



## A COMPARISON OF INTERROGATION IN TWO INQUISITORIAL COURTS OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY<sup>1</sup>

Irene Bueno

### Introduction

The spread of the Cathar heresy in Western Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was perceived as a real challenge to orthodoxy. The Catholic Church soon employed all means possible in a reaction against this dualistic religion, which was especially widespread in the south of France and in central and northern Italy. After the conclusion of the Albigensian crusade (1209–1229), effective inquisitorial activity, started in Languedoc in 1233 on the initiative of Pope Gregory IX, became the main weapon employed to undermine the dualistic heresy.<sup>2</sup>

However, in the second half of the thirteenth century a great number of perfects and *credentes* crossed the Alps and established a sort of “church” in exile in the towns of northern Italy. Such a hinterland constituted a reservoir for the re-emergence of Catharism at the turn of the century, when a spiritual *reconquista* was led in Languedoc by the Authié brothers. Even though partial and limited,

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<sup>1</sup> This article is a shortened version of my MA thesis, “Two Inquisitors of Declining Catharism,” (Central European University, 2005). I would like to thank all those who helped me during my work, especially my supervisor Gábor Klaniczay, and my Academic Writing professor, Judith Rasson; I am also very grateful to Dinora Corsi and DeLloyd Guth.

<sup>2</sup> On the general history of Catharism see: Malcolm Barber, *The Cathares. Dualist Heretics in Languedoc in the High Middle Ages* (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2000); Arno Borst, *Die Katharer* (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1953); *Cathares en Languedoc*, Cahiers de Fanjeaux, 3 (Toulouse: Privat, 1968); Jean Duvernoy, *Le catharisme: L'histoire des Cathares* (Toulouse: Privat, 1976) (henceforth: Duvernoy, *Le catharisme : L'histoire*); *Effacement du Catharisme? (XIII<sup>e</sup>–XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, Cahiers de Fanjeaux, 20 (Toulouse: Privat, 1985); Elie Griffé, *Le Languedoc cathare et l'Inquisition (1229–1329)* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1980); Malcolm Lambert, *The Cathars* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998); Raoul Manselli, *L'eresia del male* (Naples: Morano, 1963) (henceforth: Manselli, *L'eresia del male*); Michel Roquebert, *Les Cathares. De la chute de Montségur aux derniers bûchers (1244–1329)* (Paris: Perrin, 1998) (henceforth: Roquebert, *Les Cathares*); Michel Roquebert, *Histoire des Cathares. Hérésie, Croisade, Inquisition du XI au XIV siècle* (Paris: Perrin, 1999).



Irene Bueno

the success of their mission was supported by fertile resources, represented by the heretical tradition and a web of supporters ready to hide, protect, and accompany the heretics from place to place.

Nevertheless, re-emerging Catharism soon had to confront the capable reaction of the Inquisition headquarters based in Carcassonne, Toulouse, and Pamiers. The Dominicans Geoffroy d'Ablis (Carcassonne, 1303–1316) and Bernard Gui (Toulouse, 1306–1324), and the bishop of Pamiers—future Pope Benedict XII—Jacques Fournier (1318–1325), dominated the scene of the last repression of the dualist heresy. The three inquisitorial seats and their jurisdictional area delimited the region of the last repression, which extended from the Pyrenees to the present *département* of Ariège.

After the famous *Montaillou: village occitane* by Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie,<sup>3</sup> historians have studied the demise of Catharism in the French Midi, mostly from anthropological, socio-economic or religious perspectives.<sup>4</sup> While most of the scholarship has been focused on the reconstruction of the persecuted society, my research concentrates on the less investigated inquisitorial institution.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou, village occitane* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975) (henceforth: Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou*).

<sup>4</sup> The book of Benad represents a critical answer to Le Roy Ladurie, focused on a chronological and biographical approach: Matthias Benad, *Domus und Religion in Montaillou: Katholische Kirche und Katharismus im Überlebenskampf der Familie des Pfarrers Petrus Clerici am Anfang des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1990) (henceforth: Benad, *Domus und Religion in Montaillou*). However, most of the works are constituted by articles focused on a specific topic, such as alimentation, biographies, or women.

<sup>5</sup> Concerning the most recent scholarship on French Inquisition, see Laurent Albaret, *Les Inquisiteurs: portraits de défenseurs de la foi en Languedoc (XIIe–XIV siècles)* (Toulouse: Privat, 2001) (henceforth: Albaret, *Inquisiteurs: portraits*); John J. Arnold, *Inquisition and Power* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001) (henceforth: Arnold, *Inquisition and Power*); Jacques Chiffolleau, “Avouer l’inavouable. L’aveu et la procédure inquisitoire” in *L’aveu, histoire, sociologie, philosophie*, ed. R. Dulong (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2001), 57–97; Alan R. Friedlander, *The Hammer of the Inquisitors. Brother Bernard Délicieux and the Struggle against the Inquisition in Fourteenth Century France* (La Haye: Brill, 2000) (henceforth: Friedlander, *Hammer of the Inquisitors*); James Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society: Power, Discipline and Resistance in Languedoc* (London: Cornell University Press, 2001) (henceforth: Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society*); R. I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe, 950–1250* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987); Id., “A la naissance d’une société persécutrice: les clercs, les Cathares et la formation de l’Europe,” *Heresis* 6 (1993): 11–37; Jacques Paul, “La mentalité de l’inquisiteur chez Bernard Gui,” in *Bernard Gui et son Monde*, Cahiers de Fanjeaux, 16 (Toulouse: Privat, 1981), 279–316; id., “Jacques Fournier inquisiteur,” in *La papauté d’Avignon et le Languedoc (1316–1342)*, Cahiers de Fanjeaux, 26 (Toulouse:



## Interrogation in Two Inquisitorial Courts

The juridical procedure practiced by inquisitors and bishops in repressing heresy had already matured by the early fourteenth century. The contribution of “un code, des décrétales, des canons de conciles et des lettres officielles qui fixent avec de plus en plus de minutie tous les détails d’un procès,” determined a certain uniformity in the work of inquisitors.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, inquisitorial documents are not identical with each other. Although similar in many regards, the registers of Geoffroy d’Ablis<sup>7</sup> and Jacques Fournier<sup>8</sup> have different characteristics which seem to show that there was some margin for personal interpretation. The aim of this article is to enquire into the inquisitorial activity of d’Ablis and Fournier through a comparative analysis of their registers, focusing on the major differences between the two courts.<sup>9</sup> I will first compare the procedure employed in the tribunals of Carcassonne and Pamiers, analyzing the construction of the inquest, the summoning of witnesses and accused, and the various phases of the process. Secondly, through the dissection of the questions asked by the inquisitors in the course of interrogations, I will reconstruct the questionnaires employed in the two courts.

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Privat, 1991) 39–67 (henceforth: Paul, “Jacques Fournier inquisiteur”); Mark Gregory Pegg, *The Corruption of Angels: The Great Inquisition of 1245–1246* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001) (henceforth: Pegg, *Corruption of Angels*); Edward Peters, *Inquisition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989) (henceforth: Peters, *Inquisition*).

<sup>6</sup> Paul, “La procédure inquisitoriale à Carcassonne au milieu du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle,” in *L’Église et le droit dans le Midi, (XIII<sup>e</sup>–XIV<sup>e</sup> siècles)*, Cahiers de Fanjeaux, 29 (Toulouse: Privat, 1994), 361; id., “Jacques Fournier inquisiteur,” 39–67.

<sup>7</sup> Annette Pales-Gobilliard, ed. and tr., *L’inquisiteur Geoffroy d’Ablis et les cathares du comté de Foix (1308–1309)* (Paris: CNRS, 1984) (henceforth: *Geoffroy d’Ablis*).

<sup>8</sup> *Le registre d’Inquisition de Jacques Fournier (évêque de Pamiers): 1318–1325*, ed. Jean Duvernoy, 3 vols. (Toulouse: Privat, 1965), (henceforth: *Jacques Fournier*).

<sup>9</sup> While I have considered the whole register of Geoffroy d’Ablis (composed by seventeen trials), my analysis on the register of Jacques Fournier was carried out on a representative sample of eighteen selected cases, chosen according to criteria such as kind of accusation, social status, gender, previous appearance at the court of Carcassonne, and relation with other trials. I analyzed the cases of Brune Pourcel (*Jacques Fournier*, I, 382–394), Alazais Fauré (ibid., I, 410–421), Alamande Guilhabert (ibid., I, 422–428), Arnaud Fabre (ibid., I, 429–435), Arnaud Gélis (ibid., I, 128–143), Guillaume Autier (ibid., I, 436–441), Baruch l’Allemand (ibid., I, 177–190), Guillaume Agasse (ibid., II, 135–147), Bernard Marty (ibid., III, 253–295), Guillaume Guilabert (ibid., I, 255–257), Alazais Azéma (ibid., I, 307–322), Bernard Clergue (ibid., II, 268–304), Béatrice de Planissoles (ibid., I, 214–250), Barthélemy Amilhac (ibid., I, 251–259), Guillaume Fort (ibid., I, 442–454), Bernard Benet (ibid., I, 395–409), Jacqueline den Carot (ibid., I, 151–159). Because a complete examination of the entire register is opportune, I am presenting here a report of a work in progress.



Irene Bueno

### **Building the Process. The Inquest and Preliminary Phases**

After the passage from accusatorial to inquisitorial procedure, which became the new standard form of criminal court suits in Europe, processes against heresy were issued by the initiative of the ecclesiastical courts on the basis of a *denunciatio*.<sup>10</sup> The suspected heretics were usually summoned by means of a letter sent to their parish priest, but sometimes they preferred to give their depositions spontaneously, hoping to be treated more mercifully. Only four spontaneous confessions appear in the register of Geoffroy d'Ablis, indicated by expressions such as *veniens non citatus*, *gratis veniens*, *veniens non citatus nec vocatus*,<sup>11</sup> while the majority of the processes were started because of a denunciation.<sup>12</sup>

In Fournier's register, the elements of the accusation were summarized at the beginning of the proceeding. This list of errors, compiled on the basis of a previous denunciation, constituted the raw materials for the interrogation. Denunciations were rigorously anonymous and the name of the accuser was never revealed. In spite of his request, not even a powerful man such as the bailiff of Montailou managed to learn from the inquisitor who had deposed against him, because, according to the bishop, this *non erat de consuetudine vel stilo officii Inquisitionis*.<sup>13</sup>

For inquisitors, interrogations constituted occasions for being informed about other people involved in heresy. As a consequence, a single trial could open the way to a series of trials, according to a sort of "cluster model." During each interrogation, Geoffroy d'Ablis and his lieutenants collected long lists of names. For example, in the trial proceedings of Guillaume de Rodes almost 60 names are listed in his confession.<sup>14</sup> Pierre de Gailhac of Tarascon was another impressive case; he listed 42 names, subdivided by place of origin and with indication of family links.<sup>15</sup> While d'Ablis put together lists of names, Fournier

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<sup>10</sup> Peters, *Inquisition*, 52, 64–65.

<sup>11</sup> Spontaneous confessions were given by Philippe de Larnat, Pierre de Tinhac, Jacques Garsen, and Gérard de Rodes, see the Introduction of Pales-Gobilliard in *Geoffroy d'Ablis*, 33–36; Céléstin Douais, *L'inquisition, ses origines – sa procédure*, (Paris: Plon, 1906), 164 (henceforth: Douais, *L'inquisition*); Peters, *Inquisition*, 64–65.

<sup>12</sup> Ten cases out of seventeen: Béatrice de Planissoles, Alazais Azéma, Guillaume Fort, Guillaume Guilbert, Aude Fauré, Baruch l'Allemand, Bernard Marty, Brune Pourcel, Guillaume Agasse, and Bernard Clergue.

<sup>13</sup> *Jacques Fournier*, II, 301–302.

<sup>14</sup> *Geoffroy d'Ablis*, 134–163.

<sup>15</sup> *Geoffroy d'Ablis*, 338–341.



## Interrogation in Two Inquisitorial Courts

performed more detailed investigations. His concern was to enquire into facts, relations, and dialogues, which his notary attentively recorded.

The convocation of witnesses was regarded as a major component of the investigation. With the progressive disappearance of archaic proofs related to supernatural powers—such as ordeals, judicial duels, and purgatory oaths—and the diffusion of evolved methods of proof in secular courts of justice, full evidence was provided either by a full confession of the accused or by testimonies of eyewitnesses who had caught the criminal in the act.<sup>16</sup>

The employment of witnesses was extremely rare in the tribunal of Carcassonne. None of the seventeen proceedings mentions recourse to any external testimony. However, evidence by the accused was routinely put together by comparing different depositions. By interrogating several individuals about the same event and asking them to list the names of the participants, the inquisitor and his lieutenants provided support for the original accusation.<sup>17</sup>

In contrast, the court of Pamiers had recourse to witnesses frequently. Sometimes the accused were simultaneously employed as witnesses for someone else's process.<sup>18</sup> In other cases, innocent witnesses were summoned to give testimony. The more recent the events being enquired into, the more testimonies the inquisitor was able to find. For the process of Aude Fauré, whose doubts on the Eucharist had arisen only a few days before the trial, ten witnesses were found.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, the awareness that an accused was far from confessing the truth made the use of witnesses desirable. This was the case, for example, of Bernard Clergue: five people provided testimony against his attempts to elicit false depositions from them. His case was relevant because of the important role of the Clergue family in the village; therefore the bishop put all his efforts into obtaining a reconstruction of the facts.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> See Peters, *Inquisition*, 65; Jean-Philippe Lévi, *La hiérarchie des preuves dans le droit savant du Moyen Âge depuis la Renaissance du Droit Romain jusqu'à la fin du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, *Annales de l'Université de Lyon*, (Lyon, 1939), 67–105; John Gilissen, *La preuve en Europe du XVI<sup>e</sup> au début du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*. *Manuels de la Société Jean Bodin*, 17 (Brussels: Editions de la Librairie Encyclopedique, 1964); Raoul Charles Van Caenegem, "Methods of Proof in Western Medieval Law," in Raoul Charles Van Caenegem., *Legal History: A European Perspective*, (London: The Hambledon Press, 1991), 71–113 (henceforth: Van Caenegem, "Methods of Proof").

<sup>17</sup> *Geoffroy d'Ablis*, trials of Guillaume de Rodes (156–163), Blanche de Rodes (232–241), Raimond Issaura (284–291), Pierre Issaura (304–311), and Arnaud Issaura (310–323).

<sup>18</sup> See for example the case of Guillaume Guilhabert's *hereticatio*, or the process of Arnaud Gélis, *Jacques Fournier*, I, 128–143.

<sup>19</sup> *Jacques Fournier*, II, 82–105.

<sup>20</sup> *Jacques Fournier*, III, 268–304.



Irene Bueno

### **The Inquisitorial Procedure: Anatomy of a Trial**

After the accused and witnesses were summoned in front of the judging authorities, they were required to take an oath. A group, usually composed of the lieutenants of the inquisitor, Dominican friars, secular clerics, ecclesiastical and civil officials, and a notary acted as witnesses and were present at the various sessions of the process.<sup>21</sup> The interrogations were not necessarily conducted by the appointed inquisitors. Geoffroy d'Ablis entrusted his lieutenants with the role of eliciting the first important depositions and normally he was not present at the first sessions. On the contrary, most of the time Fournier interrogated his accused personally. Among my selected cases only Guillaume Agasse gave his deposition to inquisitorial officials delegated by the bishop.

Moreover, d'Ablis and Fournier elaborated diverse strategies of interrogation and made use of pressure techniques in different ways. Alternatively to regular interrogations and admonitions, means of coercion were normally employed by the inquisitorial courts in order to elicit a full confession. In the register of Geoffroy d'Ablis there is no evidence of torture, while in that of Fournier only one case is documented. This trial was unusual, unique in the whole register for both the subject of the accusation and its procedure. Guillaume Agasse, guardian of a leprosarium in Pamiers, was accused of having participated in a meeting in Toulouse, organized by the king of Granada and the sultan of Babylonia, where about fifty lepers repudiated the Christian faith and assumed the commitment to poison wells and fountains by means of special potions.<sup>22</sup> Interestingly, the first interrogation of Agasse, where torture was employed, was not led by the bishop, but by his procurator.<sup>23</sup> Fournier usually interrogated his accused personally, but in this case he met the accused only for the third interrogation and he did not resort to torture. Although it is impossible to reconstruct precisely the vicissitudes of the process, we can hypothesize some links between the peculiar feature of the accusation, the means of coercion used, and the identity of the interrogating inquisitor.

Preventive imprisonment was much more in use in the tribunals of Carcassonne and Pamiers. Temporary detention had a threatening function and

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<sup>21</sup> *Geoffroy d'Ablis*, 4–32; Paul, “Jacques Fournier inquisiteur,” 43–48.

<sup>22</sup> *Jacques Fournier*, II, 135–147. The case has been studied by Carlo Ginzburg, *Storia notturna* (Turin: Einaudi, 1989), 51–52; see also David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).

<sup>23</sup> *Jacques Fournier*, II, 137.



## Interrogation in Two Inquisitorial Courts

was conceived to persuade the suspected to confess.<sup>24</sup> In the register of d'Ablis, custody preceding the process was more frequent.<sup>25</sup> On the contrary, the court of Fournier usually decided for temporary captivity during the course of the lawsuit, in case the accused was believed to be hiding the truth after the first deposition. According to Given, Fournier resorted to coercive imprisonment in fifty-five cases out of eighty-nine.<sup>26</sup> Temporary captivity was in fact one of the most effective techniques used to obtain a satisfactory confession.

In Carcassonne, the first interrogations routinely concluded with a declaration of repentance from the accused, who rejected his errors and, having abjured, was reconciled with the Catholic Church.<sup>27</sup> Abjuration was necessary to avoid being considered unrepentant, which would invite the capital sentence. According to the procedure put into practice in Pamiers, this phase was strictly associated with a further session of recapitulation.

This phase was aimed at obtaining a confirmation from the accused of what he had previously confessed. The importance of this stage seems to be confirmed by its official appearance: in Carcassonne, it was undertaken by Geoffroy d'Ablis himself, while in Pamiers it usually included the pontifical judge Jean de Beaune besides Fournier. The notary read the previous confession in the vernacular and the accused under oath *approbavit, innovavit, ratificavit et confirmavit tamquam vera et nullam continentem falsitatem*.<sup>28</sup> If he did not have to make any further additions, he promised to persevere in these declarations, renouncing any possibility of defence in case they were contradicted. Confirmation and abjuration sanctioned the end of the trial sessions and entrusted the repented heretic to pronouncement of the sentence.

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<sup>24</sup> Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society*, 65; for the whole chapter on "Coercive imprisonment," see 52–65.

<sup>25</sup> Seven accused declared during their deposition to have been imprisoned before being summoned in front of the judges: they were Raimond Autier (*Geoffroy d'Ablis*, 116–135), Guillaume de Rodes (*ibid.*, 134–163) and his wife Blanche (*ibid.*, 212–241), Raimond Issaura (*ibid.*, 260–291) and his brother Pierre (*ibid.*, 290–311), Pierre de Gailhac (*ibid.*, 332–361), and Alamande de Vicdessos (*ibid.*, 240–249).

<sup>26</sup> In forty-two of them it was possible to determine the length of time of the forced custody: in 75% of the cases about 37.3 weeks were considered necessary, Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society*, 58–59.

<sup>27</sup> The usual formula employed in Carcassonne was *Juravit et abjuravit omnem heresim et fuit reconciliatus*.

<sup>28</sup> This was the formula employed in the tribunal of Carcassonne. In Pamiers it was very similar: *recognovit esse vera, et in nullo continere falsitatem, et dictam suam confessionem tamquam veram et legitime factam approbavit, ratificavit, et ex certa sciencia sonfirmavit, et pro renunciato et concluso haberi voluit*. (*Jacques Fournier*, I, 142).



Irene Bueno

What were the margins of flexibility in the inquisitorial procedure? Was the mechanism of trials a truly uniform system? Or was it rather open to local modifications?

At Carcassonne, exceptions were allowed according to the social and cultural level of the accused. Two suspected heretics, a notary and the priest of Luzenac, provided their own written confessions. While the former was in charge of registering his interrogation, the latter brought two *cedulae* containing a narration on his links with the Cathar heresy.<sup>29</sup> In this case, writing a confession had the advantage of avoiding a regular interrogation.

Among the trials that I selected in Fournier's register, variations of the procedure were related to the importance of the case. This could be determined by the status of the accused. Bernard Clergue, for example, occupied an eminent position in the village of Montailou; appointed bailiff, and brother of the village priest Pierre Clergue, he was a member of a powerful family and deeply involved in Catharism. His process presents interesting peculiarities.<sup>30</sup> The total number of times that Bernard was summoned in front of the inquisitor was quite high; not only was he convoked nine times by Fournier, but he had also been interrogated by Geoffroy d'Ablis in 1310 and Jean de Beaune in 1321.<sup>31</sup> On some occasions he tried to turn the course of the process to his advantage. Not only did he manage to be freed from prison by paying a fine, but he also obtained keys to the cells and had free access to the inquisitorial prison. There, alternating promises of rewards with threats and insults, he sought to obtain retractions from those who had denounced his brother.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, Fournier provided the accused with all means to defend himself; he allowed Clergue to read the depositions that various witnesses had delivered against him, and even offered him the possibility of having an advocate. The overall duration of Bernard Clergue's process was also impressive; without considering the deposition released to Geoffroy d'Ablis, it lasted almost three years and four months.

In conclusion, the whole structure of the processes against heresy was aimed at obtaining a "full proof." This was constituted by a confession of the

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<sup>29</sup> Depositions of Pierre de Gaillac (*Geoffroy d'Ablis*, 332–361) and Pierre de Luzenac (*ibid.*, 368–393).

<sup>30</sup> *Jacques Fournier*, I, 268–304; Le Roy Ladurie, *Montailou*, 88–107, 220–241; Benad, *Domus und religion in Montailou*, Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society*.

<sup>31</sup> Although the register of Geoffroy d'Ablis does not preserve this deposition, it was in the register of Fournier: this case of double evidence was unique.

<sup>32</sup> From this time Bernard Clergue was accused both because of his involvement in heresy and his attempts to obstruct the work of the inquisition, see *Jacques Fournier*, I, 298.



## Interrogation in Two Inquisitorial Courts

accused or at least two eyewitness testimonies, which were ultimately supposed to confirm what the judge already knew because he had received the denunciation. Because the suspected heretic had no other choice than to confess or be considered *relapsus* and left to the secular arm, the process was usually concluded with his admission of guilt and his abjuration.<sup>33</sup>

### The Interrogation: The Strategies of the “Doctor of the Soul”

Interrogations represent the principal scenario of the dialectical relations between the inquisitor and the accused. Depositions were structured and formulated according to what the Catholic authority considered to be a “heretical” behavior or belief, linking inextricably, by their own nature, the identity of heretics to what inquisitors believed this identity to be. What exactly did inquisitors understand as heretical? How did this understanding change in time?<sup>34</sup>

Inquisitorial documents chronicle a noticeable evolution of the strategies of interrogating suspected heretics between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Concentrating on the famous manuscript 609,<sup>35</sup> Pegg has highlighted the main feature of interrogations in Toulouse in the years 1245–1246, stating that elements of behavior rather than principles of faith represented the most vivid concern of inquisitors:

‘Did you see a heretic [a good man or a good woman] or a Waldensian?’ was, invariably, the first question. ... ‘If so, then where and when, how often and with whom, and who were the others present?’ ‘Did you listen to the preaching or exhortation of heretics?’ ‘Did you give the heretics lodging or arrange shelter for them?’ ‘Did you lead the heretics from place to place or otherwise consort with them or arrange for them to be guided or escorted?’ ‘Did you eat or drink with the heretics or eat the bread blessed by them?’<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Peters, *Inquisition*, 40–73; Van Caenegem, “Methods of Proof,” 98–99; Paul, “Jacques Fournier inquisiteur,” 59–65; Norman Rufus Colin Cohn, *Europe’s Inner Demons: The Demonization of Christians in Medieval Christendom* (London: Pimlico, 1993), 42–43.

<sup>34</sup> Arnold, *Inquisition and Power*, 7; Pegg, *Corruption of Angels*, 47.

<sup>35</sup> Toulouse, Bibliothèque municipale, ms 609.

<sup>36</sup> And it goes on: ‘Did you give or send anything to the heretics?’ ‘Did you act as a financial agent [*questor*] or messenger [*nuncius*] or assistant [*minister*] of the heretics?’ ‘Did you hold any deposit or anything for a heretic?’ ‘Did you receive the peace from a heretic’s book, mouth, shoulder, or elbow?’ ‘Did you adore a heretic or bow your head or genuflect and say ‘Bless us’ before the heretics?’ ‘Did you participate, or were you



Irene Bueno

The list continues without any reference to what a suspected heretic believed. How had the inquisitorial understanding of heresy changed by the turn of the fourteenth century? What was the meaning of heretical belief for Geoffroy d’Ablis and Jacques Fournier?

*1. Inheritance of a Traditional Questionnaire*

The traditional feature of thirteenth-century interrogations was not obliterated during the last trials against Catharism in Languedoc. Most of the questions that were mentioned above maintained a central role in interrogatories and shaped fourteenth-century depositions.

In both the registers, the overall structure of most of the depositions shows that meeting with ‘good men’ represented one of the main concerns for inquisitors and was regarded as important evidence of involvement in heresy. Two typical examples were derived from the registers under study here (*Table 1*):<sup>37</sup>

*Table 1. Typical reports of facts.*

<b>D’Ablis:</b> Interrogation of Pierre Tinhac	<b>Fournier:</b> Interrogation of Brune Pourcel
Item dixit se visitasse et vidisse V anni vel circa sunt elapsi predictos tres hereticos et Petrum ac Guillelmum Auterii hereticos non tamen simul sed diversis vicibus in domo predicti Martini.	Item dixit quod post annum vel quasi, ipsa iterum venit per se ad domum dicte Alazaicis, et cum fuit in dicta domo, in domo vocata la foganha, inventi stantem iuxta ignem dictum Pradas Tavernier hereticum...

The narration, apparently free, was composed on the framework of some standard elements. Besides rarely omitted chronological and geographical data,

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present at their *consolamentum* or *apparellamentum*...?’ ‘Did you ever confess to another inquisitor?’ ‘Did you believe the heretics to be good men and good women, to have good faith, to be truthful, to be friends of God?’ ‘Did you hear, or do you know, the errors of the heretics?’ ‘Did you hear them say that God had not made all visible things, that there was no salvation in baptism, that marriage was worthless, that the Host was not the body of Christ, and that the flesh would never be resurrected?’ ‘If you did believe these errors, and also believed the heretics to be good, then how long have you persisted in these beliefs?’ ‘And when did you first begin to believe in the heretics and their errors?’ ‘Did you leave the sect of the heretics?’ ‘How long ago did you leave and did you ever see the heretics after this time?’ ‘Did you ever agree to keep silent about all these things?’ ‘Did you ever hide the truth?’ Pegg, *Corruption of Angels*, 45–46.

<sup>37</sup> *Geoffroy d’Ablis*, 256; *Jacques Fournier*, I, 384.



## Interrogation in Two Inquisitorial Courts

verbs such as *videre*, *visitare* or *invenire* [*hereticum*] express the core of each reported episode and provide the answer expected by those who were leading the interrogation: because the deponent had seen the *boni homines*, he was likely to share their faith. In his handbook for inquisitors, Bernard Gui suggests this as the first question to be put to believers of the *Secta manichaeorum*:

In the first place, let the one under examination be asked whether he has seen or known a heretic or heretics anywhere, knowing or believing them to be such or to have that name or reputation; where he saw them; how often; with whom; and when.<sup>38</sup>

However, meeting heretics did not constitute a sufficient proof of adherence to heresy. Geoffroy d'Ablis and Jacques Fournier inherited a range of questions focused on what a suspected heretic had done, which can be grouped according to their topics.

Having ascertained that the accused had met some of the heretics, inquisitors often investigated his/her participation in rites.<sup>39</sup> The *adoratio* of heretics, or *melhoramentum*,<sup>40</sup> was perceived by d'Ablis as a crucial element of the involvement in the *prava fide*. The deponent was asked *si adoravit dictos hereticos* almost every time that he admitted to having met the *boni homines*.<sup>41</sup>

To the inquisitorial eye the ritual of *adoratio* meant a turning point in the interaction of an individual with heresy due to the passage from passivity to a deliberate choice of performing homage in front of the *boni homines*. In Fournier's register, such a crucial step seems to be represented rather by the participation in a *hereticatio*, or *consolamentum*, as is shown by the iteration of questions on whether someone *fuit receptus et hereticatus per dictum hereticum* and *de modo hereticationis*.<sup>42</sup> Questions concerning what was regarded as the only Cathar

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<sup>38</sup> Walter L. Wakefield and Austin P. Evans, ed. and tr., *Heresies of the High Middle Ages: Selected Sources* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), 384–385 (henceforth: Wakefield and Evans, ed. and tr., *Heresies of the High Middle Ages*).

<sup>39</sup> On Cathar rituals see Christine Thouzellier, ed., *Rituel cathare* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1977) (henceforth: Thouzellier, ed., *Rituel*); Francesco Zambon, *La cena segreta. Trattati e rituali catari* (Milan: Adelphi, 1997).

<sup>40</sup> According to Albaret's "Glossaire" it is a "Acte de salutation du croyant au parfait dès qu'il se trouve en sa présence et qui 'adore' en lui le bien ou la présence du Saint-Esprit," in Albaret, *Inquisiteurs: portraits*, 175.

<sup>41</sup> See for example *Geoffroy d'Ablis*, 115, 121, 125–127, 147, 151, 169, 202, 265, 321. *Jacques Fournier*, 311, 416, 346, 431, 494.

<sup>42</sup> According to the description provided by Bernard Gui, "The heretic asks the individual who has to be received, if [the invalid] can speak, if he or she wishes to become a good Christian man or woman and wishes to receive holy baptism. Upon



Irene Bueno

sacrament were more frequent and articulated in Fournier's forum than in d'Ablis'.<sup>43</sup>

Given that *adoratio* and *hereticatio* represented the most relevant scenarios of the encounter between believers and *boni homines*, numerous questions concerned these thematic nodes. Sometimes the inquisitors asked the accused whether he ate the bread blessed by the *boni homines*.<sup>44</sup> A question concerning the *promissio*, (*convenenza* in Occitain) could also be asked.<sup>45</sup> This was a pact through which the believers declared to the heretics their intention of being received into the sect at the end of their life. The importance of this promise was certainly acknowledged by inquisitors because it represented a deliberate and conscious choice of entrusting the salvation of one's soul to mediators different from the Catholic clergy.

As was said above, the accused were frequently asked to recall the names of other people who participated in those meetings, with the aim of situating individuals within a net of relations with other heretics and stimulating

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receiving an affirmative answer, accompanied by the request, "Bless us," the heretic, with his hand over the head of the sick person... and holding the Book, repeats the Gospel... On the spot, or in a place apart, the heretics make many prostrations, obeisances, and genuflections to the ground, repeating the Lord's prayer several times while bowing and raising," Wakefield and Evans, ed. and tr., *Heresies of the High Middle Ages*, 383. See the glossaire of Michel Roquebert, *Les Cathares*, 539–540; Anne Brenon, "Les fonctions sacramentelles du consolament," *Heresis* 20 (1993): 33–55; Franjo Sanjek, "L'initiation cathare dans l'Occident médiéval," *Heresis* 6 (1985): 19–27; Thouzellier, ed., *Rituel*, 222–260.

<sup>43</sup> In *Jacques Fournier*, I, 320, the heretication of Na Roqua is reported by Alazais Azéma; the heretication of Guillaume Guilhabert was witnessed and reported by Bernard Benet (*Jacques Fournier*, 395–409), Alazais Fauré (ibid., I, 410–421), Alamande Guilhabert (ibid., 422–428), Arnaud Fauré (ibid., I, 429–425), Guillaume Authié (ibid., 436–441).

<sup>44</sup> See for example *Geoffroy d'Ablis*, 124 (interrogation of Raimond Authié), or 304 (interrogation of Pierre Issaura): the formula is "Interrogatus si comedit umquam de pane a dictis hereticis benedicto;" in *Jacques Fournier*, I, 412 Alazais Fauré is "Interrogata si comedit de pane benedicto per dictum hereticum."

<sup>45</sup> Bernard Gui describes the pact like this: "Also, they teach their believers to make with them a pact, which they call the agreement (*la convenensa*), to the effect that the believers desire to be taken into the heretics' sect and order at the end of the life. Once the pact is sealed, the heretics may accept them during an illness, even though they should have lost the power of speech or their memory should have failed," Wakefield and Evans, ed. and tr., *Heresies of the High Middle Ages*, 382. See examples in *Geoffroy d'Ablis*, 118; *Jacques Fournier*, I, 412.



## Interrogation in Two Inquisitorial Courts

reciprocal denunciations.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, the inquisitors often enquired about what the accused and the other participants did or spoke about with heretics,<sup>47</sup> and asked whether they presented anything to the *boni homines*, which would illuminate their role of collaboration with the *secta*.<sup>48</sup> Following this line, questions regarded the permanence of *boni homines* in a house, and alimentary matters (whether the accused eat or drank with them, who provided food and cooked it, and what it was).<sup>49</sup> In addition, inquisitors investigated the *nuntii* and guides in charge of escorting heretics, their residence and destination.<sup>50</sup> This kind of information allowed inquisitors to draw a sort of map of the places usually frequented by heretics and families willing to host them.

### 2. *Questions of Belief*

Was “heretical behavior” the only concern of these inquisitors? Is something else to be found in their records? Theorizing the proper method of questioning the “Manichaeans” around 1323–1324, Bernard Gui also suggests that the inquisitors examine the belief of their accused:

Also, [ask] what he heard said or taught by the heretics against the faith and sacraments of the Roman Church; what he heard them

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<sup>46</sup> Or simply “Interrogatus de presentibus.” Examples of questions on names of participants are to be found in almost every page in the register of Geoffroy d’Ablis, but see samples in *Geoffroy d’Ablis*, 112, 128, 150, 338–340, 342.

<sup>47</sup> In d’Ablis’ register the question is usually formulated like this: “Interrogatus quid fecit vel dixit cum dictis hereticis,” see *Geoffroy d’Ablis*, 112, 116, 118, 120, 122, 124–126, 166, 180, 202, 222, 240, 360.

<sup>48</sup> “Interrogatus si dederunt aliquid,” see for example *Geoffroy d’Ablis*, 112, 166, 202; *Jacques Fournier*, I, 384: Brune Pourcel is interrogated “si tunc vel in preterita vice misit aliquid dicto patri suo [i.e. Prades Tavernier]; the question could also regard another person: Alazais Fauré was asked whether she knew “quod mater eius dederit aliquid dicto heretico,” *Jacques Fournier*, I, 412.

<sup>49</sup> Questions of this type are quite rare among my selected cases in the register of Fournier, while they are frequently reported in the register of d’Ablis, for example 118, 182, 202, 214, 220, 252, 256, 320. On the inquisitorial concern about eating with heretics, see Pegg, *Corruption of Angels*, 99.

<sup>50</sup> The interrogation of Bernard Marty of Junac is particularly interesting; being brother of a *perfectus*, Bernard was very active in protecting the heretics and escorting them from place to place, *Jacques Fournier*, III, 253–295. The role of various members of the Marty family in guiding the heretics is also testified to in the register of Geoffroy d’Ablis, in particular in the depositions of Arnaud Piquier (164–179), Blanche de Rodes (212–241), Raimond Issaura (260–291), and Pierre Issaura (290–311). See other examples in *Geoffroy d’Ablis*, 118, 182, 257.



Irene Bueno

saying about the sacrament of the Eucharist; about baptism, matrimony, confession of sins to priests, adoration or veneration of the Holy Cross; and similarly for other errors... Also, whether he believed that the heretics were good men and truthful; that they had and kept a good faith, a good sect, and good doctrine; that the heretics themselves and their believers could be saved in their faith or sect; also, how long he has shared in or persisted in the said belief; also, when he first began to accept this belief; also, whether he still believes it; also, when and why he abandoned it.<sup>51</sup>

Such a questionnaire was the result of the evolution of the practice of interrogation in the fourteenth century. In that period depositions were characterised by the emergence of questions of faith. The change implied a new concern of inquisitors in what simple *credentes* believed, which tenets they had learned from the preaching of the *boni homines*, or they had been taught by someone else. While Gui's *Practica* chronicles this change from a theoretical point of view, inquisitorial proceedings show how such an evolution in fact affected the inquisitorial practice.

I will consider first the register of Geoffroy d'Ablis. Undoubtedly in 1308–1309 the inquisitor and his lieutenants used to examine the doctrine of their accused. An individual who had met the *boni homines* was often asked *si audivit monitiones vel predicationes eorum*.<sup>52</sup> In case the suspected heretic admitted to having listened to their *errores*, the next question was likely to regard the content of the preaching.

However, in d'Ablis' register, questions on the Cathar belief were formulated according to a pre-defined and not-too-malleable scheme. As a consequence, answers were repetitive and similar to each other. As in this excerpt from the deposition of Raimond Authié (brother of the famous heretics Pierre and Guillaume Authié), the accused occasionally described the way the *boni homines* lived compared to that of clerics:

*Interrogatus quid dicebant, dixit quod loquebantur de facto Dei, specialiter de apostolis, videlicet de sancto Paulo et sancto Petro, et quod ipsi tenebant viam et fidem Dei et apostolorum, ita quod non jurabant nec menciebantur et quod non comedebant carnes, caseum nec ova et quod faciebant magnas abstinentias et magna jeiunia.*<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Wakefield and Evans, ed. and tr., *Heresies of the High Middle Ages*, 385–386.

<sup>52</sup> See *Geoffroy d'Ablis*, 118, 146; another formulation was: "Interrogatus si audivit dictos hereticos loquentes aliquid de secta sua."

<sup>53</sup> *Geoffroy d'Ablis*, 118.



## Interrogation in Two Inquisitorial Courts

Such a description constituted a key element of heretical preaching for, relying on concrete examples rather than abstract principles of doctrine, it set out the basis for a new path to salvation, different from that offered by the Latin Church. Although this description does not appear in d'Ablis' record as often as in that of Fournier, many individuals summoned in Carcassonne spoke about the *boni homines* in a similar way.<sup>54</sup> However, they were more often required to answer a different kind of question:

*Interrogata si audivit loqui ipsos hereticos aliquid contra ecclesiam Romanam vel fidem catholicam de sacramentis ecclesiasticis, videlicet de baptismo, de matrimonio, de sacrificio misse seu corpore Christi vel de quibuscumque aliis que sunt contra fidem ecclesie Romane...*<sup>55</sup>

In the tribunal of Carcassonne, this question had a central role among those about the content of heretical preaching. The rejection of the Catholic faith was ascertained by referring to the denial of the pillars of the Latin Church, the sacraments. How did the accused reply to this question? Once more, the recorded answers have a repetitive feature. The accused follow step by step the formulation of the question, and reply referring to the Cathar critique of every single sacrament. As a consequence, these depositions are characterised by an obstinate repetition of the same arguments.

In addition, the examination on important tenets of the Cathar belief rarely appears d'Ablis' register. The inquisitor of Carcassonne, so to speak, approached the heretical doctrine from a negative perspective, being interested in what of the Catholic Church the *boni homines* sought to deny, rather than in what they positively stated. In order to identify heresy, the main perspective was indicated by the true doctrine rather than by the *errores manichaeorum*.

The attitude of Jacques Fournier was quite different. The bishop of Pamiers regarded the investigation of doctrine as an essential part of the process dealing with heresy. He was noticeably concerned to discover which tenets the accused had heard during the preaching and which of them he believed in. As an excerpt from the process of Bernard Marty de Junac shows, Fournier led his interrogations on the basis of a more articulated questionnaire:

*Interrogatus si tunc vel ex tunc credidit dictos errores, scilicet quod dicti heretici essent boni homines et sancti, et quod salvabant animas vel iuvabant ad salvandum ipsas, et quod nullus poterat salvari nisi in fide eorum, et quod nullus*

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<sup>54</sup> See also *Geoffroy d'Ablis*, 292: "ipsi non jurabant nec menciabantur nec faciebant malum homini et talem vitam ducebant." Moreover, see *Geoffroy d'Ablis*, 250: "Et dicebant quod ipsi faciebant magnas abstinencias et faciebant tres quadragesimas in anno et quod habebant potestatem salvandi animas."

<sup>55</sup> *Geoffroy d'Ablis*, 228; see also 251, 262, 293, 334.



Irene Bueno

*etiam salvari poterat, nisi transiret per manus eorum, et quod recepti per eos absoluebantur ab eis ab omnibus peccatis, et incontinenti post mortem eorum anime salvabatur, et quod si ipse loquens moreretur en la endura, postquam fuerat hereticatus, eius anima statim iret ad paradisum...*<sup>56</sup>

The interrogation is quite complex; centred on the function of the *boni homines* as mediators for salvation it also regards death in *endura* and its consequences. Such tight interrogations were usually employed by Fournier at the end of the deposition, probably with a summarising purpose. However, the method he considered most effective in order to elicit the truth was to let the accused speak at length, suggesting directions to their narration and asking for clarifications. As a consequence, the structure of answers was not as repetitive as in d'Ablis' register.<sup>57</sup>

Moreover, as was shown concerning procedures, the way of leading interrogations often varied according to the status of the accused or the relevance of their processes. The case of Béatrice de Planissoles offers another eloquent example. This aristocratic woman was the mistress of the heretic priest of Montailou, Pierre Clergue, who joined his erotic passion to the teaching of the heresy.<sup>58</sup> Because her interrogation was likely to provide a great deal of information on one of the central figures in the Cathar heresy in Montailou, Béatrice gave one of the most interesting depositions of the entire register. Her belief was attentively enquired into, with many detailed questions on the dualistic doctrine, on the reincarnation of souls, on the feature of the incarnation on Christ, and on sacraments.<sup>59</sup>

Nevertheless, some cases of particular belief did not fit easily into the frame of the questionnaire formulated by Fournier. Such an example is provided by the trial against Aude Fauré, who could no longer believe in the Eucharist. A real trauma caused her loss of faith: Aude knew of a woman giving birth in the street and was horrified by the *turpitude* released during the childbirth, namely the placenta. She was so shocked by the event that she could not avoid

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<sup>56</sup> *Jacques Fournier*, III, 253–295, especially III, 267.

<sup>57</sup> The deposition of Béatrice de Planissoles is emblematic; besides her beliefs, she reported about love, sex, contraception, and popular medicine, see *Jacques Fournier*, I, 214–250; the deposition of Bernard Marty also provides an example of a long confession; the accused was expected to speak at length and all details of the narration were recorded by the inquisitorial notary, *Jacques Fournier*, III, 253–295.

<sup>58</sup> The Cathar critique of marriage was interpreted by the village priest of Montailou as a license for extramarital relations.

<sup>59</sup> *Jacques Fournier*, I, 241–243. On the Cathar doctrine, see Jean Duvernoy, *Le Catharisme: La religion des Cathares* (Toulouse: Privat, 1979); Manselli, *L'eresia del male*.



## Interrogation in Two Inquisitorial Courts

comparing it, during the mass, to the Christian archetype of the Mother and the Child, imagining the body of Christ contaminated by the same impurity. However, the inquisitor seemed to be unable to understand the real meaning of Aude's experience. He summoned ten witnesses and many of them were asked whether the woman was known to be heretic, belonged to a heretical family, or had met the *boni homines*. Aude herself had to answer as to whether she had met heretics or spoken with them.<sup>60</sup> In spite of a deep interest in doctrinal matters, the existence itself of a formulated questionnaire prevented understanding the meaning of all those beliefs that were hardly traceable as Cathar.

### ***Interrogatus dixit. Recording Depositions***

What kind of narration was originated within the framework of interrogations? How were depositions recorded? Many of the depositions appear as a paratactic series of more or less independent episodes, not necessarily linked to each other by logical or chronological ties. They describe the circumstances in which the deponent, or someone that he knew, saw the *boni homines*. Each of them represents the elementary cell of the discourse and is characterised by the narration of a brief story. In d'Ablis' register these episodes have a very synthetic feature; the essential information is usually put together within the space of 4–10 lines, normally followed by a series of questions.<sup>61</sup> The accused undertook their narration, which was routinely interrupted by the repetitiveness of inquisitorial questions.

The presence of details was certainly more typical of the depositions issued in Pamiers. There, the accused described accurately the context of their meeting with the *boni homines*. Not only did they provide information on time, space, participants, and facts, but they also reconstructed the entire situation in which the facts took place, with details on daily occupations, relations, dialogues, popular beliefs, and food habits. Moreover, the reports of feelings and direct speeches are much more frequent than in d'Ablis' register.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Jacques Fournier, II, 83; see Laurent Albaret, "L'antycléricalisme dans les registres de l'Inquisition de Toulouse et de Carcassonne au XIII<sup>e</sup> et au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle," *L'antycléricalisme dans la France méridionale au XIII<sup>e</sup> et XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Cahiers de Fanjeaux, 38 (Toulouse: Privat, 2003) 447–470; Jean Pierre Albert, "Croire et ne pas croire. Les chemins de l'hétérodoxie dans le Registre d'Inquisition de Jacques Fournier," *Heresis* 39 (2003) 91–106.

<sup>61</sup> I am referring to the edition of Annette Pales-Gobilliard.

<sup>62</sup> See, for example, how Brune Pourcel of Montailou described the circumstances of her meeting with the heretic Prades Tavernier, her father: "Dixit enim quod XVIII anni sunt vel circa, tempore Paschali, ... Alazaicis uxor Bernardi Riba quondam de Monte Alionis venit ad domum eius et dixit ei quod portaret Ramundum filium suum lactan-



Irene Bueno

The bishop of Pamiers was aiming at obtaining a “total” confession. He did not elaborate a revolutionary questionnaire, but rather left the accused more space to answer and on some occasions allowed a free narrative.<sup>63</sup> Moreover, the notary registered a multicolored series of elements that, although arising within a narration concerning heresy, sometimes were not necessarily related to the *heresia manichea*.

### Conclusions

The comparative analysis of the registers of Geoffroy d’Ablis and Jacques Fournier allowed highlighting differences and similarities in the activity of two almost contemporary tribunals. The inquisitorial strategies applied in fighting heresy in Carcassonne and Pamiers have been considered regarding the inquest, the structure of the process, and the methods of interrogation.

What can ultimately be derived is a general similarity of the procedures leading from the accusation to the abjuration, although Fournier’s activity was characterized by a more articulated phase of investigation based on accurate depositions of witnesses and by more use of imprisonment as a means to elicit full confessions. The interrogatory differed somewhat between the two inquisitors. On the one hand, d’Ablis and his lieutenants followed the structure of a precise questionnaire attentively, contenting themselves with a synthetic type of answer. As a consequence, the narration is concise and does not leave space, as in Fournier’s register, for detailed descriptions of the context in which the narrated events took place. On the other hand, questions of faith appear in both the registers, but only in Pamiers were they aimed at enquiring deeply into the beliefs of the accused, in their variety and complexity.

The inquisitorial system in the early fourteenth century was stable and consolidated. However, the differences encountered in the two registers show margins of flexibility that opened the way to the personal interpretation of different inquisitors.

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tem, qui poterat esse medii anni, ad domum ipsius Alazaicis, quia in dicta domo eius erat quedam mulier de Radesio que gravabatur lacte, et ipsa respondit quod non faceret, quia lac dicte mulieris offenderet dictum filium eius. Tandem ad preces dicte Alazaicis, ipsa portavit dictum filium suum ad domum dicte Alazaicis... Invenit eiam stantem in hostio cuiusdam camere Pradas Tavernieir hereticum,” *Jacques Fournier*, I, 382. See in particular the depositions of Béatrice de Planissoles (*ibid.*, I, 214–250), Barthélemy Amilhac (*ibid.*, I, 251–259), Bernard Clergue (*ibid.*, II, 268–304), Alazais Azéma (*ibid.*, I, 307–322), Bernard Marty (*ibid.*, III, 253–295).

<sup>63</sup> As in some excerpts of Béatrice de Planissoles’ deposition, *Jacques Fournier*, I, 214–250.



## Interrogation in Two Inquisitorial Courts

After 1307, the activity of Geoffroy d'Ablis was strictly correlated to that of Bernard Gui, inquisitor of Toulouse from that year. However, while the latter obtained extraordinary fame, the former was almost destined to anonymity by the silence of the sources. This lack of posthumous notoriety is in fact contradicted by an essential role in the persecution of the Cathar heresy in Languedoc. The work of d'Ablis was intensive and effective; between 1303 and 1309 his activity led to the capture of most of the *perfecti* of the region, which prevented the recruitment of new believers. Only a last heretic, Guillaume Bélibaste, survived until the time of Jacques Fournier.<sup>64</sup>

Nominated in the context of a large anti-inquisitorial revolt arising around Bernard Delicieux, Geoffroy d'Ablis was appreciated because, coming from Ablis near Paris, he was not familiar with the region and unrelated to the conflict between the Inquisition and the local elites.<sup>65</sup> He was soon involved, however, in the vicissitudes of the uprising of those years. As a consequence of these troubles, d'Ablis had to delegate some of his powers to his lieutenants. The result was the creation of a collaborative relation within the court of Carcassonne, expressed by the concerted effort of various officials under d'Ablis' direction.<sup>66</sup> The choice of delegating affected the features of the trials, characterized by the active participation of the inquisitorial lieutenants.

On the contrary, the court of Pamiers was dominated by the centralizing personality of Jacques Fournier. He was present at every session of the processes and carefully interrogated all his accused. While the Dominican d'Ablis was the appointed pontifical inquisitor of Carcassonne, with authority over seventeen dioceses, the Cistercian Fournier was a bishop and his

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<sup>64</sup> For a list of the last *perfecti*, see Duvernoy, *Le catharisme: L'histoire*, 324–325. In 1310, two years after Amiel de Perles, the heretic Pierre Authié was sent to the stake. The capture of Jacques Authié took place in 1309, while the heretic Sanche Mercadier committed suicide; Prades Tavernier was probably burned after Pierre Authié; imprisoned and having escaped from prison, Philippe d'Alayrac was eventually captured in Donnezan and certainly burned; Arnaus Marty was sent to the stake as well in the same period; see Roquebert, *Les Cathares*, 472–473.

<sup>65</sup> Charles Peytavie, "L'Inquisition de Carcassonne. Geoffroy d'Ablis (1303–1316), le Mal contre le mal," in Albaret, *Inquisiteurs: portraits*, 92 (henceforth: Peytavie, "L'Inquisition de Carcassonne"); see also Friedlander, *Hammer of the Inquisitors*; Roquebert, *Les Cathares*, 425–471.

<sup>66</sup> Peytavie, "L'Inquisition de Carcassonne," 92, 97; "Le nouvel inquisiteur n'entend en rien déroger aux impératifs de sa charge, réactivant toutes ressources disponibles de l'Eglise, depuis la simple paroisse aux échelons supérieurs des archiprêtres et des diocèses pour accentuer la lutte contre les hérétiques. Lui-même, pour poser sa présence, opère des arrestations à Albi avec le concours de l'évêque." *Ibid.*, 92.



Irene Bueno

inquisitorial function was limited to the territory of the diocese of Pamiers. The more contained area under the jurisdiction of Fournier constitutes a possible factor for a more intensive and accurate type of interrogation.

However, the difference in the offices of d'Ablis and Fournier affected their inquisitorial personalities in other ways. The inquisitor of Carcassonne systematically applied the ordinary procedures of the fight against heresy. On the contrary, Fournier performed the double function of inquisitor and bishop. Being the chief of his diocese, he acted out of pastoral concern for the salvation of every single soul of his flock. "Total confessions" represented the necessary passage to be accomplished in order to reconcile repentant heretics with the Church.<sup>67</sup>

In addition, some historical factors should also be taken into account. The two inquisitors witnessed two different phases of the late history of Catharism in Languedoc. While d'Ablis challenged the new rise of Catharism since its early expansion—the brothers Authié had come back to the region just three years before—Fournier confronted the heresy already in a retreat, when almost all the *perfecti* had already been captured and sent to the stake.

The methodology of the two inquisitors seems to have responded to the necessities of the moment. On the one hand, d'Ablis practiced a broad investigation aimed at capturing the last handful of *perfecti*, and initiated dismantling the web of *credentes* on a large scale by applying a consolidated procedure. On the other hand, Fournier seems to have been aware of the need for an intensive and deep investigation to penetrate the profound level of the heresy in the complexity of its village and family relations. The search for a "total confession," possible only within the limits of a restricted investigation, put such an approach in practice. Fournier inherited the success of the campaigns of d'Ablis and Gui, and accomplished their mission with a new technique of interrogation. After his investigation, there was scarce evidence of the presence of Catharism in Languedoc.

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<sup>67</sup> Annie Cazenave, "Aveu et contrition. Manuel de confesseurs et interrogatoires d'Inquisition en Languedoc et en Catalogne (XIII–XIV siècles)," in *La piété populaire au Moyen Âge. Philologie et histoire jusqu'au 1610, Actes du 99<sup>e</sup> Congrès national des Sociétés savantes, Besançon, 1974* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1977), 333–352; Paul, "Jacques Fournier inquisiteur," 64.