the etymology of the term 'monster' (whether from *monstrare*, to show, or from *monere*, to warn), which "demonstrates a passive exhibition."[12] The nomenclature applied to human abnormalities was further used by contemporaries to explain their public display. A French pamphleteer's observation in 1655 that "some say the word monster comes from *monstrer* [show] … because such spectacles are ordinarily shown to people"[13] echoes the opinion of the Italian physician Liceti, who had written in 1616 that reactions to monsters encouraged "everyone [to] show them to one another."[14]

When "disproportionate creatures were demonstrated to an audience," historian Barbara Benedict has noted, "they became the early modern phenomenon of a curiosity" because "their strangeness existed through their impact on spectators, so that it is only in proximity to normality that a monster exists."[15] Lazarus Colloredo was one such monster whose strangeness had a profound impact on his audiences. Born in Genoa in 1617, he was a man described by contemporaries as being of a "proper stature, comely in his person, [and] of morals humane and courteous." Generally he was portrayed as wearing a long cloak and when this was fastened a stranger "would have no suspicion of the monster underneath."[16] The cloak in fact concealed an extreme bodily anomaly that was the focus for discourses on the significance of monstrosity and its various interpretations amongst commentators of the age and beyond.

Figure 1. Lazarus Colloredo and John Baptista, c.1645

For it was only when Lazarus removed his cloak that the full extent of his body was revealed: protruding laterally from his breast was his parasitic twin brother, named John Baptista. [Figure 1[17]] The definitive description of the twins' appearance was provided by the Danish anatomist Thomas Bartholin, who met them on two occasions in 1645. Lazarus had "a small brother born with him, growing out of his breast." The torso of this smaller twin was visible, as was his left leg, two arms with imperfectly formed

hands, a small thorax and a head much larger than that of Lazarus. Bartholin observed that John Baptista's eyes were usually closed and that his respiration, though weak, was sufficient to cause a feather to flutter when held above his mouth. The credibility of the anatomist's account endured through its relaying by later commentators including William Winstanley in *The New Help to Discourse*[18] and was verified by others who encountered the brothers on their tour throughout Europe.

Lazarus first toured his native Italy, then Germany, Spain and France,[19] before arriving in London in October of 1637, by which time he was aged twenty.[20] Having been granted a royal audience and subsequent warrant from Charles I, he then received a six-month licence from the City of London "to shew his brother Baptista, that grows out of his navel, and carryes him at his side."[21] Martin Parker's ballad *The Two Inseparable Brothers* published by Robert Milbourne less than three weeks after Lazarus's arrival in the city, sought to advertise to Londoners "this wondrous youth ... with his strange burden" who was "now... present to be seen in the *Strand*" and described John Baptista as being sentient though listless and unable to eat, drink, talk or see. The accompanying illustration clearly shows Lazarus as "gallantly attired," his cloak swept aside to reveal his semiconscious brother beneath. Despite his initial six-month licence Lazarus remained on show in London well into 1639 before making his way to Norwich, where on 21st December he was granted permission "to shewe a monnster" until the "day after twelfe," under the royal licence still in his possession.[22] The following year the brothers were recorded in the Polish port of Gdansk,[23] and the strong commercial links that stretched between the Baltic and the North Sea might help to explain their subsequent visit to the Scottish port of Aberdeen, where they exhibited themselves for just over a week around Easter of 1642. Their stay in the city was recounted in particular detail by the commentator John Spalding, whose description of the "Italian man monster" bears the hallmarks of first-hand observation and affirms that of other contemporaries. It also offers clues about how this form of early modern entertainment was orchestrated and received:

> About a day or two before Easter, there came to Aberdeen an Italian man monster, of about twenty-four years of age, having since his birth growing from the breast upward, face to face, as it were, a creature with a head and hair on the side, like the colour of the man's hair; the head still drooping backwards and downward. He had eyes, but closed, not opened. He had ears, two arms, two hands, three fingers on each hand, one body, one leg, one foot with six toes; the other leg within the flesh inclining to the left side. It had the penis of a man, but no scrotum. It had a kind of life and feeling, but was void of all other senses, fed by the man's own nourishment and evacuated the same way. This great work of God was admired by many in Aberdeen and through the countries as he travelled; yet such was the goodness of our God that he would go and walk where he pleased, carrying this birth without any pain, and unobserved when his clothes were on.

> When he came to the town he had two servants waiting on him, who with himself were well clad. He had his portrait with the monster drawn, and hung out at his lodging, to the view of the people. The one servant had a trumpet which he sounded at such time as the people should come and see this monster, who flocked abundantly into his lodging. The other servant received the money from each person for his sight, some less some more. And after there was so much collected as could be gotten, he, with his servants, shortly left the town, and went southward again.[24]

Phrases such as "he had his portrait with the monster drawn" indicate that Spalding regarded the brothers as two beings despite their bodily union. Their juxtaposition – indeed, their very existence – raised a plethora of questions for contemporaries that mirrored those asked of all conjoined twins, many of which concerned wider issues about the nature and causes of monstrosity. For modern scholars the apparent attraction of human exhibition throughout history invites investigation into notions of entertainment, performance and spectacle, and the ways in which prevailing religious and cultural forces shaped audience interpretations of such acts.

Historically, conjoined and parasitic twins have challenged assumptions about personhood and individuality, and here instructive comparisons might be made with human exhibits of a later era. In the 17th century, just as in the 20th, descriptions of such cases in promotional and medical literature focused on their remarkable somatic unity, "obsessing about where one body began and another ended."[25] Performers used different strategies to emphasise their connectedness as, after all, this was precisely what made their appearance intriguing. Conjoined or parasitic twins of the 19th and 20th centuries such as Lalloo the 'Double-Bodied Hindoo Boy,' Chang and Eng (the original 'Siamese twins'), and the 'Two-Headed Nightingale' Millie-Christine McCoy were usually depicted in promotional literature as dressed in identical costume, and likewise contemporary depictions of Lazarus portrayed him either as naked or as clothed in similar attire to John Baptista, probably to impress upon his audience their unity. Tellingly, each of the Colloredo brothers' shirts was unbuttoned, clearly to emphasise "the place where two people became one," which Nadja Durbach noted proved such an attraction to the "curious audiences" who flocked to view conjoined twins at Victorian freak shows.[26] Lazarus was often depicted standing with hands on hips, holding open his cloak, a stance clearly designed further to draw attention to his brother.

Such a spectacle forced observers to question whether conjoined twins ought to be regarded as one person or two. Promotional material for conjoined twins of the Victorian era was often deliberately contradictory, casting them both as individuals and, by the use of the singular personal pronoun, as one person.[27] Similarly, though Lazarus was described by contemporaries as being a singular monster, he was at the same time also a pair of brothers. In his ballad of 1637

Martin Parker emphasised John Baptista's parasitic nature and concentrated on the twins as a biological phenomenon.[28] Though Lazarus "doth beare his brother at his side, inseparably knit," and "some suppose / The other is contained Within his brother's body," in other ways they appeared to act independently. Parker noted that "sometimes one's sick, the other well" and related the occasion when John Baptista contracted small pox, which did not affect his "perfect brother" except insofar as it made him sad. When the smaller twin was pinched it cried out with pain that Lazarus did not feel, yet "if the one be cold or hot, that's common to both twaine."[29]

These observations seem to confirm a series of medical investigations that had been undertaken during the twins' visit to Paris a few years earlier. On examination French physicians declared Lazarus and his brother to be a "two-fold" body and theorised that John Baptista received nourishment from his host twin by means of vessels which were likened to an umbilical cord between the foetus and its mother.[30] Indeed, the brothers' appearance "recalled the image of a mother caught in mid-delivery" and another early verse described Lazarus as "bear[ing] and foster[ing]" his twin "at his tender wombe."[31] This analogy was reprised by the poet John Cleveland, who regarded Lazarus as "Th'*Italian* Monster pregnant with his Brother."[32] Being ontologically interlinked had implications for each brother: after meeting them twice the anatomist Thomas Bartholin opined that although Lazarus was "commonly in good spirits," he was "now and then a little dejected, when thinking on his future fate," as the death of his brother would "by the consequent putrefaction and stench, be the destruction of himself."[33] It was not only Lazarus's existence that was threatened as a result of the twins' indivisibility: several Parisian doctors related the story that the larger brother had been condemned to death for having committed murder, but could not be executed for the crime because it would have entailed the death of his innocent parasitic twin.[34]

The 17th century debate about whether the brothers ought properly to be identified as one individual or two was one which had spiritual and legal as well as medical ramifications. The author of a broadside advertising the arrival of another monster to London in late 1639 pondered the issue of the twins' individuality and commented that John Baptista, "though having sense and feeling, [was] destitute of reason and understanding: whence me thinkes a disputable question might arise, whether as they have distinct lives, so they are possessed of two soules; or have but one imparted betwixt them both."[35] Not long before the publication of this pamphlet, the physicians who examined the twins in Paris had concluded that because they had two brains, they "may be rightly call'd two Men, who consequently have two Souls."[36] This concurs, it might be assumed, with the view taken shortly after their birth when, as a number of accounts relate, they were each baptised, an act which in the early modern era "determined entry into the community of humanity."[37] This had considerable implications for other aspects of the twins' legal status, such as the right to vote (though one vote or two?) and to marry. While contemporary sources did not comment on such issues with regard to Lazarus, a

later report claimed that he married and fathered several children.[38] His ability to do so supported the early modern view that, since the state of marriage was intended to validate procreation, it should not be denied to those capable of reproducing.[39] Moreover, Lazarus and his brother each had a head, which seemed far more than useless limbs to emphasise the personhood of John Baptista. It is a medical certainty that John displayed automated responses rather than possessing a brain capable of individual thought or reasoning (far less any consciousness of self), but the early modern ambiguity ensured they were a source of ongoing curiosity. Stephen Pender has contended that "speculation about [a later 17th century set of conjoined twins'] individuality, about the distinctness of their bodies and their souls, at least in part accounted for their popularity as "freaks"."[40] In noting that "the multiple ways in which conjoined twins were theorised thus reveals considerable interest in what constituted a person, the boundary between the self and the other, and the relationship between the mind and the body,"[41] Durbach shows that the appeal of conjoined twins for 19th-century audiences remained rooted in fundamental issues of identity.

While this was also true of Lazarus Colloredo and his 17th century audiences, it is debateable whether he was subjected to the same exploitation that some historians have argued befell later performers. David Gerber has claimed that the lack of alternative employment for participants in 20th century freak shows compromised the notion of consensual participation[42] and it is probably true that Lazarus had little option but to make the most of his aberrancy. However, it is also likely that he shared the attitude of some later performers who, it has been argued, "were active participants in their own presentation, defined themselves as showmen and performers," and regarded their audiences disparagingly.[43] It is clear from John Spalding's description that Lazarus's orchestration of his visit to Aberdeen was deliberate and sophisticated, from the display of his portrait outside his lodgings (as a tantalising promise of what lay inside) to the sounding of a trumpet by a servant – the equivalent of the circus showman encouraging passers-by to "step right up" – and even the dictating of the hours he would display himself. He had advertised himself in the same way in London several years previously (being described in a contemporary pamphlet as "a very handsome man ... whose picture hath bin publickely set out to the common view, and himselfe to bee seene for money"[44]) and probably also did so elsewhere he visited. Mark Thornton Burnett has noted that Lazarus's command of his exhibition provides "evidence of one show at least which stood wholly independent of the fairground circuit."[45] A French source commented in 1655 that some monsters "let themselves be seen and indeed show themselves for the sake of gain and profit,"[46] and Lazarus certainly seemed to have done well financially from his self-exhibition. Spalding describes him as being accompanied by two well-dressed servants on his visit to Aberdeen in 1642, and he presumably also had the financial means to hire lodgings in the town and to commission a local artist to paint his portrait. Furthermore, contemporary depictions of the twins invariably show them in clothing befitting their gentlemanly status.

Appearances, however, can be deceptive. Shay Sayre and Cynthia King have recently argued that entertainment is not truth "because it uses whatever will be more stimulating and whatever will make for a better experience."[47] Proprietors of 20th-century freak shows stretched the truth of the human oddities they displayed by accentuating these performers' particular characteristics often in subtle ways, such as dressing extremely tall individuals in high hats and boots.[48] Was this strategy of "aggrandised presentation"[49] also adopted by Lazarus in the 17th century? Each contemporary representation of the brothers, whether in word or image, shows how Lazarus presented himself as a man of refinement and distinction; in Mark Thornton Burnett's words, "not so much a common 'monster' as a court fop."[50] Perhaps he strategically clad himself in the genteel attire he was invariably depicted as wearing in order to emphasise his social standing in spite of his deformity – to cast himself as acceptable despite his unacceptable body – though the simple act of juxtaposing himself with those (able-bodied) spectators who paid to view him might have been sufficiently effective in highlighting his somatic difference. In addition to claims of being highly educated, multi-lingual and possessing an array of other talents,[51] being granted an audience with royalty further cemented a performer's respectability[52] and on his arrival in England Lazarus had "bin shewne (with marvel)" to King Charles and Queen Henrietta.[53] Thomas Bartholin had described him in 1645 as possessing "the polite accomplishments of a courtier"[54] and later promotional literature billed him as an Italian count – a respectable spectacle indeed.[55]

The motivations and expectations of the audiences who paid to view human abnormalities also demand consideration. It could be argued that the spectacle of Lazarus and his brother constituted entertainment in its own right, if we accept Dorf Zillmann and Jennings Bryant's definition of the term as "any activity designed to delight and, to a smaller degree, enlighten through the exhibition of fortunes and misfortunes of others."[56] It has been claimed that only a minority of later freak show acts were performative in that they accomplished skilful feats either because of or in spite of their deformities; more common were those whose entertainment value lay simply in their appearance.[57] Similarly, some early modern human monsters added a theatrical element to their exhibition such as the French woman who toured England in the 1630s, sewing, washing and writing despite having no hands.[58] Others did not. Spalding's description of the Italian brothers in Aberdeen casts Lazarus as charging money simply for "the sight" of him and his brother – as spectacle only. It could be argued that he was nevertheless performing, insofar as this term arguably might relate equally to 'being' ("existence itself") as 'doing' ("the activity of all that exists").[59] The likelihood that Lazarus merely displayed himself and his twin, rather than extending his "act" to include physical tasks or tricks is reinforced by his leaving the city once "there was so much collected as could be gotten," which to gauge from Spalding's account of concurrent events, was a little over a week.[60] It might be claimed that in doing so Lazarus manipulated his

audience, for "short-run performances limit our attendance options" and are more likely to create a clamour to view the performance before its run finishes.[61]

Entertainment theorists have identified a number of "consumption motives" among performance attendees including enrichment (such as intellectual enhancement or emotional stimulation), communion (whereby the participant gains a sense of attachment with others engaged in the experience) and distinction (which enables the participant to compare themselves with others and can engender a feeling of superiority).[62] While there is merit in applying each of these to Lazarus's typical spectatorship, it is the latter motive – that of distinction – that is perhaps most pertinent. Arthur A. Raney has noted that it is human nature to rejoice in others' misfortunes and "an innate need to feel superior drives social comparisons of oneself with weaker or inferior others."[63] Audiences' motives for attending a particular performance can also be influenced by a wish to communicate status, for example through paying an exorbitant admission fee.[64] Three effects arising from this have been identified, each of which might be applied to an early modern consumer of human exhibition: snob effects (when a scarce ticket is purchased for an extraordinary performance); bandwagon effects (when a person attends a performance because everyone else is); and Veblen effects (motivated by the desire for conspicuous consumption).[65] A particular indication of this latter phenomenon in action is provided by Spalding, who noted that Lazarus charged spectators in Aberdeen "some less some more" to view him, making it likely that each paid as much as they were willing to (or could afford).

Audience responses are another factor that invariably influences the popularity of entertainment forms. Sayre and King have noted that in order "to draw, grow and maintain audiences, entertainment must stimulate agreeable effects for them," even if such effects might also be unpleasant,[66] and 17th-century spectators of human abnormalities reportedly responded in overwhelmingly positive ways. This was due to contemporary beliefs about what monstrosity signified. With a career spanning the 1630s and 1640s, Lazarus and his brother can be located in what has recently been described as "a watershed moment in the perception of anomalous creatures"[67] which helped to dictate their audiences' reactions. Discourses in the 17th century on monsters were founded on an earlier intellectual tradition which regarded human abnormalities as "moral prodigies," purposeful divine creations intended as a call for the reformation of iniquitous behaviour, or as portents foreshadowing extraordinary events.[68] However, while monstrous births were still deemed primarily to have divine origins, historians have identified a gradual shift by the later-16th century away from their portentous significance and towards an interpretation of such creatures as wonders of nature. Typical of this changing view, which led physicians also to emphasise various secondary or natural causes of monstrosity, was Ambroise Pare's influential *On Monsters and Marvels*, first published in 1573. Pare cited thirteen reasons for the origins of monsters which combined the divine – including the glory and the wrath of God – with the natural, including sperm that was defective or produced in

incorrect amounts. Conjoined twins, for example, could result from "too great a quantity of seed" or from too small a womb, which led the man's sperm to become "constrained and crowded," eventually "coagulat[ing] in a globe, from which two children, thus joined and united, will be formed."[69] Historians such as Dudley Wilson, Katherine Park and Lorraine Daston have argued that in line with this 'natural' view monsters came to be regarded with increasing intellectual objectivity that became reflected in "more medical and scientific attitudes to monstrous births,"[70] so that "by the end of the 16th century the emphasis shifted from final causes (divine will) to proximate ones (physical explanations and the natural order)."[71]

An increasingly empirical approach to scientific enquiry during the 17th century was epitomised by Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum*, first published in 1620. While Pare had mixed divine and natural reasons for monsters, Bacon sought to separate the two, advocating empirical observation and methodical experiment[72] with the justification that monsters and related marvels ought not to be exempted from scientific explanation.[73] Park and Daston have acknowledged Bacon's ongoing sense of wonder at the monstrous despite this scientific objectivity with which they were increasingly regarded, but noted that it was "an admiration directed now towards "nature," the force that is within the intellectual containment of the human mind." As the 17th century progressed, "the divine as a cause" was finally "banished from intellectual discourse and the monster [was] absorbed into the natural and logical, albeit as exception to the rule."[74] This transition was a gradual one, accelerated by Baconian science and the work of the Royal Society from the 1660s.[75] By the end of the century monsters became "included as special cases in the by then established fields of comparative anatomy and embryology."[76]

Despite the increasingly medicalised way of looking at human aberrancy in the 17th century, "the sense of wonder that still attracted spectators to monsters did not disappear so quickly."[77] Contemporary accounts of the spectacle of Lazarus and similar cases of human exhibition reflect invariably "agreeable effects," which are required to sustain audiences. These effects – principally wonder and awe – arose from a fundamental view of monsters as evidence of the power of both God and nature. This belief was perfectly evinced in Martin Parker's ballad of *The Two Inseparable Brothers* (1637), which described Lazarus both as "th' work of Gods hands" and as a "youth ... whom nature freely did adorn With shape and pulchritude," an appearance which bred "admiration" and "may much wonder win." Lazarus was recorded in the ballad as having travelled through Germany, Spain, France "and other Christian lands" to serve as a reminder to his audiences of God's might. Parker wrote, "In seeing this or such strange things, Let us admire the king of kings, and of his power conceaue,"[78] while the reverend Thomas Bedford noted in 1635 that conjoined twins "doe teach us the presence of Gods Providence."[79] Although the poet Alexander Brome called the Colloredo brothers a "miracle"[80] this was not a term typically used to describe monsters during this era when, after all, many of those who upheld their significance were Protestants. Rather, such human

oddities "provided a paradigm for the cooperation of primary and secondary causes."[81] In spite of the centrality of divine agency in the creation of monsters, the interpretation of their causes was usually left not to theologians but to "Doctors and Chyrurgeons."[82] Reverend Bedford condemned the practice of "carr[ying] ... monsters and mishapen births ... up and downe the country for sights to make a gaine by them" on the grounds that it was not "lawfull to delight in what may not be desired. And who would desire a mishapen birth, to be the issue of his owne body? ... I see not how there can bee place either for profit or pleasure to bee thought upon."[83] Nevertheless, in common with other theological commentators Bedford judged conjoined twins to be "the worke of God, presented to the world to be seene and to be admired."[84] All human oddities served as "objects of religious meditation," offering valuable instruction to the faithful.[85]

In addition to God, nature was increasingly cast as a powerful force in the creation of monsters: in 1616 the Italian physician Liceti "likened nature to an artist who, faced with some imperfection in the materials to be shaped, ingeniously creates another form still more admirable." As a result, he noted, the "novelty and enormity [of monsters] provoke[es] as much wonder as surprise and astonishment."[86] This was a longstanding view: the navigator and diarist Edward Fenton had written in 1569 that "there is nothing to be seen, which more stirs the spirit of man, which ravishes more his senses, which does more amaze him… than … monsters, wonders and abominations."[87] Such pleasurable effects derived from viewing monsters continued throughout the 17th century: the diarist Samuel Pepys recorded, for example, on seeing a bearded lady at a London fair in 1688, "it was a strange sight to me, I confess, and what pleased me mightily."[88] That such a sight elicited pleasure for Pepys is indicative of monsters' diminishing roles as prodigious omens. Similarly, conjoined twins stillborn a year earlier were deemed to prove "the wonders of the Lord" yet, "unlike earlier ballad descriptions, these twins were not a portent or a symbol; they simply were."[89]

But this diminishing role of human abnormalities as prodigies occurred only gradually over the 17th century. Monsters could be imbued with particular significance depending on concurrent circumstances: "in times of war, civil conflict, and confessional upheaval, almost anything was grist for the prodigious mill."[90] With this in mind, the prodigious meaning of the brothers should not be discounted. A German broadsheet from 1638 advertising the twins linked their existence to the equally portentous appearance of a comet some twenty years previously and, shortly after their arrival in London, Martin Parker's illustrated verses emphasised their religio-political significance by likening the perfect brother to the populous embracing a corrupt church with its degenerate clergy.[91] Although Anita Guerrini has recently noted that the "special status" monsters had held as prodigies "began to fade" by the 1640s,[92] the spectacle of Lazarus and his brother remained charged with political and religious meaning for their audiences during this decade. In his 1641 description of the brothers as "Nature's *Diaresis*, half one another,"[93] the cavalier poet John Cleveland reiterated the paradox that the brothers were at once

united and divided, a state of being that he regarded as analogous to the collectivity of Puritan clergymen against whom he was writing. It can only be conjectured how much significance might have been attached to the brothers during their visit to Aberdeen in 1642, at a time when, as one contemporary noted, “the civill wars did overrun all” in a city which strategically “more than any other ... lay on the contested frontier between the Covenanting south and the royalist north.”[94] Could Lazarus and his brother have embodied the divided city itself? Since March 1639 Aberdeen had been regularly garrisoned and the city enjoyed a two-year respite from military occupation only from February 1642; it had barely begun to recover from the religious, political, financial and social upheaval occasioned by the wars when Lazarus visited just eight weeks later.[95] The multiple dislocations occasioned by the Civil Wars provided particular ideological fodder for the appearance of prodigious monsters throughout the British Isles: during the 1640s a number of strange births were given added meaning, including a headless child, whose birth in 1646 was interpreted as “providence’s curse on a ‘Popish gentlewoman,’ who, in denouncing parliament, had vowed rather to have a headless child than one with a Roundhead.”[96]

Bolstered by the multiple layers of meaning with which his very appearance was imbued, Lazarus’s extensive European tour entailed a life of self-promotion unmatched by any other. After visiting Scotland, he was recorded in Copenhagen, Basel, Strasbourg and Verona before dropping out of the historical record around 1646.[97] What might be concluded in analysing what drew 17th-century audiences to view the spectacle of him and his brother? It would be misleading to judge spectators simply as seeking to be entertained or to articulate an inherent fascination with physical differences (as might be argued was often the case with later freak show attendees[98]), and more instructive to acknowledge that the majority of contemporaries reacted to the sight of the twins and other such examples of human exhibition as admirable, awe-inspiring proof of both God and nature’s ingenuity. The juxtaposition of Lazarus and John embodied a somatic ambiguity that facilitated allegorical reflections on current religio-political affairs, as well as medical and intellectual discourses on the nature and meaning of monstrosity. The Italian brothers can be located in the midst of a liminal period when the cultural interpretations of human abnormalities were particularly ambiguous, though, as Pender has argued, these meanings remained fluid throughout the 17th century.[99] Lazarus was a consummate showman who successfully exploited the curiosity he knew was generated by his appearance, and he did so at a time when the significance of monstrosity was still rooted in moral prodigy as well as scientific scrutiny. For contemporaries the spectacle of Lazarus Colloredo and his parasitic brother John Baptista embodied evidence of both divine omnipotence and nature’s fecundity, transforming the very sight of them into an instructive and awe-inspiring – and very potent – form of entertainment.

[1] Dudley Wilson, *Signs and Portents: Monstrous Births from the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 1.
[2] Stephen Pender, "No Monsters at the Resurrection: Inside some Conjoined Twins," in *Monster Theory: Reading Culture*, ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 143-167, at 145.
[3] Shay Sayre and Cynthia King, *Entertainment and Society: Influences, Impacts, and Innovations* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2nd edition, 2010), 6.
[4] Pender, "No Monsters at the Resurrection," 146.
[5] Stephen Pender, "In the Bodyshop: Human Exhibition in Early Modern England," in *Defects: Engendering the Modern Body*, ed. Helen Deutsch and Felicity Nussbaum (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 95-126, at 96.
[6] Nadja Durbach*, Spectacle of Deformity: Freak Shows and Modern British Culture* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2010), 1-9, at 2. Most spectators "had access only to carefully crafted visual and textual representations of monstrosity that were tailored to serve a particular political, moral, or religious purpose."
[7] Paul Semonin, "Monsters in the Marketplace: the Exhibition of Human Oddities in Early Modern England," in *Freakery: Cultural Spectacles of the Extraordinary Body*, ed. Rosemarie Garland-Thomson (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 69-81, at 70.
[8] Patricia Fumerton and Anita Guerrini, "Introduction: Straws in the Wind," in *Ballads and Broadsides in Britain, 1500-1800*, ed. Patricia Fumerton and Anita Guerrini, with the help of Kris McAbee (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 1-9, at 1.
[9] Anne Jacobson Schutte, ""Such Monstrous Births": A Neglected Aspect of the Antinomian Controversy," *Renaissance Quarterly* 38 (1985): 85-106, at 94.
[10] Barbara M. Benedict, *Curiosity: a Cultural History of Early Modern Inquiry* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 5.
[11] Susan Bennett, *Theatre Audiences: a Theory of Production and Reception* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2nd edition, 2003), 204.
[12] Benedict, *Curiosity*, 6.
[13] Wilson, *Signs and Portents*, 73.
[14] Katherine Park and Lorraine Daston, *Wonders and the Order of Nature* (New York: Zone Books, 1998), 200.
[15] Benedict, *Curiosity*, 6.
[16] Account by Thomas Bartholin (1654), trans. J. Greene, *Gentleman's Magazine* 47 (December, 1777), 482-483, at 482.
[17] Lazarus Colloredo and John Baptista, c.1645; from Thomas Bartholin, *Historiarum Anatomicarum rariorum Centuria* volume I (The Hague, 1654). This image taken from *Wikimedia Commons* [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d6/Lazarus_and_Joannes_Baptista_Colloredo.jpg, accessed 22nd January 2011].
[18] William Winstanley, *The New Help to Discourse* (London: F.C., 4th edition, 1696), 133-135.
[19] Jan Bondeson, *The Two-Headed Boy and Other Medical Marvels* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), vii.
[20] Hyder Edward Rollins, ed., *The Pack of Autolycus: or, Strange and Terrible News of Ghosts, Apparitions, Monstrous Births, Showers of Wheat, Judgements of God, and Other Prodigious and Fearful Happenings as Told in Broadside Ballads of the Years 1624-1693* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927), 7.
[21] Rollins, ed., *Pack of Autolycus*, 8.
[22] The anonymous broadside *A Certaine Relation of the Hog-faced Gentlewoman Called Mistris Tannakin Skinker* (London, 1640), the licence for the publication of which was applied for in December of 1639, recorded him as being "late (if not now) in Towne"; Rollins, ed., *Pack of Autolycus*, 8-9.
[23] Bondeson, *Two-Headed Boy*, xi.
[24] John Spalding, *Memorialls of the Trubles in Scotland and in England, AD 1624-AD 1645* (Aberdeen: Spalding Club, 1851), 125-126.

[25] Durbach, *Spectacle of Deformity*, 60.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid, 63.
[28] Pender, “No Monsters at the Resurrection”, 157.
[29] Ibid, 160.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Mark Thornton Burnett, *Constructing ‘Monsters’ in Shakespearean Drama and Early Modern Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), 28.
[32] John Cleveland, *The Works of Mr John Cleveland* (London: R. Holt, 1687), 28.
[33] J. Greene, *Gentleman’s Magazine* 47 (December, 1777), 482.
[34] Wilson, *Signs and Portents*, 88; Bondeson, *Two-Headed Boy*, x.
[35] Rollins, ed., *Pack of Autolycus*, 8.
[36] Pender, “No Monsters at the Resurrection,” 160.
[37] Mary Lindemann, “The Body Debated: Bodies and Rights in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Germany,” *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 38 (2008): 493-521, at 498.
[38] Bondeson, *Two-Headed Boy*, xix.
[39] Lindemann, “The Body Debated,” 505, 508-509. Well into the eighteenth century, however, debate persisted about the likelihood of an individual passing on abnormalities to any offspring. Lazarus’s children were reportedly free from deformity.
[40] Pender, “No Monsters at the Resurrection,” 144.
[41] Durbach, *Spectacle of Deformity*, 65.
[42] David A. Gerber, “The “Careers” of People Exhibited in Freak Shows: the Problem of Volition and Valorisation,” in *Freakery*, ed. Thomson, 38-54, at 43.
[43] Robert Bogdan, “In Defence of *Freak Show,*” *Disability, Handicap and Society* 8 (1993): 91-94, at 92; Robert Bogdan, “The Social Construction of Freaks,” in *Freakery*, ed. Thomson, 23-37, at 35.
[44] [Anon], *Certaine Relation of the Hog-faced Gentlewoman*; Rollins, ed., *Pack of Autolycus*, 8.
[45] Burnett, *Constructing ‘Monsters,’* 19.
[46] Wilson, *Signs and Portents*, 72-73.
[47] Sayre and King, *Entertainment and Society*, 6.
[48] Robert Bogdan, *Freak Show: Presenting Human Oddities for Amusement and Profit* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 209.
[49] Bogdan, *Freak Show*, 108.
[50] Burnett, *Constructing ‘Monsters,’* 18.
[51] Bogdan, *Freak Show*, 108.
[52] Bogdan, “Social Construction of Freaks,” 30.
[53] Bondeson, *Two-Headed Boy*, vii.
[54] J. Greene, *Gentleman’s Magazine* 47 (December, 1777), 482.
[55] Bondeson, *Two-Headed Boy*, ix.
[56] Quoted in Peter Vorderer, “Entertainment Theory,” in *Communication and Emotion: Essays in Honour of Dolf Zillmann*, ed. Jennings Bryant, David R. Roskos-Ewoldsen and Joanne Cantor (Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2003), 131-54, at 133.
[57] Gerber, ““Careers” of People Exhibited in Freak Shows,” 45-46.
[58] Burnett, *Constructing ‘Monsters,’* 15.
[59] Richard Schechner, *Performance Studies: an Introduction* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2002), 22.
[60] Spalding, *Memorialls*, 125-126 recorded that the twins visited the town “a day or two” before Easter (which in 1642 was on 10th April) and had apparently left by April 17th.
[61] Sayre and King, *Entertainment and Society*, 56-57.
[62] Ibid, 56.
[63] Arthur A. Raney, “Disposition-Based Theories of Enjoyment,” in *Communication and Emotion*, ed. Bryant, Roskos-Ewoldsen and Cantor, 61-84, at 62.
[64] Sayre and King, *Entertainment and Society*, 56.
[65] Ibid, 56-57.
[66] Ibid, 6.

[67] Tassie Gniady, "Do You Take this Hog-Faced Woman to be Your Wedded Wife?" in *Ballads and Broadsides*, ed. Fumerton and Guerrini, 91-107, at 91.
[68] Rudolf Wittkower, "Marvels of the East. A Study in the History of Monsters," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942): 159-97, at 176- 77, 185.
[69] Ambroise Pare, *On Monsters and Marvels*, intro. Janis L. Pallister (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 14-5.
[70] Wilson, *Signs and Portents*, 1.
[71] Robert Hole, "Incest, Consanguinity and a Monstrous Birth in Rural England, January 1600," *Social History* 25 (2000): 183-99, at 195, citing Katherine Park and Lorraine Daston, "Unnatural Conceptions: The Study of Monsters in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century France and England," *Past and Present* 92 (1981): 20-54, at 35.
[72] Hole, "Incest, Consanguinity and a Monstrous Birth," 198.
[73] Lorraine Daston, "Marvellous Facts and Miraculous Evidence in Early Modern Europe," *Critical Inquiry* 18 (1991): 93-124, at 111. Certainly Lazarus and his brother were subjected to rigorous medical scrutiny by a number of physicians in France, as well as by the Danish anatomist Thomas Bartholin, though it is interesting to note that their findings included consideration of their spiritual well-being in addition to their physiological composition.
[74] David Williams, *Deformed Discourse: the Function of the Monster in Mediaeval Thought and Literature* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 327-328.
[75] Julie Crawford, *Marvelous Protestantism: Monstrous Births in Post-Reformation England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 181.
[76] Herman W. Roodenburg, "The Maternal Imagination. The Fears of Pregnant Women in Seventeenth-Century Holland," *Journal of Social History* 21 (1988): 701-16, at 706.
[77] Anita Guerrini, "Advertising Monstrosity: Broadsides and Human Exhibition in Early Eighteenth-Century London," in *Ballads and Broadsides*, ed. Fumerton and Guerrini, 109-27, at 112.
[78] Rollins, ed., *Pack of Autolycus*, 10-14.
[79] Thomas Bedford, *A True and Certaine Relation of a Strange-Birth* (London: Anne Griffin, 1635), 10.
[80] Hyder E. Rollins, "Martin Parker, Ballad-Monger," *Modern Philology* 16 (1919): 449-74, at 457.
[81] Park and Daston, *Wonders and the Order of Nature*, 192.
[82] Crawford, *Marvelous Protestantism*, 182.
[83] Bedford, *True and Certaine Relation*, 13-14.
[84] Ibid, 1.
[85] Park and Daston, *Wonders and the Order of Nature*, 182.
[86] Ibid, 200.
[87] Pender, "No Monsters at the Resurrection," 154.
[88] Park and Daston, *Wonders and the Order of Nature*, 197-98.
[89] Guerrini, "Advertising Monstrosity," 119.
[90] Park and Daston, *Wonders and the Order of Nature*, 191.
[91] Pender, "No Monsters at the Resurrection," 157-159, 160.
[92] Guerrini, "Advertising Monstrosity," 111.
[93] Cleveland, *Works of Mr John Cleveland*, 28.
[94] Gordon DesBrisay, "The Civill Warrs did Overrun All: Aberdeen, 1630-1690," in *Aberdeen Before 1800: a New History*, ed. E. Patricia Dennison, David Ditchburn and Michael Lynch (East Linton: Tuckwell, 2002), 238-66, at 239, 247.
[95] DesBrisay, "Civill Warrs," 249, 256.
[96] Sarah Barber, "Curiosity and Reality: a Seventeenth-Century Image," *History Workshop Journal* 70 (2010): 21-46, at 35.
[97] Bondeson, *Two-Headed Boy*, xii-xiii, xiv.
[98] Bogdan, "Social Construction of Freaks," 34; Gerber, ""Careers" of People Exhibited in Freak Shows," 43.
[99] Pender, "No Monsters at the Resurrection," 145.