

Abstract

When the Albigensian Crusade ended with the signing of the Peace of Paris on 12 April 1229, the Lauragais region in what is now Southern France had dramatically changed from what it was when the war began two decades earlier. Whereas local nobles had once been tolerant, and even sympathetic, towards those accused of heresy, the devastating conflict left them much more willing to combat heresy. Beginning in 1245, the Dominican inquisitors Bernart de Caux and Jean de Saint Pierre began what would become the largest inquisition ever conducted in the Middle Ages. Thousands of depositions were recorded over two hundred and one days. The original record of this trial is lost, but two volumes with around six thousand testimonies from a copy made a decade later survives as Manuscript (MS) 609 in the Municipal Library of Toulouse. This manuscript is one of the few surviving records from the thirteenth-century *inquisitionis heretice pravitatis*. It has become a text at the center of the contentious and lively scholarly debate over the existence of Catharism, usually assumed to be the most famous heresy of the Middle Age. If there is no Catharism, then the history of Latin Christianity and the Middle Ages will have to be rewritten.

Recently, the study of MS 609 has been reinvigorated with the work of Jean-Paul Rehr, who encoded and published much of MS 609 earlier this year. Rehr's encoding of the manuscript included extensive and detailed metadata. Extracting, filtering, and analyzing the metadata included in his files, allowed me to study depositions based on specific attributes while still considering the manuscript as a whole. As such, this thesis contributes to the debate about Catharism by arguing that there is no evidence in MS 609 of a widespread structured heresy in the twelfth and early thirteenth-century Lauragais.