Sacrilege and Redemption in Renaissance Florence.  
The Case of Antonio Rinaldeschi

Second, Revised Edition  
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In Florence, in the summer of 1501, a man named Antonio Rinaldeschi was arrested and hanged after throwing horse dung at an outdoor painting of the Virgin Mary. His punishment was severe, even for the times, and the crimes with which he was formally charged, gambling, blasphemy and attempted suicide, did not normally warrant the death penalty.

This text unveils a series of newly discovered sources concerning this striking episode. The authors show how the political and religious context of Renaissance Florence resulted both in Rinaldeschi’s death sentence and in the creation by the followers of Savonarola of a new religious devotion in the heart of the city commemorating the event.

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