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Catharism and MS 609 of the Bibliothèque municipale de Toulouse

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Over 130 years ago Célestin Douais – abbot, bishop, and early historian of Catharism – observed in his influential overview of manuscript 609 of the Bibliothèque municipale de Toulouse (MS609), the registry of the 'great inquisition' of Toulouse, that it was marked by “la longueur d’un document, du reste quelque peu monotone, puisque, comme dans toutes les enquetes, les memes renseignements y reviennent souvent”¹. Not one historian who has referred to MS 609 since Douais has failed to comment on this particular quality of the registry², notably moreso since Mark Pegg published his monograph on it, *The Corruption of Angels*.

Historians' more modern complaints about the “formulaic”, “terse”, “dry”, “repetitive” aspects of the registry appear to have sealed its historiographic fate, shunted to a corner usually reserved for late medieval accounting rolls. This is a stunning fate for one of the largest records of quotidian life of the thirteenth-century, particularly after the anthropological turn of the 1970s which provoked a brief spate of micro-histories plumbed from inquisitorial archives. By any measure of medieval records, MS 609 is an extraordinary document: 254 folios covered recto and verso by the depositions of more than 5500 people summoned to Toulouse from across the Lauragais by inquisitors between the spring of 1245 and the summer of 1246. There, at the Dominican abbey of Saint-Sernin, each deponent swore to “tell the truth, about the living and the dead, regarding the crime of heresy”. The words they uttered in response to questions from the inquisitors Brother Bernard de Caux and Brother Jean de Saint-Pierre were heard by a rotating cast of over 100 witnesses – bishops, canons, priests, abbots, and monks – and summarized and recorded by a team of notaries. Those thousands of notarized parchment originals are now lost. But in a remarkable action representative of the ambitions of the earliest inquisitors in the Midi, a paper copy of the thousands of Toulouse originals were made for the inquisitors at Narbonne - the contents of MS609, the oldest extant original document of the first inquisitions into heresy (*inquisitio heretice pravitatis*).³

On its face, this inquisition presents a scale of inquiry that appears to have penetrated every corner of the thirteenth-century society of the Lauragais: the deponents include lords and ladies,

knights and quires; skimmers and tanners, spinners and weavers; harvesters, millers, and bakers; plowmen, cow herders, cutlers, and charcoal-makers; scribes and doctors. The depositions record a range of confessions, from the heretical to orthodox (according to the schema of the inquisitors), from single depositions filling multiple folios with decades of interactions with “heretics” (*boni homines* and *bonae feminae*) to short descriptions of a single event. More often than not, we find depositions from multiple members of a family across multiple generations, with memories going back to the end of the twelfth century before the Albigensian Crusade. Moreover, and unique among inquisition records of this period, we find folio after folio of complete and utter denials of any knowledge or contact with the *heretici* or their *hereses*. This combination of continuity and diversity at such a large scale has repeatedly lead historians to conclude with the Célestin Douais that this was an “enquête sur l’état religieux du pays”⁴.

And yet despite the apparent richness of the registry contained in MS609 – not only in terms of the study of religion and heresy per se, but also as an unequalled contiguous document of familial, social, economic, and political relations among hundreds of villages in the thirteenth-century – the manuscript has not been edited and published in the 150 years since it entered the modern historiographic record⁵. The reasoning for this has been based on material circumstance. In their recent volume of translated documents on heresy from thirteenth-century France (which includes extensive extracts from MS609), Peter Biller and John Arnold suggest that the manuscript's size combined with extensive water damage has blocked attempts to edit the manuscript⁶. However, a physical inspection of the manuscript shows that water damage is virtually non-existent, although there are a number of folios which have ironically suffered from the glue and silk used in a restoration effort in the 1950s⁷ – but the latter does not prevent accurate, rapid reading of 98% of the text of the folios affected, provided one consults it in person or through high-resolution reproductions. In the case of the aforesaid editors, they produced their translation through low-resolution images and old microfilms while referring to two extant problematic and incomplete transcriptions⁸. This approach characterises the treatment and reception of MS609 which have impeded the objective exploration of its contents over the last century: that the manuscript, or more specifically the lives of thousands of people living nearly 800 years ago, can be well enough understood in fragments.

Of course the inquisitors's formularies that impose the infamous repetitive, terse structure on the depositions in MS 609 do not encourage the reader to see variation in it – that was the inquisitors's very point: to impose the unitary world view contained in the canons of Lateran IV (the supremacy of the Roman Church and its priestly orders, rites, and sacraments) on the distinctly varied pre-Lateran world, a public correction of private sin. However nothing prevents a researcher from penetrating the superficiality of inquisitorial formularies. Except that MS609 entered the historiographic record when

the theologian Charles Schmidt's "scientific" theory of Catharism (or Albigensianism) was already long the single, accepted theory of heresy in the lands of the Count of Toulouse and across Western Latin Christendom⁹. And so Célestin Douais, whose prolific output of reliably-edited sources historians have depended upon until today, provided the first, model reading of MS609, based on the rubric of Schmidt's Catharism and filtered through the Douais's very orthodox Catholic theology. Thus the "mêmes renseignements" he identified, or "repetitiveness" for modern scholars, was in fact an elision of deponents' experiences of a local holiness (which manage to break through the surface of formularies) into categories of heresy that the historical science of Catharism demanded from them. And so Douais organized the "heretics" under theological-scientific headings of "doctrine" and "rituals", even though, for example, a contiguous reading of depositions related to a any single *bonus homo* in MS609 makes it clear that, even when reduced to a group of five deponents speaking of the same occasion with a *bonus homo*, there was no consistency among the interactions with *heretici* and the content of their *predicatio*, other than what historians make it to be¹⁰.

The blasé acceptance of this early, untested historiographic construction of the contents of MS609 – deemed so evident that it was never once considered worth a close examination in the 110 years between Douais's inventory and Pegg's monograph – has freed historians to build a social world to explain the Cathar heresy by selectively picking from the manuscript itself. Thus, the seigneurie of the Midi were the lynch-pin of the success of heresy¹¹; the individual followers of Cathar heresy could be demographically mapped because it was objectively a counter-Church, if not at least a sect, which a quantifiable segment of the population attended like Sunday Mass¹²; one could effectively reconstitute the life of a community around the Cathar counter-Church and its "parfaits"¹³; one could even evaluate the level of the "participation" of women in the Cathar Church¹⁴ and the relationship of Cathars to money itself¹⁵. The foregoing studies, many of them considered benchmarks in Cathar historiography, offer a strange sight of historians extracting selected "social data" from the manuscript to build a world that supported Catharism, while ignoring the contradictions that lay at the foundation of the very edifice it is meant to support and explain¹⁶. One should add here that Jacques Paul, in his monograph *Les croyants des hérétiques* (2019), has attempted himself to redress this problem raised long ago by Mark Pegg, coming to different conclusions than the latter.

This century-long reduction of MS609 into a "long, repetitive catalogue of stereotypical heretical actions and opinions...an endless recital of routine heretical acts and beliefs"¹⁷ combined with the manuscript's length, has no doubt contributed to undercutting the desire to create a scholarly edition of it¹⁸. Other than the few old photostats and microfilms available at a handful of universities and research centers, historians have relied upon two transcriptions. Those transcriptions incorporated the theory of Catharism into their very construction, distorting the manuscript source itself¹⁹. The older, but

little known and rarely circulated, is that created by Austin Evans through through a series of paleography courses organised from the 1930s at Columbia University. The transcript is currently bound and stored at the Butler Library, but it is missing approximately 12% of the manuscript (from the last third, after folio 200)²⁰. The accuracy of paleography is generally high, although variable by student who performed it (errors are occasionally corrected by a single hand, likely Evans' own) – each individual students' work is identifiable by their typewriter font and habits in formatting their transcription. It lacks any index, forcing the reader to manually search the 1400 plus typed pages, and the historical apparatus is highly variable – frequently non-existent. Where it does exist, the typescript begins to show the bias of its researchers: the historical notes meant to guide the reader focus on those heretics and nobles made famous by nineteenth-century historians, notably by Douais and his student Jean Guiraud (even where there is shared cognomen but no actual relation proved). The effect is an echo-chamber of the early sociology of Catharism with a certain handful of “notable families” appearing to have a ubiquity among depositions that did not exist in reality. This typescript was little distributed, used principally by Evans's students Walter Wakefield and John Mundy in their social histories, and sat loose-leaf in boxes without shelf mark in the office of the History Bibliographer up until the turn of the twenty-first century²¹.

The more recent transcription, and more widely circulated and influential, is that of the lawyer and prolific savant local Jean Duvernoy²². Made by Duvernoy for his personal research, this typescript first circulated among his fellow travellers Michel Roquebert and Anne Brenon²³, and then eventually utilised by professional historians and the general public when Duvernoy made all his personal transcriptions available on his website. Although often referred to as a transcription and treated as such, it is better described as a series of extracts offering insights into Duvernoy's vision of what should be retained from MS609²⁴. A comparison of Duvernoy's transcription to the manuscript suggests that he viewed between 15 and 20% of it as unnecessary to record. In his “forward” he outlines his abbreviations used in transcription, taking the formularies such as “set non adoravit nec vidit adorare” and reducing them to acronyms like “s n a n v a”. A stable set of clearly marked abbreviations *might* be navigable, but Duvernoy intermixes his own abbreviations with the abbreviations of the original notaries (MS609 being famous for its abbreviated spellings), often imposing his abbreviations where the original text doesn't exist, whether because he quickly scanned the text, because of sloppiness, or because it was all the same to him²⁵. Whatever the case, comparing the manuscript to Duvernoy's version, one quickly becomes aware of what he thought was important to retain. Like Douais and Guiraud before him, the actual text of the depositions become ciphers of the ideal Cathar heresy. For this reason he frequently omits sections of depositions with ellipsis as if to say, “we know what this is meant to say”. Moreover, and not infrequently, even the text Duvernoy retained was transcribed with a

willing, free interpretation, so *leprosus est* and *conversam* become the provocative “combustus est”²⁶ and “combustam”²⁷, *prefata* transforms into the valuable “perfecta”²⁸, and *duos bonos homines id est hereticos* in turn becomes “duos bonos homines, scilicet h.”²⁹.

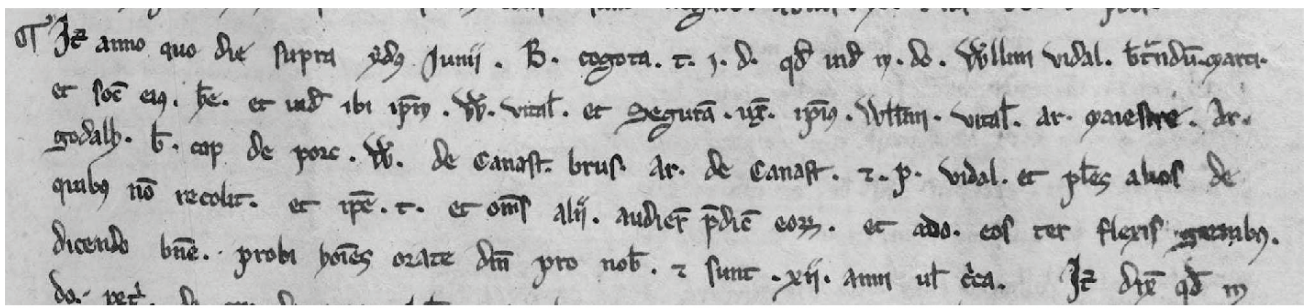
Duvernoy's numerous errors and ellisions would remain a curio, a charming insight into the work of a prolific antiquarian, if it were not for the influence it has exerted on the study of MS 609 by trained historians. Such is the strange context of the Cathar debate, where professional standards of historical methodology frequently seem absent and a number of trained historians have relied solely upon the personal redactions of an amateur without verifying against the source³⁰, introducing basic errors into discussions. One can cite two very recent examples of errors and their consequences. One is direct: Jörg Feuchter has argued for the historical legitimacy of the role and label *perfectus* / *perfecta* (“perfect”) based on Duvernoy's preferred but erroneous reading. The other is less direct, but suggests the primacy of expectations of a historical text versus the reality: Claire Taylor has argued for the use of “Cathar” based first on an absence of adequate direct evidence of a specific use of *boni homines* in sources, namely in MS609. However this argument is based on her self-admitted dependency on Duvernoy's incomplete transcription. Secondly, one of the uses she proceeds to cite from MS609 was transcribed incorrectly by Duvernoy³¹. It seems hardly a radical proposition that if the Cathar debate has come down to arguing over single words, let alone broader content and context³², then the words we argue over should at least be represented completely and accurately. This not-very-radical sentiment led me to create an edition of MS 609.

“Completely” and “accurately” in the scholarly editing of diplomatic texts such as inquisitorial registries obliges two sets of interventions: the critical apparatus and the historical notes. The former render the original text as clear as possible (reconciling possibly different copies of the same source document and different readings of the subject script, offering corrections, etc.) while defining potential problems in readings of the original(s). The object of this exercise is to give researchers a definitive text. The latter is an *enrichment* of the understanding of the text by the editor for researchers. For diplomatics this can include bibliographical, biographical, and geographic notes, among other reference points. As seen in the various editions of Douais and Duvernoy, and more recently Peter Biller and his team at York University³³, historical notes are highly variable according to the goals of the editor, and the time and physical paper space reasonably available to achieve them. These variables change significantly with a digital scholarly edition (« édition électronique »).

A scholarly digital edition of MS 609 (<http://medieval-inquisition.huma-num.fr/>) presents a fundamental re-orienting of an edition of inquisitorial sources, by challenging certain limits of a printed edition³⁴. A broad discussion of the practices and stakes of the scholarly digital edition are beyond the

scope of this essay³⁵, but for our purposes here we can group them into the categories of “interconnection” and “enrichment”. This can be best demonstrated through examples.

In a traditional, book-based edition of a registry of depositions, the editor is able to “connect” information through a name index of places and people. An especially ambitious editor, with a team, may also be able to create an index of “ideas”. It is then left to the reader-researcher to follow the indexes (hoping that the editor has managed to capture all instances) to understand how these things might interact across the texts. If one wanted to look up mentions of Bernard del Mas, lord of le Mas-Saintes-Puelles, it would be a relatively straightforward task, provided the indexer identified all instances.



```
<seg type="dep_event" subtype="event" xml:id="MS609-0013-1">
  <lb break="n" n="20"/>Item.
  <date type="deposition_date" when="1245-06-13">Anno quo <surplus>die</surplus>
    supra Ydus Iunii,</date>
  <persName ref="#Bernard_Cogota" role="dep">B. Cogota</persName>
  testis iuratus dixit quod vidit
  <placeName type="event_loc" ref="#domus_Guilhem_Vidal">in domo
    <persName ref="#Guilhem_Vidal" role="own">Willelmi Vital</persName>
  </placeName>
  <persName ref="#Bertrand_Marty" role="her">Bertrandum Marti</persName>
  <lb break="n" n="21"/>et socium eius, hereticos. Et vidit ibi ipsum
  <persName ref="#Guilhem_Vidal" ana="#pAdo #pAud" role="par">W.
    Vitalis</persName>; et
  <persName ref="#Segura_Vidal" ana="#pAdo #pAud" role="par">Seguram,
    uxorem ipsius
    <persName ref="#Guilhem_Vidal" role="ref">Willelmi
      Vitalis</persName></persName>;
  <persName ref="#Arnald_Maiestre" ana="#pAdo #pAud" role="par">Arnaldum
    Maiestre</persName>;
  <persName ref="#Arnald_Godalh" ana="#pAdo #pAud" role="par">Ar
    <lb break="y" n="22"/>naldum Godal</persName>;
  <persName ref="#Bernard_Cap-de-Porc" ana="#pAdo #pAud" role="par">B.
    Cap de Porc</persName>;
  <persName ref="#Guilhem_Canast-Brus" ana="#pAdo #pAud" role="par">W.
    de Canast Brus</persName>;
  <persName ref="#Arnald_Canast" ana="#pAdo #pAud" role="par">Arnaldum
    de Canast</persName>;
  <persName ref="#Peire_Vidal" ana="#pAdo #pAud" role="par">P.
    Vidal</persName>; et
  <persName ref="#others_unrecalled" ana="#pAdo #pAud" role="par">plures
    alios de<lb break="n" n="23"/>quibus non recolit</persName>. Et
  <persName ref="#Bernard_Cogota" ana="#pAdo #pAud" role="par"/>ipse testis
    et omnes alii audierunt predicationem eorum et adoraverunt eos ter
    flexis genibus<lb break="n" n="24"/>dicendo
  <quote>Benedicite, probi homines, orate Deum pro nobis</quote>.
  <date type="event_date" when="1233">Et sunt XII anni vel circa</date>.
</seg>
```

Figure 1 : First lines of the deposition of Bernard Cogota. At top, the original from Toulouse, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 609 f. 2r; at bottom, the same encoded in TEI-XML.

In a digital edition (TEI-XML format), the content is “marked-up”. An example appears in Figure 1, which demonstrates the encoding from manuscript to the version encoded in TEI-XML. In the encoded version we see that the person and places are “tagged” with an identifier that connects it to other instances of the same. We can also see that a person is “tagged” with a role and the actions they performed. In this case deponent (“dep”) and other participants (“par”) adored (“pAdo”) the hereticus Bertrand Marty (“her”) at the *domus* of Guilhem Vidal in 1233. The vocabulary of the database is thus constituted of the inquisitors' own words, and reflects their point of view.

The encoded version can be output to different formats for reading (web page, book, PDF), and also be treated as a database. As a database, one can create queries to ask questions that, even in a print version, would ordinarily require a research team to answer, perhaps taking days or weeks. The famous work done by Jean Guiraud or Jean Duvernoy to identify all the *boni homines* mentioned in the registries – the product of months and years of work – can now be performed faster than it takes to write this single sentence. Moreover, one can begin to develop more complex questions in an attempt to understand the interactions between the actors in a deposition better, “Which people appeared with which *boni homines* at le Mas-Saintes-Puelles between 1230 and 1235?” Or, as we can query the co-appearance of the the actors with each other, we may be able to develop more interesting questions, “Is there a pattern of which people appeared with each other at le Mas-Saintes-Puelles between 1230 and 1235?”, or “Are there patterns of incriminations of particular people?”

These kinds of questions can be asked not only because it is a digital edition, but because of the logic of the records scrupulously constructed by the inquisitors Bernard de Caux and Jean de Saint-Pierre themselves, a logic which a digital edition can expose rapidly. The registry in MS 609 is constructed of depositions with a very specific formulary - that same source of historians' frustrations and complaints mentioned above – one which took whatever the deponents may have said and transformed them into rigidly structured confessions: who met with which *bonus homo*, where, when, with which other people, and what did they did. Each one of those elements can be encoded and compared to each other. What becomes rapidly clear, especially with tools that helps us organize and visualize complex data³⁶, is that certain people are mentioned over and over again. They are mentioned in the same stories repeated before inquisitors (to the purposeful exclusion of others), including stories which have no *boni homines* in them, nor even heresy, and they are the subject of incriminations which flow in one direction towards a clear group of accused. It becomes immediately clear that the inquisitors Bernard and Etienne were indeed searching for individual affiliation with heresy, but only select individuals in each village.

In the closed-circuit logic of Catharism, the southern nobility, both greater or lesser, have been the focus of the sociology of the Cathar heresy. This is found across the 170 years of Cathar history –

from Schmidt, Douais, and Guiraud to Duvernoy, Roquebert, and Brenon, to Wakefield, Barber, and Biller – the noble as the agent of, or as the ideal representative of, the penetration of the Cathar heresy in the society of the Midi³⁷. This is often reflected in the historical notes of editions themselves, the *enrichment* of the text, for example those of Douais, in his edition of extant sentences that resulted from this inquisition³⁸, or even those of the aforementioned students of Evans. It is quite easy then to match these noble families with the depositions of MS 609, or even impute them from the occasional adjective *miles* found in the depositions. Yet these names are not those at the center of inquisitor's interest in MS 609, despite the historiographic emphasis. In fact, nobility fall into second place in inquisitor interest, if not third.

The answer to the question “Who is at the center of inquisitorial interest?” is not found within the depositions themselves. As Walter Wakefield remarked about MS 609, “social distinctions in the village are not easily discerned in the testimony, other than the prominence of the ruling family”³⁹. Rather, they are found in the sources little-consulted by Cathar historians: the *chartes* kept in the national and departmental archives of France. To take one example, in the *Trésor des chartes* of the Archives nationales (Paris) are found a series of oaths made in towns and villages across the lands of the count of Toulouse in 1243 right after the failed rebellion of count Raymond VII against King Louis IX, from Armagnac to the Montagne Noire above Carcassonne. These oaths were made to Louis IX by the men of each town and village, swearing to counsel their lord count Raymond against new rebellion against the King; to be loyal to the King should war come again; and to support the Roman Church against heresy and excommunicants. At the top those lists of men swearing fealty to King and Church are village consuls and *probi homines*, like those of le Mas-Saintes-Puelles, Laurac, and Fanjeaux, to name only three of the dozens of oaths from the Lauragais which have come down to us⁴⁰. It is these village counsels, the leading *probi homines*, and their families, who appear two to three years later at the centre of incriminations in MS609.

It is the circular logic of the historiography of Catharism and MS609 that has kept these documents from enriching our understanding the “great inquisition” contained in MS609. Such documents lay outside the usual religious tracts (and the prescriptive sociology of the “three orders” on which the polemics of those medieval ecclesiastics rested⁴¹) which historians have deployed in their apparatuses and arguments. The prescriptive sociology of the “three orders” has even affected the very representation of those documents which we might use to illuminate MS609. In the case of two edited collections of documents which historians of heresy and inquisition in the Midi frequently rely upon as sources, the *Histoire générale de Languedoc* and the *Layettes du trésor des chartes*, the names of nobility are listed, but in the twin interests of saving space and documentary bias towards nobility, consuls, *probi homines*, and other actors were replaced by the editors with “et cetera”⁴².

Despite this, if we want to pursue the subject of consuls in the Lauragais to shed light on the groups at the center of MS609, we should certainly turn to the sole reference work on the development of consuls there, Jean Ramière de Fortanier's *Chartes de franchises du Lauragais*. Yet de Fortanier makes the incorrect claim that there were only a handful of consulates in the Lauragais before Alphonse de Poitiers became count of Toulouse in 1249⁴³. Fortanier's claim was rooted in a methodological bias – he was interested in a constitutional history of consulates, one which required that he take into account only those sources which formally document rights granted by the count or seigneurie to a consulate (*chartes de franchises*). So, the oaths of consuls and *probi homines* from villages across the Lauragais in 1242-1243 disappear from historiographic view (among other illuminating documents on consulates of the Lauragais in the Trésor des chartes). From a comparative view, we might consult also Monique Bourin's brilliant social and institutional history of the *Villages médiévaux en Bas-Languedoc*, which itself discusses the development of the counsels of the littoral Languedoc from the *probi homines*⁴⁴. Bourin's work is strangely absent from Catharism, as historians have gone to significant lengths to separate the *boni* or *probi homines* of inquisition records from any *boni* or *probi homines* otherwise referred to in charters of the same period and same region, in an effort to keep the heretics in the sphere of a strictly religious history⁴⁵. By the same token, Bourin's volume explicitly did not engage with religious history (Catharism)⁴⁶.

It is finally these historiographic divisions, and the epistemologies like that of Catharism created by them, that has impeded our ability to see that Bernard de Caux and Jean de Saint-Pierre were searching for incriminating information on counsels and leading *probi homines* found in the oaths. And the same now impedes our ability to understand why the inquisitors did so. But the categories of historians are constructed by them to understand and explain the world, they are not natural to it⁴⁷. An enrichment of our understanding of the “great inquisition” in broader social and political context is the goal of my edition of MS609. Only in this way can we address the problems which begin to surface with careful, methodological analysis of the inquisitors' intentions :

- Why do numerous *probi homines* and *consuls* who swore oath to King and Church appear as *boni homines* in MS609?
- Why were almost all those mentioned by name in MS609 as burned by previous inquisitors related to, or were themselves, consuls?⁴⁸
- What should we make of the fact that many of the people who populate the celebrated lists of flat denials in MS609 appear to have come from the same *domus* of those accused of consorting with *boni homines*, often in the very same *domus*?
- And perhaps the most problematic over-arching question of all originates in the fact that virtually all the depositions reflect the inquisitors's interests in events that go back 5, 10, 20, 40

years. What was the relevance of stories previously confessed to others inquisitors, frequently without penance, to the brothers Bernard and Etienne at Toulouse? What was the goal in seeking confessions about and from consuls and *probi homines*, about facts they had already confessed years before, when they had since sworn oaths to King and Church to defend against heresy?

In this brief review of MS609 as a document of the “great inquisition”, we have come a long way from the long-held consensus opinion of this inquisition as a “enquête sur l’état religieux du pays”. If we seem to have entered a fog detached from the secure opposites of orthodoxy and heresy, “religious” inquisition and the “secular” world of villages, it is only because those opposites are the creation of historians following the epistemologies and sociologies of their sources without reflection, and often remaking the very sources themselves into that image.

Abbreviations

Sources :

MS609 : Bibliothèque de Toulouse, Ms. 609

MS9992 : Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms. Lat. 9992

TdC : Trésor de chartes, Archives nationales, Paris

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- Schmidt, *Histoire* : Charles Schmidt, *Histoire et doctrine de la secte des Cathares ou Albigeois*, Paris, 1848
- Semkov, *Context socio-economique du Catharisme* : Georgi Semkov, « Le Context socio-economique du Catharisme au Mas-Saintes-Puelles dans la première moitié du 13e siècle », *Heresis* 2 (été 1984), p. 35–53.
- *CIQ* : Antonio Sennis (éd.), *Cathars in Question*, Suffolk, 2016
- *Layettes* : Alexandre Teulet, *Layettes Du Trésor Des Chartes (1224-1246)*, Vol. 2, Paris, 1866
- Wakefield, *Heretics* : Walter L. Wakefield, « Heretics and Inquisitors: The Case of Le Mas-Saintes-Puelles », *The Catholic Historical Review* 69, no. 2 (1983): 209–26

- 1 Douais, *Les Hérétiques*, p. 149. The label 'the great inquisition' was given by Mark Pegg in Pegg, *COA*.
- 2 For example: Dossat, *Crises*, p. 73-74.; Given, *Inquisition*, p. 2; Caterina Bruschi, Peter Biller, "Introduction" in *Texts and the Repression of Heresy*, Suffolk, 2003, p. 3-19, esp p. 17.
- 3 The manuscript contains 260 folios, the last six of which are blank. According to several comments found in the margins of MS609, this manuscript is a copy of numbers four and five of at least ten original volumes (whether at Toulouse or Narbonne is unclear). The history of the manuscript, as well its palaeography and codicology, has been described a number of times in detail, chief of among them: Dossat, *Crises*, p. 56-86 ; Pegg, *COA*, p. 20-27; Albaret, *Enquête*, p. 185-210. My own description of the manuscript will be published with my edition of MS 609, expected to be completed in early 2022.
- 4 Douais, *Les Hérétiques*. Parmi eux qui reprennent cette formulation : Dossat, *Les Crises*, p. 226 n. 70, 233–34 ; Walter Wakefield, *Heresy, Crusade and Inquisition in Southern France 1100-1250*, Londres, 1974, p. 174 ; Wakefield, *Heretics and Inquisitors* ; Abels, *Participation*, p. 220-223; Lambert, *Cathars*, p. 215–217 ; James B. Given, *Inquisition and Medieval Society: Power, Discipline, and Resistance in Languedoc*, Ithaca, New York, 2001, p. 2, 35 ; Barber, *Cathars*, p. 195 ; et l'étudiant d'Anne Brenon, Cabirou, *Société à Saint-Martin-Lalande*, p. 4 ; Laurent Albaret, « Le témoignage dans les procès d'Inquisition en France méridionale au XIII^e siècle: l'exemple du manuscrit 609 de Toulouse », *Quête de soi, quête de vérité. Du Moyen Âge à l'époque Moderne*, Aix-en-Provence, 2007, p. 27-43, esp. p. 40-41.
- 5 Charles Molinier, *L'Inquisition dans le Midi de la France au XIII^e et au XIV^e siècle: étude sur les sources de son histoire*, Toulouse, 1880 ; Molinier, *Manuscrits*, introduction et p. 358.
- 6 Arnold, Biller, *Heresy*, p. 380.
- 7 *Interrogatoires subis par les hérétiques albigeois devant Frère Bernard de Caux, Inquisiteur de 1245-1253. Rapport de restauration 1950-1952*, Bibliothèque municipale de Toulouse.
- 8 Their footnotes indicate that Arnold and Biller did not avail themselves of the ease of access to the manuscript in Toulouse, nor the CNRS's exceptional high-resolution images available since 2013 at https://bvmm.irht.cnrs.fr/consult/consult.php?REPRODUCTION_ID=620.
- 9 Charles Schmidt, *Histoire et doctrine de la secte des Cathares ou Albigeois*, Paris, 1848. On the nineteenth century creation of the historical science of Catharism see Mark Gregory Pegg, « Innocent III, les "Pestilentiels Provençaux", at le paradigme épuisé du catharisme », *Cahiers de Fanjeaux* 50, 2015, pp. 225-279, and Jean-Louis Biget, *Hérésie et inquisition dans le Midi de la France*, Paris, 2007, pp. 69-71
- 10 To take just one example, see the thirteen depositions across folios f. 50r – 57v which recount the same story having taken place at the *nemus de la Vezan* around 1236: the deponents' memories of their actions and what the *heretici* said are highly varied. In contrast Douais, *Les Hérétiques*, p. 151-153, choses selections from the depositions as representative of its entirety, where in fact they are carefully selected to match Douais's theological categories. Peter Biller has tried to argue that any variations stem from whether the given deponent was able to understand what was being said by the heretics, while suggesting that the very same deponent understood the "five questions they put to them" by inquisitors about the sacraments. Peter Biller, "Cathars and the Material World", *God's Bounty?: The Churches and the Natural World*, Woodbridge, 2010, p. 89-110, esp. p. 99-104.
- 11 Michel Roquebert, « La famille seigneuriale du Mas-Saintes-Puelles devant l'Inquisition », *Les voies de l'hérésie : le groupe aristocratique en Languedoc : XIe-XIIIe siècles*, Vol. 1, Carcassonne, 1995, p.165-187 ; Cabirou, *Société à Saint-Martin-Lalande* ; see now the recent dissertation by Biller's student, Rachael Mary Hardstaff, *Heresy and Aristocracy in Thirteenth-Century Languedoc*, Thèse, University of York, 2019.
- 12 Semkov, *Context socio-economique du Catharisme* attempted a demography of Cathar believers via MS 609. This problematic study has been used as evidence of the adhesion of the population to heresy in numerous major studies including Barber, *Cathars*, p.75 ; Lambert, *Cathars*, p. 133 ; Jean-Louis Biget, *Hérésie et inquisition dans le Midi de la France*, Paris, 2007, p. 130–32.
- 13 Wakefield, *Heretics and Inquisitors*.
- 14 Abels, *Participation*.
- 15 Deborah Shulevitz, "Following the Money: Cathars, Apostolic Poverty, and the Economy in Languedoc, 1237–1259", *The Journal of Medieval Religious Cultures*, Vol. 44, n° 1 (02/2018), pp. 24-59.
- 16 Pegg refers to this as strip-mining the manuscript in Pegg, *CEQ*, p. 14-15
- 17 Given, *Inquisition*, p. 2
- 18 Beyond the two transcriptions to be discussed, several other attempts have been made. Douais mentions in a letter to the editor that he was working on an edition in 1890 – it never saw publication, and may have disappeared in the fire that apparently consumed his archives at Beauvais during the first World War, Célestin Douais, « Lettre de Mgr C. Douais' », *Revue Historique* 1902/09-12 (1902), p. 326–327. Yves Dossat and Annette Pales-Gobilliard had apparently collaborated on an edition but it did not see publication before their deaths, Annette Pales-Gobilliard, « Conférence de Mme Annette Pales-Gobilliard », *Annales de l'École Pratique des Hautes Études* 100, no. 96 (1987), p. 343.
- 19 It is notable that among all the historians who have produced extensive work using MS 609, only Mark Pegg used the

- actual manuscript, spending a year in Toulouse while working on his PhD. A certain mystery has accrued to the manuscript, no doubt encouraged by the repeated myth that it was moved out of Toulouse for some time to be hidden in Paris. The manuscript services at the Bibliothèque municipale de Toulouse has a long record of transactions for all manuscripts, and it has not left the building going back decades.
- 20 Bound and given a shelfmark at the Butler Library after 2000: BX4890 .B47 1255g (*Interrogatoires subis par des hérétiques albigeois par-devant frère Bernard de Caux, inquisiteur, de 1245 à 1253*). Two copies of this transcript (containing the same lacuna) can also be found in the archives of John Mundy at the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, F 110.3 – 110.6, Toronto. Only recently has a scan (incomplete) be made available by the Hathi Trust at <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/008400500>, consulted March 2, 2018.
 - 21 From an email exchange with Mark Pegg, February 1, 2018.
 - 22 The original typescript is stored with his archives at the Archives départementales de l'Aude under cote 10 JJ 422-423
 - 23 Anne Brenon, *Les femmes cathares*, Paris, 1992, p. 389
 - 24 This practice is not unknown even in Duvernoy's published books, for example his harvesting of any reference to Montségur in the depositions of MS 609 and Doat, stripped of context and translated from third to first person, in Jean Duvernoy, *Dossier de Montségur : Interrogatoires d'inquisition 1242-1247*, Toulouse, 1998.
 - 25 Early on in his career Duvernoy had already been taken to task for inaccuracies in his edition of the registries of Jacques Fournier by Antoine Dondaine, "Le registre d'Inquisition de Jacques Fournier. A propos d'une édition récente (J. Duvernoy, *Le registre de l'inquisition de Jacques Fournier (1318-1325)*, 3 vol., Toulouse, 1965)", *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, 1970, Vol. 178, n° 1, pp. 49-56.
 - 26 cf. MS609 fol. 2r vs. Duvernoy, *Le Manuscrit 609*, p. 9
 - 27 cf. MS609 fol. 28v vs. Duvernoy, *Le Manuscrit 609*, p. 64
 - 28 cf. MS609 fol. 123r vs. Duvernoy, *Le Manuscrit 609*, p. 316
 - 29 cf. MS609 fol. 38r vs. Duvernoy, *Le Manuscrit 609*, p. 95
 - 30 For example, Chris Sparks, *Heresy, Inquisition and Life-Cycle in Medieval Languedoc*. York, 2014 and just last year Rachael Mary Hardstaff, *Heresy and Aristocracy in Thirteenth-Century Languedoc*, Thèse, University of York, 2019, both students of Peter Biller.
 - 31 For Claire Taylor see *CIQ*, p. 242-256, esp. note ; Jörg Feuchter cites Duvernoy in his conference paper circulated at the launch of *CIQ*, « The term "perfect" in inquisition records », January 19, 2017, amended in Jörg Feuchter, « Revised list of occurrences of the term "perfect" in inquisition records. With an additional list of occurrences in legislation texts », January 24, 2017.
 - 32 Deborah Shulevitz, « Historiography of Heresy: The Debate over "Catharism" in Medieval Languedoc », *History Compass* 17 (2018), e12513, <https://doi.org/10.1111/hic3.12513>, esp. p. 6.
 - 33 An impeccable example of a classic diplomatic edition is that of volumes 25 and 26 of the Doat Collection by Peter Biller, Caterina Bruschi, Shelagh Sneddon (éds.), *Inquisitors and Heretics in Thirteenth-Century Languedoc: Edition and Translation of Toulouse Inquisition Depositions, 1273-1282*, Leiden, 2010.
 - 34 P. Sahle, « What is a Scholarly Digital Edition? », *Digital Scholarly Editing : Theories and Practices*, M. J. Driscoll, E. Pierazzo (éds.), Cambridge, 2017, pp 19-39.
 - 35 For an overview of the practice of digital scholarly editing see Elena Pierazzo, *Digital Scholarly Editing: Theories, Models and Methods*, Surrey-Burlington, 2015, followed by discussion in Matthew James Driscoll, Elena Pierazzo (éds.), *Digital Scholarly Editing : Theories and Practices*, Cambridge, 2017.
 - 36 See the document downloadable with Rehr, *Re-mapping*.
 - 37 See for example Peter Biller's insistent focus on Hélie de Mazerolles and her family as representatives of Catharism, first in his attack on Pegg in *CIQ*, p. 281-282, and then by proxy through the recent dissertation of his PhD student, Rachael Mary Hardstaff, *Heresy and Aristocracy in Thirteenth-Century Languedoc*, Thèse, University of York, 2019, esp. p. 226- 240. I trace the genealogy of this sociology of Catharism in Chapter 1 of Rehr, *Vidit cum hereticis*.
 - 38 Douais, *Documents pour servir à l'histoire de l'inquisition dans le Languedoc*, 2 vols, Paris, 1900, 1-89.
 - 39 Wakefield, *Heretics*, p. 210 ; see also Semkov, *Context socio-économique du Catharisme*. Ironically Duvernoy' transcript omits one small, vital clue; it leaves off "consul" from *non dixit veritatem quia Poncius Marti consul prohibuit ei*, cf. Duvernoy, *Le Manuscrit 609*, p. 85-86 and MS609 folio 33r.
 - 40 cf. Archives nationales de France, Trésor des chartes, J 305/28, J 305/17, J 305/27.
 - 41 Georges Duby, *Les trois ordres ou l'imaginaire du féodalisme*, Paris, 1978
 - 42 cf. *HGL*, Vol VIII, cols 1123-1126 ; *Layettes*, n° 3069
 - 43 Jean Ramière de Fortanier, *Chartes de franchises du Lauragais*, Toulouse, Paris, 1939.
 - 44 Monique Bourin, *Villages médiévaux en Bas-Languedoc, genèse d'une sociabilité : Xe-XIVe* (2 tomes), Paris, 1987, 1995
 - 45 Julien Théry, « L'hérésie Des Bons Hommes. Comment Nommer La Dissidence Religieuse Non Vaudoise Ni Béguine En Languedoc ? (XIIIe-XIVe s.) », *Heresis*, no. 36–37 (2002), p. 75–117 ; « Claire Taylor, Looking for the 'Good Men' in the Languedoc: An Alternative to 'Cathars' ? », *CEQ*, p. 242-256.

- 46 See now some of her considerations twenty-five years later on in Monique Bourin, « Les Dissidents Religieux Dans La Société Villageoise Languedocienne à La Fin Du XIIIe et Au Début Du XIVe Siècle », *L'hérétique Au Village: Les Minorités religieuses dans l'Europe médiévale et moderne : Actes des XXXIes Journées internationales d'histoire de l'Abbaye de Flaran, 9 et 10 Octobre 2009*, Toulouse, 2011, p. 201–216.
- 47 My view is deeply influenced by the American historian of religion Jonathan Z. Smith, for example in his *Imagining religion: from Babylon to Jonestown*, Chicago, 1982, p. xi: “while there is a staggering amount of data, of phenomena, of human experiences and expressions that might be characterized in one culture or another, by one criterion or another, as religious – *there is no data for religion*. Religion is solely the creation of the scholar’s study.” His work has only recently become available in French, Jonathan Z. Smith, *Magie de la comparaison et autres essais d'histoire des religions*, Geneva, 2014.
- 48 For example, Arnald Godalh of le Mas-Saintes-Puelles; consul Bernard Alzeu, and Andrea de Gibel, wife of Ysarn de Gibel of Saint Martin Lalande; and Arnald Mazeler of Laurac.